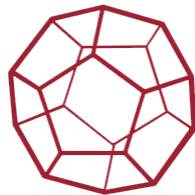


Metamorphoses of the Soul

Paths of Experience

GA 58 & 59



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GA 58 & 59

by

Rudolf Steiner

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Synopsis

Volume 1

1. **The Mission of Spiritual Science** **October 14, 1909**

The spirit is a reality for spiritual science. Count von Hoditz and Wolframitz, a personality of outstanding importance, said: Man is in essence an image of the Divine. Today spiritual science exists; a higher, super-sensible form of knowledge. Goethe saw in the harmonious human being the goal of the universe. Kant denied a path of knowledge leading into the spiritual world, from which comes moral consciousness, duty and conscience. Goethe is his antithesis. By means of "contemplative judgement" one can ascend into the spiritual world. The stages on this path are Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. Initiates in ancient times revealed the most profound secrets of life in legends and myths as well as in symbols. The "Therapeutae" were able to look into the spiritual world. Augustin experienced an awareness of the Divine. Today spiritual observation can be expressed in the logical terms of external science. It is the mission of spiritual science to ascend into the spiritual world by developing the hidden forces of the soul.

2. **The Mission of Anger** **December 05, 1909**

There are hidden faculties in the soul. Soul and spirit can issue only from soul and spirit. The fact of repeated earth lives is a consequence of this. The sentient soul is connected with the sentient body, the Intellectual soul with the ether body and the consciousness soul with the physical body. In the sentient soul lie images, antipathy and sympathy. The intellectual soul forms thoughts and judgements with the outside world. We have to make ourselves as many-sided as possible and overcome egoism. Anger can educate the human being to calmness and true gentleness. Prometheus brought language, knowledge, writing and fire to mankind, all of them gifts which educate the ego. The wrath of Zeus extinguishes the power of the ego in Prometheus. Zeus is succeeded by Christ, anger by the loving ego.

3. The Mission of Truth

October 22, 1909

The ego is confined between losing itself and egoism. Lessing demands that man strive for truth. A sense of truth leads to selflessness. The one-sided point of view does not lead to truth. Passions, desires, have to be overcome; to the same extent peace and harmony rules among man. There is the truth of reflective thought about outer observation, as well as truth which comes about by creative thought. Among the latter are the truths of spiritual science. Reflective thinking can lead to egoism; truths arrived at by creative thinking, which lead into the future, liberate us from our self. This is the contrast between Epimetheus and Prometheus. Both the Titan brothers must work together. Wisdom and the Word have to unite with the Deed.

4. The Mission of Reverence

October 28, 1909

The "Unio mystica" is the union with the eternal-feminine within human reach. The human being should strengthen his ego but he must not harden it into egoism. The will is able to develop devotion towards the unknown, the feeling develops love for the unknown. When both are united reverence comes into being, which leads to knowledge of the unknown. Love without judgement leads to sentimental enthusiasm. Love and devotion imbued with the right kind of self-feeling lead upwards. Gestures of reverence are the bended knee, folded hands, the lifted face. The soul purifies within itself a feeling for what is beautiful and what is good. The will, purified by reverence, builds up moral ideals. In old age the strength arises to be active in life. We draw near to the Almighty, Increasingly rich knowledge is the result of educating the consciousness soul. The "eternal-masculine" must permeate all reverence. The strong ego ascends to higher regions.

5. Human Character

March 14, 1909

The divisions in the being of man must be overcome by the unified character. At its foundation lies the harmony brought forth by the ego from the interaction of the three soul members. The human being ripens through experience and wisdom learnt from life. Experiences are transformed into

abilities. They are limited by the disposition of the physical and ether bodies. The forces which we have woven into archetype can only enter existence in a new life. The outer is an expression of the inner being. Laocoon, an image of the human being from which the ego is absent. True ripeness of experience is not attained until the 35th year of age. Joy and love fill the physical body of the child with strength. Then there are fewer obstacles for the ego in the period of the consciousness soul. Similar links exist between the ether body and the intellectual soul and the periods when they manifest themselves. The experience of authority in the period from 7 to 14 provides the foundation for courage. The ideals presented to the human being in the period from 14 to 21 are imprinted on the sentient soul. Immersion in the cosmic secrets further remoulds the character. Character is evident in facial expression, the physiognomy and the formation of the skull.

6. **Asceticism and Illness**

November 11, 1909

Spiritual science asks how can the human being surpass the limits of his knowledge at a given time by developing his abilities. The human being requires the stimulus of the outside world for the development of his consciousness. But he can strengthen the inner members of his being in such a manner that he retains consciousness in them without stimulus from the outside world. A first exercise is symbolic concepts, such as the rose-cross. Such an exercise is asceticism in the true sense. The human being may reject the spiritual for reasons of self-preservation if it were to throw his mind into confusion. It would be self-destructive to accept knowledge of the spiritual world purely for sensationalism. It is the wrong type of asceticism to weaken the body and not work on the soul. False images of one's own being are the result. Illness can be a symptom for a faulty relationship between body and soul. By strengthening the forces of the soul healing forces can be given to the body.

7. **Human Egoism**

November 25, 1909

For Goethe the human being is the summit of existence. The ego is the bearer of justified and unjustified egoism. If the human being places his experiences at the disposal of mankind

he is a microcosm. If he does not do this, then he becomes hardened. The wrong kind of egoism leads to a desolate existence. All great truths have a health-giving effect on the soul. Feelings which develop understanding for the outer world strengthen the life-forces. Our strength of soul develops out of ourselves the world of our actions. In the human being the higher human being is born. Wisdom gained by insight into the world passes into the will. In "Wilhelm Meister" Goethe shows the nature of egoism. Mignon is a being which is not yet an ego. The "Beautiful Soul" initially shows a refined form of egoism. But then she experiences the course of Christ's life. The human being can understand the great world around him only when his own enriched inner being flows out into the environment. Spiritual forces guide the human being. In the "Years of Travel" various tales and much wisdom is interspersed. In the "pedagogical province" the significance of veneration is shown. Makarie experiences the universe. Self-knowledge can become world-knowledge and world knowledge can lead to self-knowledge.

8. Buddha and Christ

December 02, 1909

Buddha speaks only about the means whereby man can come to an existence satisfying in itself. In the conversation between Nagasena and King Milinda the former shows how only effects pass from one earth-life to the next. Buddhism turns away from the physical world. The Christian carries the results of an earth-life into the next. Buddha sees the suffering which assails the human being from outside. The human being must fight the thirst for existence by means of the eight-fold path. Buddha wants release from the suffering of existence. Christianity is the religion of rebirth on a spiritual level. The East is non-historical, the West historical. Christianity sees the aim of development in that all the gains of earth-lives shine forth in ever higher levels of perfection and are resurrected at the end of earth-existence. It is Christian to overcome the error that the outside world is merely Maya. Everything which we experience in the incarnations must be developed in order that it may experience resurrection in the spiritual sense. At the time of Christ the old clairvoyance wanes. In its place the culture of the ego arises. The beatitudes point the way to the ego, to the divine part in

the human being. The death of Christ is the starting-point for an immortal life. In the last instance Faust ascends from death to life. In Goethe a Christianity of the future appears.

9. Something about the Moon in the Light of Spiritual Science
December 09, 1909

The "moon controversy" between Fechner and Schleiden. Fechner collated many observations on the rhythm of the moon. Goethe was working on meteorological studies. He sees the earth as a being imbued with life. The ego works on the three soul members. The sentient body is connected with man's place of home. The angle at which the sun's rays strike the earth varies from place to place. The ether body is dependent on the change of the seasons. In the far north and in the tropics the intellectual soul is unable to create a useful instrument from the ether body. The physical body develops in the alternation of day and night. Productive periods occur in 14-day rhythms. For the spiritual researcher there are periods when spiritual illuminations surge in on him and others when he penetrates them with his thinking. The earth holds the moon in orbit. The forces of the moon work to prepare the bearers of the soul. The human being transforms the external rhythm into an internal one. The tides are caused by deeper forces in the earth. The embryonic period is determined by ten lunar months.



Volume 2

1. Spiritual Science and Language **January 20, 1910**

The significance and dignity and the nature of the human being are connected with language. It transmits thoughts, feelings and will impulses to our fellow human beings and creates a link between them and ourselves. National character, too, is expressed therein. The origin of language lies before the birth of the ego. Spiritual beings formed the speech organs and fashioned the human body such that speech could develop. The forces of the astral body, ether body and physical body are

active in language. By means of the physical body we imitate outer impressions. The ether body works symbolically, in the image. The inner experiences of the astral body transform the sounds further. Lastly, the ego exerts its being on language. An atomistic element is present in Chinese, symbolism in the Semitic languages and experience of the self in the Indo-Germanic ones. Spiritual science has a fruitful effect on style in language. Language will be able to mediate the super-sensible vision of the soul.

2. Laughing and Weeping **February 03, 1910**

Daytime existence wants to create unity between the ego and the rest of the world. The ego extends its activity into the physical body in blanching and blushing. The smile arises through an expansion of the astral body, by transcending over events which happen around one. When things are withdrawn from the astral body the ego compresses it and tears flow. The animal can merely howl and grin. In weeping the inhaled breath becomes shorter and the exhaled breath longer. In laughing the reverse takes place. Jehovah caused breath to flow into the human being, thus creating the ego. Laughing and weeping contain the means which educate the forces of the ego. Tragedy strengthens the ego. Comedy liberates the ego.

3. What is Mysticism? **February 10, 1910**

Mysticism begins with Meister Eckhart and reaches a climax with Angelus Silesius. The mystic searches within himself for the divine ground of the world, the event of Christ's life and death, an inner awakening. The other path, which penetrates the veil of the outer world, leads to the wealth of outer phenomena. The inner path leads to an experience of unity, the outer path to an experience of diversity. The experiences of the mystic are influenced by national character and by his past experiences. Mystical knowledge cannot easily turn into general knowledge of the world. The knowledge of spiritual science leads to Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. Contemplation of the Rose Cross. Spiritual-scientific knowledge avoids the disadvantages both of mysticism and of a monadical view.

4. The Nature of Prayer **February 17, 1910**

Prayer is a preliminary stage of mystical contemplation and the latter is a preliminary stage of spiritual research. Two streams meet in the soul: one from the future and one from the past. We carry in us the legacy of our past, of our deeds, our feeling and our thinking. May a feeling for the divine awaken in us which guides us to a spiritual and divine ego. Similarly we feel that the soul will have a richer content in the future. The view into the past awakens reverence which leads to devotion to God. Strength with regard to future events gives a feeling of humbleness and peace of soul. Prayer is among the forces which develop the ego. It has a warming and illuminating effect. In prayer we find ourselves. If the higher ego is in conflict with the lower ego within us prayer acts like the dawn after a dark night. Prayer can give wisdom, deepen feeling, strengthen the will. The seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer embrace all the wisdom of the world. It can also be the subject of meditation and concentration. The influence of prayer over a number of years can change the course of a life. There is heightened spiritual power in congregational prayer. In art the ode acts in the manner of prayer and the cathedral is like a prayer expressed in stone. Prayer prepares a mood of eternity.

5. **Sickness and Healing**

March 03, 1910

Of the human being we observe the physical body externally and the astral body inwardly. The ether body is intermediary between both. The ego acts from the inside to the outside. In sleep the inner human being separates from the outer. During that period we gather the forces we require during the day. Our experiences turn into ability and wisdom. Love develops as the essential extract of experiences. We cannot change the form of our physical and ether bodies. Development is essentially restricted to the soul. Gestures and physiognomy are changed by reflection over a long period of time. Soul and spirit originates from soul and spirit. This leads to the principle of repeated earth lives. Soul and spiritual qualities of earlier periods determine our experiences in the present. After death the human being forms the archetype for his next physical and ether bodies. We can incorporate the fruits of our present existence into a future body. Breaching our limitations lies at the root of sickness. Reason can enter a disharmonious

relationship with outer events. It lacks the ripening of experience. The outer human being can be restored to health either by outer means or by strengthening the inner human being to such a degree that it can restore the outer human being. At the occurrence of death the harmony between outer and inner human being could not be re-established. It is a duty to heal. But death, too, is beneficial when it occurs at the end of an illness.

6. Positive and Negative Man **March 10, 1910**

A positive human being is not influenced by outer impressions. A negative human being easily submits to outer impressions. The positive human being can become rigid and the negative one can undergo a complete change. A positive human being can be completely insensitive to art treasures whilst a negative human being can give himself up to such impressions such that chaos reigns. Negative traits have to be assimilated in the soul in order to enable further development. The negative human being can also assimilate dangerous elements. Man becomes a different being when he surrenders to the "mass soul". The student of the spirit must be able to open himself to new impressions. Special diets can reduce the burden of bodily nature. But one becomes accessible not only to good, but also to bad influences. Spiritual exercises must be accompanied by the study of spiritual science. The soul becomes negative when it neglects to cultivate a healthy judgment. Spiritual science cultivates the positive. The human being develops by changing from a positive mood to a negative one in order to become positive on a higher level. The tragedy meets negative feeling and transforms it into positive one.

7. Error and Mental Disorder **April 28, 1910**

Knowledge is possible only within certain limits. Normal soul-life can turn abnormal. Sentient, intellectual and consciousness soul are soul members. Sentient soul and sentient body, intellectual soul and ether body, consciousness soul and physical body are related. If the sentient body becomes independent, images automatically appear. Disorder is caused in the intellectual soul when the human being only applies his own logic and not the facts. Thus he is saturated by the laws of error. A distinction

must be made between the true self and inherited characteristics. Disorders of the consciousness soul are megalomania and paranoia. A strong soul-life can gain the upper hand over a sick outer being. The wrong kind of physical exercise can strengthen the body but leave the soul weak. Spiritual research is not exhausting. Wrong education causes disorders such as schizophrenia and senile dementia. Spiritual science is a remedy against a bodily nature which is sick.

8. **Human Conscience**

May 05, 1910

Art is a necessary element for an existence of human dignity. It must be elevated to the level of a serious and dignified human concern. Conscience is the voice of God in the human soul. It appears as something holy in the human breast. It speaks intimately of what the human being should do and leave. Fichte points to the eternal fundamental kernel of man. Socrates does not yet possess this. He holds that virtue is something to be taught. The ego is the focus of the forces of the soul. At one time a higher ego was working in our bodily sheaths, the human being saw himself as a member of the spiritual world. When a man committed an evil deed he beheld its shamefulness as a ghostly vision. This vision of good and bad deeds became transposed into his inner life. At first he saw how he had disturbed the cosmic order. Then the cosmic spirit powerfully revealed itself to his inner life. In Aeschylus the Erinyes still appear. With Euripides conscience appears. Through Christ the human being learns to understand the connection with the Divinity in his inner being.

9. **The Mission of Art**

May 12, 1910

For Goethe the highest works of art are also the highest works of nature "There is necessity, there is God". Similarly, Richard Wagner seeks to give something to mankind which is related to the foundations of existence by the work of art. Homer invokes the Muses. At one time mythological events were reality for man. He felt spiritual powers enter and leave his being, arousing in him thoughts, feelings and will-impulses. In Homer the poetic imagination remains a substitute for the ancient clairvoyance. The ego developed strongly in Italy and Sicily. The image, picture, developed in the East, the hymn in the

West. In Greece both meet. The epic arises. The drama originates with Aeschylus. The ego emerges in the ode and the hymn with the Orphic devotees. The development from Aeschylus to Dante. Plato relates wisdom to the sentient soul. She-wolf, lion and lynx are the shadow-sides of the soul members. Shakespeare's figures no longer show any divine traits. Goethe's Faust is fundamentally everyman. The ego immerses itself into the divine world. Poetry rises to eternal spheres. Art finds entry again to the spiritual world. For Goethe truth and beauty are revelations of the divine Idea. Art is called upon to transform the parable of the transient with the message of the eternal.



Publication Note

The foundation of anthroposophically orientated spiritual science is laid in the works which were written and published by Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925). At the same time Steiner held numerous lectures and courses both for the general public and for members of the Theosophical (later Anthroposophical) Society in the years between 1900 and 1924. It was not his original wish to have these lectures published which were without exception of a spontaneous nature and conceived as "oral communications not intended for print". However, after an increasing number of incomplete and erroneous listeners' transcripts had been printed and circulated, he found it necessary to have the notes regulated. He entrusted this task to Marie Steiner von Sivers. She was made responsible for the choice of stenographers, the supervision of their transcripts and the necessary revision of texts before publication. As Rudolf Steiner was only in a very few instances able to correct the notes himself his reservation in respect to all publications of his lectures must be taken into account: "Errors occurring in transcripts which I myself have been unable to revise will just have to be tolerated."

In Chapter 35 of his autobiography, Rudolf Steiner expounds on the relationship between his lectures for Members which were initially only circulated internally and his public writings. The relevant text is printed at the end of this volume. What is expressed there also applies to the lecture courses directed towards a restricted audience already familiar with the principles of spiritual science.

After Marie Steiner's death (1867–1948) the editing of a "Complete Works of Rudolf Steiner" was commenced according to her directions. The volume at hand constitutes a part of this complete edition. As far as necessary, particulars with regard to the text are to be found in the accompanying notes.

A Note on the Term "Theosophy"

At first glance the use of the term "theosophy" may be somewhat misleading for the English reader. It may suggest to him associations with Anglo-Indian Theosophy and the Theosophical Society founded by H. P. Blavatsky.

Rudolf Steiner, however, uses the term independently and with different and much wider connotation. In earlier centuries, particularly in Central Europe, "Theosophy" was a recognised section of Philosophy and even of Theology. Jacob Boehme was known as the great "theosopher". In English the term goes back to the seventeenth century.

Ultimately it leads us back to St. Paul who says (I Cor. ii, 6-7): "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world ... But we speak the wisdom of God (Greek 'Theosophia') in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory."

All "theosophy" implies a knowledge of the spiritual world, and such knowledge has been attained in different ways at different epochs of man's history. The Rosicrucian way referred to in the title is the way suited to modern man in this age of world knowledge and individual freedom.



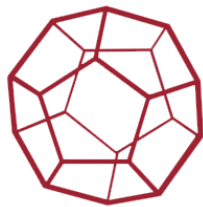
Preface

The series of public lectures given in the Architect's House, Berlin, in 1909/1910 is being published in the 1983 edition in *chronological* order. In the first edition, on which all further editions so far have been based, Marie Steiner (who also chose the titles) arranged the *Metamorphoses of the Soul and Paths of Experience* according to criteria of contents. Three of the lectures (20th January, 3rd March and 28th April) were not included in the two volumes and were published elsewhere.

The lectures on 21st and 29th October were replaced right from the first edition by parallel lectures in Munich (5th December 1909 and 14th March 1910). The Berlin lecture on 21st October, "The Mission of Anger", is incomplete towards the end and the direction which the Munich lecture takes at the end in content is not present in the Berlin one. The lecture on 29th October, "Human Character", only became available to the Archive in the 1960's and the text is too fragmentary for it to replace the Munich parallel lecture, although in style it would fit better into the Berlin series of lectures. Of particular note is that the later Munich version develops aspects in compressed form which are presented in Berlin in two different contexts. Thus the Munich lecture contains aspects of the lectures "Human Character" and "Sickness and Healing" (3rd March 1910, 2nd vol.).



Volume One



1. The Mission of Spiritual Science

Berlin, 14th October 1909

This year I shall again be giving a series of lectures on subjects related to Spiritual Science, as I have done now for several years past. Those of my audience who attended those previous lectures will know what is meant here by the term, Spiritual Science (*Geisteswissenschaft*). For others, let me say that it will not be my task to discuss some abstract branch of science, but a discipline which treats the spirit as something actual and real. It starts from the premise that human experience is not unavoidably restricted to sense-perceptible reality or to the findings of human reason and other cognitive faculties in so far as they are bound up with the sense-perceptible. Spiritual Science says that it is possible for human beings to penetrate behind the realm of the sense-perceptible and to make observations which are beyond the range of the ordinary intellect.

This introductory lecture will describe the role of Spiritual Science in present-day life, and will show how in the past this Spiritual Science — which is as old as humanity — appeared in a form very different from the form it must take today. In speaking of the present, I naturally do not mean the immediate here and now, but the relatively long period during which spiritual life has had the particular character which has come to full development in our own time.

Anyone who looks back over the spiritual life of mankind will see that "a time of transition" is a phrase to be used with care, for every period can be so described. Yet there are times when spiritual life takes a leap forward, so to speak. From the 16th century onwards, the relationship between the soul and spiritual life of human beings and the outer world has been different from what it was in earlier times. And the further back we go in human evolution, the more we find that men had different needs, different longings, and gave different answers from within themselves to questions concerning the great riddles of existence.

We can gain a clear impression of these transition periods through individuals who lived in those days and had retained certain qualities of feeling, knowing and willing from earlier periods, but were impelled to meet the demands of a new age.

Let us take an interesting personality and see what he makes of questions concerning the being of man and other such questions that must closely engage human minds — a personality who lived at the dawn of modern spiritual life and was endowed with the inner characteristics I have just described. I will not choose anyone familiar, but a sixteenth century thinker who was unknown outside a small circle. In his time there were many persons who retained, as he did, mediaeval habits of thinking and feeling and wished to gain knowledge in the way that had been followed for centuries, and yet were moving on towards the outlook of the coming age. I shall be naming an individual of whose external life almost nothing is historically known. From the point of view of Spiritual Science, this is thoroughly congenial. Anyone who has sojourned in the realm of Spiritual Science will know how distracting it is to find attached to a personality all the petty details of everyday life that are collected by modern biographers. On this account, we ought to be thankful that history has preserved so little about Shakespeare, for instance; the true picture is not spoilt — as it is with Goethe — by all the trivia the biographers are so fond of dragging in. I will therefore designate an individual of whom even less is known than is known about Shakespeare, a seventeenth century thinker who is of great significance for anyone who can see into the history of human thinking.

In Francis Joseph Philipp, Count von Hoditz and Wolframitz, who led the life of a solitary thinker during the second half of the seventeenth century in Bohemia, we have a personality of outstanding importance from this historical point of view. In a little work entitled *Libellus de nominis convenientia* ^[1] — I have not inquired if it has since been published in full — he set down the questions which occupied his soul. If we immerse ourselves in his soul, these questions can lead us into the issues that a reflecting man would concern himself with in those days. This lonely thinker discusses the great central problem of the being of man. With a forcefulness that springs from a deep need for knowledge, he says that nothing so disfigures a man as not to know what his being really is.

Count von Hoditz turns to important figures in the history of thought, for instance to Aristotle in the fourth century B.C., and asks what Aristotle says in answer to this question — what the essential being of man really is. [2] He says: Aristotle's answer is that man is a rational animal. Then he turns to a later thinker, Descartes, and puts the same question, and here the answer is that man is a thinking being. [3] But on reflection he comes to feel that these two representative thinkers can give no answer to his question; for — as he says — in the answers of Aristotle and Descartes he wanted to learn what man is and what he ought to do. When Aristotle says that man is a rational animal, that is no answer to the question of what man is, for it throws no light on the nature of rationality. Nor does Descartes in the seventeenth century tell us what man ought to do in accordance with his nature as a thinking being. For although we may know that man is a thinking being, we do not know what he must think in order to take hold of life in the right way, in order to relate his thought to life.

Thus our philosopher sought in vain for an answer to this vital question, a question that must be answered if a man is not to lose his bearings. At last he came upon something which will seem strange to a modern reader, especially if he is given to scientific ways of thought, but for our solitary thinker it was the only answer appropriate to the particular constitution of his soul. It was no help for him to know that man is a rational animal or a thinking being. At last he found his question answered by another thinker who had it from an old tradition. And he framed the answer he had thus discovered in the following words: Man in his essence is an image of the Divine. [4] Today we should say that man in his essence is what his whole origin in the spiritual world makes him to be.

The remaining remarks by Count von Hoditz need not occupy us today. All that concerns us is that the needs of his soul drove him to an answer which went beyond anything man can see in his environment or comprehend by means of his reason. If we examine the book more closely, we find that its author had no knowledge gained direct from the spiritual world. Now if he had been troubled by the question of the relation between sun and earth, he could, even if he were not an observer himself, have found the answer somewhere among the observations collected by the new forms of scientific thought. With regard to external questions of the sense-world he could have used answers given by people who had themselves

investigated the questions through their own observations and experiences. But the experiences available to him at that time gave no answer to the questions concerning man's spiritual life, his real being in so far as it is spiritual. Clearly, he had no means of finding persons who themselves had had experiences in the spiritual world and so could communicate to him the properties of the spiritual world in the same way as the scientists could impart to him their knowledge about the external world. So he turned to religious tradition and its records. He certainly assimilated his findings — this is characteristic of his quality of soul — but one can see from the way he worked that he was only able to use his intellect to give a new form to what he had found emerging from the course of history or from recorded tradition.

Many people will now be inclined to ask: Are there — can there be — any persons who from their own observation and experience are able to answer questions related to the riddles of spiritual life?

This is precisely what Spiritual Science will make people aware of once more: the fact that — just as research can be carried out in the sense-perceptible world — it is possible to carry out research in the spiritual world, where no physical eyes, no telescopes or microscopes are available, and that answers can thus be given from direct experience as to conditions in such a world beyond the range of the senses. We shall then recognise that there was an epoch, conditioned by the whole evolutionary progress of humanity, when other means were used to make known the findings of spiritual research, and that we now have an epoch when these findings can once more be spoken of and understanding for them can again be found.

In between lay the twilight time of our solitary thinker, when human evolution took a rest, so to speak, from ascending towards the spiritual world, and preferred to rely on traditions passed down through ancient records or by word of mouth. In certain circles it began to be doubted whether it was possible for human beings to enter a spiritual world through their own powers by developing the cognitive faculties that lie hidden or slumbering within them. Are there, then, any rational grounds for saying that it is nonsensical to speak of a spiritual world that lies beyond the sense-perceptible? A glance at the progress of ordinary science should be enough to justify this question. Precisely a consideration of the wonderful advances that

have been made in unraveling the secrets of external nature should indicate to anyone that a higher, super-sensible knowledge must exist. How so?

If we study human evolution impartially, we cannot fail to be impressed by the exceptional progress made in recent times by the sciences concerned with the outer world. With what pride — and in a certain sense the pride is justified — do people remark that the vast, ever-increasing advance of modern science has brought to light many facts that were unknown a few centuries ago. For example, thousands of years ago the sun rose in the morning and passed across the heavens, just as it does today. That which could be seen in the surroundings of the earth and in connection with the course of the sun was the same then, for external observation, as it was in the days of Galileo, Newton, Kepler, Copernicus, and so on. But what could men say in those earlier ages about the external world? Can we suppose that the modern knowledge of which we are so justly proud has been gained by merely contemplating the external world? If the external world could itself, just as it is, give us this knowledge, there would be no need to look further: all the knowledge we have about the sense-perceptible world would have been acquired centuries ago. How is it that we know so much more and have a different view of the position of the sun and so on? It is because human understanding, human cognition concerning the external world, has developed and changed in the course of hundreds or thousands of years. Yes, these faculties were by no means the same in ancient Greece as they have come to be with us since the 16th century.

Anyone who studies these changes without prejudice must say to himself: Men have acquired something new. They have learnt to see the outer world differently because of something added to those faculties which apply to the external sense-world. Hence it became clear that the sun does not revolve round the earth; these new faculties compelled men to think of the earth as going round the sun.

No-one who is proud of the achievements of physical science can have any doubt that in his inner being man is capable of development, and that his powers have been remodeled from stage to stage until he has become what he is today. But he is called upon to develop more than outer powers; he has in his inner life something which enables him to recreate the world in the light of his inward capacity for

knowledge. Among the finest words of Goethe are the following (in his book about Winckelmann) [5]: "if the healthy nature of man works as a unity, if he feels himself within the world as in a great, beautiful, noble and worthy whole, if harmonious ease offers him a pure and free delight: then the universe, if it could become conscious of itself, would rise in exultation at having reached its goal and would stand in wonder at the climax of its own being and becoming." And again: "Man, placed at the summit of Nature, is again a whole new nature, which must in turn achieve a summit of its own. He ascends towards that height when he permeates himself with all perfections and virtues, summons forth order, selection, harmony and meaning, and attains in the end to the creation of a work of art."

So man can feel that he has been born out of the forces he can see with his eyes and grasp with his reason. But if he applies the unbiased observation we have mentioned, he will see that not only external Nature has forces which develop until they are observed by the human eye, heard by the human ear, grasped by the human reason. In the same way a study of human evolution will show that something evolves within man; the faculties for gaining exact knowledge of nature were at first asleep within him, and have awakened by stages in the course of time. Now they are fully awake, and it is these faculties which have made possible the great progress of physical science.

Is it then inevitable that these inner faculties should remain as they are now, equipped only to reflect the outer world? Is it not perfectly reasonable to ask whether the human soul may not possess other hidden powers that can be awakened? May it not be that if he develops further the powers that lie hidden and slumbering within him, they will be spiritually illuminated, so that his spiritual eye and spiritual ear — as Goethe calls them [6] — will be opened and will enable him to perceive a spiritual world behind the sense-world?

To anyone who follows this thought through without prejudice, it will not seem nonsensical that hidden forces should be developed to open the way into the super-sensible world and to answer the questions: What is man in his real being? If he is an image of the spiritual world, what, then, is this spiritual world?

If we describe man in external terms and call to mind his gestures, instincts and so forth, we shall find all these characteristics represented imperfectly in lower beings. We shall see his external semblance as an integration of instincts, gestures and forces which are divided up among a number of lower creatures. We can comprehend this because we see around us the elements from which man has evolved into man. Might it not be possible then, to use these developed forces to penetrate similarly into a *spiritual* external world and to see there beings, forces and objects, just as we see stones, plants and animals in the physical world? Might it not be possible to observe spiritual processes which would throw light on man's inner life, just as it is possible to clarify his relationship to the outer world?

There has been, however, an interval between the old and the modern way of communicating Spiritual Science. This was a time of rest for the greater part of mankind. Nothing new was discovered; the old sources and traditions were worked over again and again. For the period in question this was quite right; every period has a characteristic way of meeting its fundamental needs. So this interlude occurred, and we must realise that while it lasted men were in a special situation, different both from what had been in the past and from what would be in the future. In a certain sense they became unaccustomed to looking for the soul's hidden faculties, which could have given insight into the spiritual world. So a time drew on when men could no longer believe or understand that the inner development of hidden faculties leads to super-sensible knowledge. Even then, one fact could hardly be denied: that in human beings there is something invisible. For how could it be thought that human reason, for example, is a visible entity? What sort of impartial thinking could fail to admit that human cognition is by its nature a super-sensible faculty?

Knowledge of this fact was never quite lost, even in the time when men had ceased to believe that super-sensible faculties within the soul could be developed so as to give access to the super-sensible. One particular thinker reduced this faculty to its smallest limit: it was impossible, he said, for men to penetrate by super-sensible vision into a world that comes objectively before us as a spiritual world, just as animals, plants and minerals and other people are encountered in the physical world. Yet even he had to recognise impartially that something super-sensible does exist and cannot be denied.

This thinker was Kant, [7] who thus brought an earlier phase of human evolution to a certain conclusion. For what does he think about man's relationship to a super-sensible, spiritual world? He does not deny that a man observes something super-sensible when he looks into himself, and that for this purpose he employs faculties of knowledge which cannot be perceived by physical eyes, however far the refinement of our physical instruments may be carried. Kant, then, does point to something super-sensible; the faculties used by the soul to make for itself a picture of the outer world. But he goes on to say that this is all that can be known concerning a super-sensible world. His opinion is that wherever a man may turn his gaze, he sees only this one thing he can call super-sensible: the super-sensible element contained in his senses in order that he may perceive and grasp and understand the existence of the sense-world.

In the Kantian philosophy, accordingly, there is no path that can lead to observation or experience of the spiritual world. The one thing Kant admits is the possibility of recognising that knowledge of the external world cannot be attained by the senses, but only by super-sensible means. This is the sole experience of the super-sensible that man can have.

That is the historically important feature of Kant's philosophy. But in Kant's argument it cannot be denied that when man uses his thinking in connection with his actions and deeds, he has the means to affect the sense-perceptible world. Thus, Kant had to recognise that a human being does not follow only instinctive impulses, as lower animals do; he also follows impulses from within his soul, and these can raise him far above subservience to mere instinct. There are countless examples of people who are tempted by a seductive impulse to do something, but they resist the temptation and take as their guide to action something that cannot come from an external stimulus. We need only think of the great martyrs, who gave up everything the sense-world could offer for something that was to lead them beyond the sense-world. Or we need only point to the experience of conscience in the human soul, even in the Kantian sense. When a man encounters something ever so charming and tempting, conscience can tell him not to be lured away by it, but to follow the voice that speaks to him from spiritual depths, an indomitable voice within his soul. And so for Kant it was certain that in man's inner being there is such a voice, and that what it says cannot

be compared with any message from the outer world. Kant called it the categorical imperative significant phrase. But he goes on to say that man can get no further than this voice from the soul as a means of acting on the world from out of the super-sensible, for he cannot rise beyond the world of the senses. He feels that duty, the categorical imperative, conscience, speak from within him, but he cannot penetrate into the realm from which they come.

Kant's philosophy allows man to go no further than the boundary of the super-sensible world. Everything else that resides in the realm from which duty, conscience and the categorical imperative emanate is shut off from observation, although it is of the same super-sensible nature as the soul. Man cannot enter that realm; at most he can draw conclusions about it. He can say to himself: Duty speaks to me, but I am weak; in the ordinary world I cannot carry out fully the injunctions of duty and conscience. Therefore I must accept the fact that my being is not confined to the world of the senses, but has a significance beyond that world. I can hold this before me as a belief, but it is not possible for me to penetrate into the world beyond the senses; the world from which come the voices of moral consciousness, duty and conscience, the categorical imperative.

We will now turn to someone who in this context was the exact antithesis of Kant: I mean Goethe. Anyone who truly compares the souls of these two men will see that they are diametrically opposed in their attitudes towards the most important problems of knowledge. Goethe, after absorbing all that Kant had to say about these problems, maintained on the ground of his own inner experience that Kant was wrong. Kant, says Goethe, claims that man has the power to form intellectual, conceptual judgments, but is not endowed with any contemplative faculty which could give direct experience of the spiritual world. But — Goethe continues — anyone who has exercised himself with the whole force of his personality to wrest his way from the sense-world to the super-sensible, as I have done, will know that we are not limited to drawing conclusions, but through a contemplative power of judgement we are able actually to raise ourselves into the spiritual world. Such was Goethe's personal reply to Kant. He emphasises that anyone who asserts the existence of this contemplative judgement is embarking on an adventure of reason, but he adds that from his own experience he has courageously gone through this adventure! [8]

Yet in the recognition of what Goethe calls "contemplative judgement" lies the essence of Spiritual Science, for it leads, as Goethe knew, into a spiritual world; and it can be developed, raised to ever higher levels, so as to bring about direct vision, immediate experience, of that world, The fruits of this enhanced intuition are the content of true Spiritual Science. In coming lectures we shall be concerned with these fruits: with the results of a science which has its source in the development of hidden faculties in the human soul, for they enable man to gaze into a spiritual world, just as through the external instruments of the senses he is able to gaze into the realms of chemistry and physics.

It could now be asked: Does this possibility of developing hidden faculties that slumber in the soul belong only to our time, or has it always existed?

A study of the course of human history from a spiritual-scientific point of view teaches us that there existed ancient stores of wisdom, parts of which were condensed into those writings and traditions which survived during the intermediate period I described earlier. This same Spiritual Science also shows us that today it is again possible not merely to proclaim the old, but to speak of what the human soul can itself achieve by development of the forces and faculties slumbering within it; so that a healthy judgment, even where human beings cannot themselves see into the spiritual world, can understand the findings of the spiritual researcher. The contemplative judgment that Goethe had in mind when he spoke out against Kant, is in a certain sense the beginning of the upward path of knowledge which today is by no means unexplored. Spiritual Science is therefore able to show, as we shall see, that there are hidden faculties of knowledge which by ascending order penetrate ever further into the spiritual world.

When we speak of knowledge, we generally mean knowledge of the ordinary world, "material knowledge"; but we can also speak of "imaginative knowledge", "inspired knowledge" and finally "intuitive knowledge". [9] These are stages of the soul's progress into the super-sensible world which are also experienced by the individual spiritual researcher in accord with the constitution of the soul today. Similar paths were followed by the spiritual researcher in times gone by. But spiritual research has no meaning if it is to remain the possession of a few; it cannot limit itself to a small circle. Certainly,

anything an ordinary scientist has to say about the nature of plants or about processes in the animal world can be of service to all mankind, even though this knowledge is actually possessed by a small circle of botanists, zoologists and so on. But spiritual research is not like that. It has to do with the needs of every human soul; with questions related to the inmost joys and sorrows of the soul; with knowledge that enables the human being to endure his destiny, and in such a way that he experiences inner contentment and bliss even if destiny brings him sorrow and suffering. If certain questions remain unanswered, men are left desolate and empty, and precisely they are the concern of Spiritual Science. They are not questions that can be dealt with only in restricted circles; they concern us all, at whatever stage of development and culture we may be, for the answering of them is spiritual food for each and every Soul.

This has always been so, at all times. And if Spiritual Science is to speak to mankind in this way, it must find means of making itself understood by all who wish to understand it. This entails that it must direct itself to those powers which are most fully developed during a given period, so that they can respond to what the spiritual researcher has to impart. Since human nature changes from epoch to epoch and the soul is always acquiring new aptitudes, it is natural that in the past Spiritual Science should have spoken differently about the most burning questions that concern the soul. In remote antiquity it spoke to a humanity which would never have understood the way it speaks today, for the soul-forces which have now developed were non-existent then. If Spiritual Science had been presented in the way appropriate for the present day, it would have been as though one were talking to plants.

In ancient times, accordingly, the spiritual researcher had to use other means. And if we look back into remote antiquity, Spiritual Science itself tells us that in order to give answers in a form adapted to the soul-powers of mankind in those times, a different preparation was necessary for those who were training themselves to gaze into the spiritual world; they had to cultivate powers other than those needed for speaking to present-day mankind.

Men who develop the forces that slumber in the soul in order to gaze into the spiritual world and to see spiritual beings there, as we see stones, plants and animals in the physical world — these men are and

always have been called by Spiritual Science, Initiates, and the experiences that the soul has to undergo in order to achieve this faculty is called Initiation. But in the past the way to it was different from what it is today, for the mission of Spiritual Science is always changing. The old Initiation, which had to be gone through by those who had to speak to the people in ancient times, led them to an immediate experience of the spiritual world. They could see into surrounding realms which are higher than those perceived through the senses. But they had to transform what they saw into symbolic pictures, so that people could understand it. Indeed, it was only in pictures that the old Initiates could express what they had seen, but these pictures embraced everything that could interest people in those days.

These pictures, drawn from real experience, are preserved for us in myths and legends which have come down from the most diverse periods and peoples. In academic circles these myths and legends are attributed to the popular imagination. Those who are cognisant of the facts know that myths and legends derive from super-sensible vision, and that in every genuine myth and legend we must see an externalised picture of something a spiritual researcher has experienced, or, in Goethe's words, what he has seen with the spiritual eye or heard with the spiritual ear. We come to understand legends and myths only when we take them as images expressing a real knowledge of the spiritual world. They are pictures through which the widest circles of people could be reached.

It is a mistake to assume — as it so often is nowadays — that the human soul has always been just as it is in our century. The soul has changed; its receptivity was quite different in the past. A person was satisfied then if he received the picture given in the myth, for he was inspired by the picture to bring an intuitive vision of the outer world much more directly before his soul. Today myths are regarded as fantasy; but when in former times the myth sank into a person's soul, secrets of human nature were shown to him. When he looked at the clouds or the sun and so forth, he understood as a matter of course what the myth had set before him. In this way something we could call higher knowledge was given to a minority in symbolic form. While today we talk and must talk in straightforward language, it would be

impossible to express in our terms what the souls of the old sages or initiates received, for neither the initiates nor their hearers had the soul-forces we have now developed.

In those early times the only valid forms of expression were pictorial. These pictures are preserved in a literature which strikes a modern reader as very strange. Now and then, especially if one is prompted by curiosity as well as by a desire for knowledge, one comes across an old book containing remarkable pictures which show, for example, the interconnections between the planets, together with all sorts of geometrical figures, triangles, polygons and so on. Anyone who applies a modern intellect to these pictures, without having acquired a special taste for them, will say: What can one do with all this stuff, the so-called Key of Solomon [10] as a traditional symbol, these triangles and polygons and such-like?

Certainly, the spiritual researcher will agree that from the standpoint of modern culture nothing can be made of all this. But when the pictures were first given to students, something in their souls really was aroused. Today the human soul is different. It has had to develop in such a way as to give modern answers to questions about nature and life, and so it cannot respond in the old way to such things as two interlocked triangles, one pointing upwards, the other downwards. In former times, this picture could kindle an active response; the soul gazed into it and something emerging from within it was perceived. Just as nowadays the eye can look through a microscope and see, for example, plant-cells that cannot be seen without it, so did these symbolic figures serve as instruments for the soul. A man who held the Key of Solomon as a picture before his soul could gain a glimpse of the spiritual world. With our modern souls this is not possible, and so the secrets of the spiritual world which are handed down in these old writings can no longer be knowledge in the original sense, and those who give them out as knowledge, or who did so in the 19th century, are doing something out of line with the facts. That is why one cannot do anything with writings such as those of Eliphas Levi, [11] for instance, for in our time it is antiquated to present these symbols as purporting to throw light on the spiritual world. In earlier times, however, it was proper for Spiritual Science to speak to the human soul through the powerful pictures of myth and legend, or alternatively through symbols of the kind I have just described.

Then came the intermediate period, when knowledge of the spiritual world was handed down from one generation to the next in writing or by oral tradition. Even if we study only external history, we can readily see how it was handed down. In the very early days of Christianity there was a sect in North Africa called the Therapeutae [12]: a man who had been initiated into their knowledge said that they possessed the ancient writings of their founders, who could still see into the spiritual world. Their successors could receive only what these writings had to say, or at most what could be discerned in them by those who had achieved some degree of spiritual development.

If we pass on to the Middle Ages, we find certain outstanding persons saying: we have certain cognitive faculties, we have reason; then, beyond ordinary reason we have faculties which can rise to a comprehension of certain secrets of existence; but there are other secrets and mysteries of existence which are only accessible by revelation. They are beyond the range of faculties which can be developed, they can be searched for only in ancient writings.

Hence arose the great mediaeval split between those things that can be known by reason and those that must be believed because they are passed down by tradition, are revelation. [13] And it was quite in keeping with the outlook of those times that the frontier between reason and faith should be clearly marked. This was justified for that period, for the time had passed when certain mathematical signs could be used to call forth faculties of cognition in the human soul. Right up to modern times, a person had only one means of grasping the super-sensible: looking into his own soul, as Augustine, [14] for example, did to some extent.

It was no longer possible to see in the outer world anything that revealed deep inner secrets. Symbols had come to be regarded as mere fantasies. One thing only survived: a recognition that the super-sensible world corresponded to the super-sensible in man, so that a man could say to himself: You are able to think, but your thought is limited by space and time, while in the spiritual world there is a Being who is pure thought. You have a limited capacity for love, whereas in the spiritual world there is a Being who is perfect love. When the spiritual world was represented for a human being in terms of his own inner experience, his inner life could extend to a vision of nature permeated by the Divine; then he had consciousness of God. But for

particular facts he could turn only to information given in ancient writings, for in himself he had nothing that could lead him into the spiritual world.

Then came the later times which brought the proud achievements of natural science. These are the times when faculties which could go beyond the sense-perceptible emerged not only in those who achieved scientific knowledge, but in all men. Something in the soul came to understand that the picture given to the senses is not the real thing, and to realise that truth and appearance are contraries. This new faculty, which is able to discern outward nature in a form not given to the senses, will be increasingly understood by those who today penetrate as researchers into the spiritual world and are then able to report that one can see a spiritual world and spiritual beings, just as down here in the sense-perceptible world one sees animals, plants and minerals.

Hence the spiritual researcher has to speak of realms which are not far removed from present-day understanding. And we shall see how the symbols which were once a means for gaining knowledge of the spiritual world have become an aid to spiritual development. The Key of Solomon, for instance, which once called forth in the soul a real spiritual perception, does so no longer. But if today the soul allows itself to be acted on by what the spiritual researcher can explain concerning this symbol, something in the soul is aroused, and this can lead a person on by stages into the spiritual world. Then, when he has gained vision of the spiritual world, he can express what he has seen in the same logical terms that apply to external science.

Spiritual Science or occultism must therefore speak in a way that can be grasped by anyone who has a broad enough understanding. Whatever the spiritual researcher has to impart must be clothed in the conceptual terms which are customary in other sciences, or due regard would not be paid to the needs of the times. Not everyone can see immediately into the spiritual world, but since the appropriate forces of reason and feeling are now existent in every soul, Spiritual Science, if rightly presented, can be grasped by every normal person with his ordinary reason. The spiritual researcher is now again in a position to present what our solitary thinker said to himself: Man in his essence is an image of the Godhead.

If we want to understand the physical nature of man, we look to the relevant findings of physical research. If we want to understand his inner spiritual being, we look to the realm which the spiritual researcher is able to investigate. Then we see that man does not come into existence at birth or at conception, only to pass out of existence at death, but that besides the physical part of his organism he has super-sensible members. If we understand the nature of these members, we penetrate into the realm where faith passes over into knowledge. And when Kant, in the evening of an older period, said that we can recognise the categorical imperative, but that no-one can penetrate with conscious vision into the realm of freedom, of divine being and immortality, he was expressing only the experience natural to his time. Spiritual Science will show that we can penetrate into a spiritual world; that just as the eye equipped with a microscope can penetrate into realms beyond the range of the naked eye, so can the soul equipped with the means of Spiritual Science penetrate into an otherwise inaccessible spiritual world, where love, conscience, freedom and immortality can be known, even as we know animals, plants and minerals in the physical world. In subsequent lectures we will go further into this.

If once more we look now at the relationship between the spiritual researcher and his public, and at the difference between the past and present of Spiritual Science, we can say: The symbolic pictures used by spiritual researchers in the past acted directly on the human soul, because what today we call the faculties of reason and understanding were not yet present. The pictures gave direct vision of the spiritual world, and the ordinary man could not test with his reason what the spiritual researcher communicated to him through them. The pictures acted with the force of suggestion, of inspiration; a man subjected to them was carried away and could not resist them. Anyone who was given a false picture was thus delivered over to those who gave it to him. Therefore, in those early times it was of the utmost importance that those who rose into the spiritual world should be able to inspire absolute confidence and firm belief in their trustworthiness; for if they misused their power they had in their hands an instrument which they could exploit in the worst possible way.

Hence in the history of Spiritual Science there are periods of degeneration as well as times of brilliance; times in which the power of untrustworthy initiates was misused. How the initiate in those early

times behaved towards his public depended to the utmost degree on himself alone. At the present time — and one might say, thank God for it! — all this is somewhat different. Since the change does not come about all at once, it is still necessary that the initiate should be a trustworthy person, and it will then be justified to feel every confidence in him. But people are already in a different relationship to the spiritual researcher; if he is to speak in accordance with the demands of his time he must speak in such a way that every unbiased mind can understand him, if the willingness to understand him is there. This is, of course, far removed from saying that everyone who could understand must now understand. But reason can now be the judge of what an individual can understand, and therefore everyone who devotes himself to Spiritual Science should bring his unbiased judgment to bear on it.

From now onwards this will be the mission of Spiritual Science: to rise into a spiritual world, through the development of hidden powers, just as the physiologist penetrates through the microscope into a realm of the smallest entities, invisible to the naked eye. And ordinary intelligence will be able to test the findings of spiritual research, as it can test the findings of the physiologist, the botanist, and so on. A healthy intelligence will be able to say of the spiritual researcher's findings: they are all consistent with one another. Modern man will come to the point of saying to himself: My reason tells me that it can be so, and by using my reason I can grasp clearly what the spiritual researcher has to tell. And that is how the spiritual researcher, for his part, should speak if he feels himself to be truly at one with the mission of Spiritual Science at the present time. But there will be a time of transition also today. For since the means to achieve spiritual development are available and can be used wrongly, many people whose purpose is not pure, whose sense of duty is not sacred and whose conscience is not infallible, will find their way into a spiritual world. But then, instead of behaving like a spiritual researcher who can know from his own experience whether the things he sees are in accord with the facts, these pretended researchers will impart information that goes against the facts. Moreover, since people can come only by slow degrees to apply their reasoning powers to understanding what the spiritual researcher says, we must expect that charlatanry, humbug and superstition will flourish preeminently in this realm. But the situation is changing. Man now has himself to blame if, without wishing to use his intellect, he is led by a certain curiosity to

believe blindly in those who pass themselves off as spiritual investigators, so-called. Because men are too comfort-loving to apply their reason, and prefer a blind faith to thinking for themselves, it is possible that nowadays we may have, instead of the old initiate who misused his power, the modern charlatan who imposes on people not the truth, but something he perhaps takes for truth. This is possible because today we are at the beginning of an evolutionary phase.

There is nothing to which a man should apply his reason more rigorously than the communications that can come to him from Spiritual Science. People can lay part of the blame on themselves if they fall victim to charlatantry and humbug; for these falsities will bear abundant fruit, as indeed they have done already in our time. This is something that must not go unnoticed when we are speaking of the mission of Spiritual science today.

Anyone who listens now to a spiritual researcher — not in a willful, negative way that casts immediate doubt on everything, but with a readiness to test everything in the light of healthy reason — will soon feel how Spiritual Science can bring hope and consolation in difficult hours, and can throw light on the great riddles of existence. He will come to feel that these riddles and the great questions of destiny can be resolved through Spiritual Science; he will come to know what part of him is subject to birth and death, and what is the eternal core of his being. In brief, it will be possible — as we shall show in later lectures — that, given good will and the wish to strengthen himself by taking in and working over inwardly the communications of Spiritual Science, he will be able to say with deepest feeling: What Goethe divined and said in his youth is true, and so are the lines he wrote in his maturity and gave to Faust to speak:

The spirit world is ever open,

Dead is thy heart, thy sense-veil closely drawn!

Up, scholar, let thy breast unwearied

Bathe in the roseate hues of dawn! [15]

In the dawn-lines of the *Spirit!*



2. The Mission of Anger

Munich, 5th December 1909

When we penetrate more deeply into the human soul and consider its nature from the point of view here intended, we are repeatedly reminded of the ancient saying by the Greek sage, Heraclitus [16]: "Never will you find the boundaries of the soul, by whatever paths you search; so all-embracing is the soul's being." We shall be speaking here of the soul and its life, not from the standpoint of contemporary psychology, but from that of Spiritual Science. Spiritual Science stands firmly for the real existence of a spiritual world behind all that is revealed to the senses and through them to the mind. It regards this spiritual world as the source and foundation of external existence and holds that the investigation of it lies within the reach of man.

In lectures given here, the difference between Spiritual Science and the many other standpoints of the present day has often been brought out; and need be mentioned only briefly now. In ordinary life and in ordinary science it is habitually assumed that human knowledge has certain boundaries and that the human mind cannot know anything beyond them. Spiritual Science holds that these boundaries are no more than temporary. They can be extended; faculties hidden in the soul can be called forth, and then, just as a man born blind who gains his sight through an operation emerges from darkness into a world of light and colour, so it is with a person whose hidden faculties awake. He will break through into a spiritual world which is always around us but cannot be directly known until the appropriate spiritual organs for perceiving it have been developed. Spiritual Science asks: How are we to transform ourselves in order to penetrate into this world and to gain a comprehensive experience of it? And Spiritual Science must ever and again point to the great event which enables a man to become a spiritual investigator and so to direct his gaze into the spiritual worlds, even as a physicist sees into the physical world through his microscope. Goethe's words are certainly valid in their bearing on the spiritual world:

Secretly, in the light of day,

Nature's veil may not be lifted.

What'er to your inquiring spirit

She will not freely reveal,

You cannot forcibly extract it,

Not with levers, not with screws. [17]

Of course, the investigator in the sense of Spiritual Science has no such instrumental aids. He has to transform his soul into an instrument; then he experiences that great moment when his soul is awakened and the spiritual world around him reveals itself to his perception. Again, it has often been emphasised here that not everyone needs to be a spiritual investigator in order to appreciate what the awakened man has to impart. When knowledge resulting from spiritual research is communicated, no more is required of the listener than ordinary logic and an unbiased sense of truth. Investigation calls for the opened eye of the clairvoyant; recognition of what is communicated calls for a healthy sense of truth; natural feeling unclouded by prejudice; natural good sense. The point is that teachings and observations concerning the soul should be understood in the light of this spiritual research when in later lectures we come to speak of some of the humanly interesting characteristics of the soul. Just as anyone who wants to study hydrogen or oxygen or any other chemical substance has to acquire certain capabilities, so is observation of the life of the soul possible only for someone whose spiritual eye has been opened. The investigator of the soul must be in a position to make observations in soul-substance, so to speak. We must certainly not think of the soul as something vague and nebulous in which feelings, thoughts and volitions are whirling about. Let us rather remind ourselves of what has been said on this subject in previous lectures.

Man, as he stands before us, is a far more complicated being than he is held to be by exoteric science. For Spiritual Science, the knowledge drawn from external physical observation covers only a part of man — the external physical body which he has in common

with all his mineral surroundings. Here, the same laws apply as in the external physical-mineral world, and the same substances function. As a result of observation, however, and not on the strength merely of logical inference, Spiritual Science recognises, beyond the physical body, a second member of man's being: we call it the etheric body or life-body. Only a brief reference can here be made to the etheric body — our task today is quite different — but knowledge of the underlying members of the human organism is the foundation on which we have to build. Man has an etheric body in common with everything that lives. As I said, only the spiritual investigator, who has transformed his soul into an instrument for seeing into the spiritual world, can directly observe the etheric body. But its existence can be acknowledged by a healthy sense of truth, unclouded by contemporary prejudices. Take the physical body: it harbours the same physical and chemical laws that prevail in the external physical-mineral world. When are these physical laws revealed to us? When we have before us a lifeless human being. When a human being has passed through the gate of death, we see what the laws that govern the physical body really are. They are the laws that lead to the decomposition of the physical body; their effect on it is now quite different from their action during life. They are always present in the physical body; the reason why the living body does not obey them is that during life an antagonist of dissolution, the etheric or life-body, is also present and active there.

A third member of the human organism can now be distinguished: the vehicle of pleasure and pain, of urges, desires and passions — of everything we associate with the emotional activities of the soul. Man has this vehicle in common with all beings who possess a certain form of consciousness: with the animals. Astral body, or body of consciousness, is the name we give to this third member of the human organism.

This completes what we may call the bodily nature of man, with its three components: physical body, etheric body or life-body, astral or consciousness-body.

Within these three members we recognise something else; something unique to man, through which he has risen to the summit of creation. It has often been remarked that our language has one little word which guides us directly to man's inner being, whereby he ranks as the crown of earthly creation. These flowers here, the desk,

the clock — anyone can name these objects; but there is one word we can never hear spoken by another with reference to ourselves; it must spring from our own inner being. This is the little name 'I'. If you are to call yourself 'I', this 'I' must sound forth from within yourself and must designate your inmost being. Hence the great religions and philosophies have always regarded this name as the 'unspeakable name' of that which cannot be designated from outside. Indeed, with this designation 'I', we stand before that innermost being of man which can be called the divine element in him. We do not thereby make man a god. If we say that a drop of water from the sea is of like substance with the ocean, we are not making the drop into a sea. Similarly, we are not making the 'I' a god when we say it is of like substance with the divine being that permeates and pulses through the world.

Through his inner essence, man is subject to a certain phenomenon which Spiritual Science treats as real and serious in the full sense of the words. Its very name fascinates people today, but in its application to man it is given full rank and worth only by Spiritual Science. It is the fact of existence that we call 'evolution'. How fascinating is the effect of this word on modern man, who can point to lower forms of life which evolve gradually into higher stages; how enchanting when it can be said that man himself has evolved from those lower forms to his present height! Spiritual Science takes evolution seriously in relation, above all, to man. It calls attention to the fact that man, since he is a self-conscious being with an inner activity springing from the centre of his being, should not limit his idea of evolution to a mere observation of the imperfect developing towards the more nearly perfect. As an active being he must himself take hold of his own evolution. He must raise himself to higher stages than the stage he has already reached; he must develop ever-new forces, so that he may approach continually towards perfection. Spiritual Science takes a sentence, first formulated not very long ago, and now recognised as valid in another realm, and applies it on a higher level to human evolution. Most people today are not aware that as late as the beginning of the 17th century the learned as well as the laity believed that the lower animals were born simply out of river-mud. This belief arose from imprecise observation, and it was the great natural scientist, Francesco Redi, [18] who in the 17th century first championed the statement: Life can arise only from the living. Naturally, this statement is quoted here in the modern sense, with all

necessary qualifications. No-one, of course, now believes that any lower animal — say an earth-worm — can grow out of river-mud. For an earth-worm to come into existence, the germ of an earth-worm must first be there. And yet, in the 17th century, Francesco Redi narrowly escaped the fate of Giordano Bruno, [19] for his statement had made him a terrible heretic.

This sort of treatment is not usually inflicted on heretics today, at least not in all parts of the world, but there is a modern substitute for it. If anyone upholds something which contradicts the belief of those who, in their arrogance, suppose they have reached the summit of earthly wisdom, he is looked on as a visionary, a dreamer, if nothing worse. That is the contemporary form of inquisition in our parts of the world. Be it so. Nevertheless, what Spiritual Science says concerning phenomena on higher levels will come to be accepted equally with Francesco Redi's statement regarding the lower levels. Even as he asserted that "life can issue only from the living", so does Spiritual Science state that "soul and spirit can issue only from soul and spirit". And the law of reincarnation, so often ridiculed today as the outcome of crazy fantasy, is in fact a consequence of this statement. Nowadays, when people see, from the first day of a child's birth, the soul and spirit developing out of the bodily element; when they see increasingly definite facial traits emerging from an undifferentiated physiognomy, movements becoming more and more individual, talents and abilities showing forth — many people still believe that all this springs from the physical existence of father, mother, grandparents; in short, from physical ancestry.

This belief derives from inexact observation, just as did the belief that earth-worms originate from mud. Present-day sense-observation is incapable of tracing back to its soul-spiritual origin the soul and spirit that are manifest before our eyes today. Hence the laws of physical heredity are made to account for phenomena which apparently emerge from the obscure depths of the physical. Spiritual Science looks back to previous lives on earth, when the talents and characteristics that are evident in the present life were foreshadowed. And we regard the present life as the source of new formative influences that will bear fruit in future earthly lives.

Francesco Redi's statement has now become an obvious truth, and the time is not far distant when the corresponding statement by Spiritual Science will be regarded as equally self-evident — with the difference that Francesco Redi's statement is of restricted interest, while the statement by Spiritual Science concerns everyone: "Soul and spirit develop from soul and spirit; man does not live once only but passes through repeated lives on earth; every life is the result of earlier lives and the starting point of numerous subsequent lives." All confidence in life, all certainty in our work, the solution of all the riddles facing us — it all depends on this knowledge. From this knowledge man will draw ever-increasing strength for his existence, together with confidence and hope when he looks towards the future.

Now what is it that originates in earlier lives, works on from life to life, and maintains itself through all its sojourns on earth? It is the Ego, the 'I', designated by the name which a person can bestow on no-one but himself. The human Ego goes from life to life, and in so doing fulfils its evolution.

But how is this evolution brought about? By the Ego working on the three lower members of the human being. We have first the astral body, the vehicle of pleasure and pain, of joy and sorrow, of instinct, desire and passion. Let us look at a person on a low level, whose Ego has done little, as yet, to cleanse his astral body and so is still its slave. In a person who stands higher we find that his Ego has worked upon his astral body in such a way that his lower instincts, desires and passions have been transmuted into moral ideals, ethical judgments. From this contrast we can gain a first impression of how the Ego works upon the astral body.

In every human being it is possible to distinguish the part of the astral body on which the Ego has not yet worked from the part which the Ego has consciously transformed. The transmuted part is called Spirit-Self, or Manas. The Ego may grow stronger and stronger and will then transmute the etheric body or life-body. Life-spirit is the name we give to the transformed etheric body. Finally, when the Ego acquires such strength that it is able to extend its transforming power into the physical body, we call the transmuted part Atma, or the real Spirit-man.

So far we have been speaking of conscious work by the Ego. In the far-distant past, long before the Ego was capable of this conscious work, it worked unconsciously — or rather sub-consciously — on the three bodies or sheaths of man. The astral body was the first to be worked on in this way, and its transmuted part we call the Sentient Soul, the first of man's soul-members. So it was that the Ego, working from the inner being of man, created the Sentient Soul at a time when man lacked the requisite degree of consciousness for transmuting his instincts, desires and so forth. In the etheric body the Ego created unconsciously the Mind-Soul or Intellectual Soul. Again, working unconsciously on the physical body, the Ego created the inner soul-organ that we call the Consciousness Soul. For Spiritual Science, the human soul is not a vague, nebulous something, but an essential part of man's being, consisting of three distinct soul-members — Sentient Soul, Mind-Soul, Consciousness Soul — within which the Ego is actively engaged.

Let us try to form an idea of these three soul-members. The spiritual investigator knows them by direct observation, but we can approach them also by means of rational thinking. For example, suppose we have a rose before us. We perceive it, and as long as we perceive it we are receiving an impression from outside. We call this a perception of the rose. If we turn our eyes away, an inner image of the rose remains with us. We must carefully distinguish these two moments: the moment when we are looking at the rose and the moment when we are able to retain an image of it as an inner possession, although we are no longer perceiving it.

This point must be emphasised because of the incredible notions brought forward in this connection by 19th century philosophy. We need think only of Schopenhauer, [20] whose philosophy begins with the words: The world is my idea. Hence we must be clear as to the difference between percepts and concepts, or mental images. Every sane man knows the difference between the concept of white-hot steel, which cannot burn him, and white-hot steel itself, which can. Perceptions bring us into communication with the external world; concepts are a possession of the soul. The boundary between inner experience and the outer world can be precisely drawn. Directly we begin to experience something inwardly, we owe it to the Sentient Soul — as distinct from the sentient body, which brings us our percepts and enables us to perceive, for example, the rose and its

colour. Thus our concepts are formed in the Sentient Soul, and the Sentient Soul is the bearer also of our sympathies and antipathies, of the feelings that things arouse in us. When we call the rose beautiful, this inward experience is a property of the Sentient Soul.

Anyone who is unwilling to distinguish percepts from concepts should remember the white-hot steel that burns and the concept of it, which does not. Once, when I had said this, someone objected that a man might be able to suggest to himself the thought of lemonade so vividly that he would experience its taste on his tongue. I replied: Certainly this might be possible, but whether the imaginary lemonade would quench his thirst is another question. The boundary between external reality and inner experience can indeed always be determined. Directly inner experience begins, the Sentient Soul, as distinct from the sentient body, comes into play.

A higher principle is brought into being by the work of the Ego on the etheric body: we call it the Mind-Soul, or Intellectual Soul. We shall have more to say about it in the lecture on the Mission of Truth; today we are concerned especially with the Sentient Soul. Through the Intellectual Soul man is enabled to do more than carry about with him the experiences aroused in him by his perceptions of the outer world. He takes these experiences a stage further. Instead of merely keeping his perceptions alive as images in the Sentient Soul, he reflects on them and devotes himself to them; they form themselves into thoughts and judgments, into the whole content of his mind. This continued cultivation of impressions received from the outer world is the work of what we call the Intellectual Soul or Mind-soul.

A third principle is brought into being when the Ego has created in the physical body the organs whereby it is enabled to go out from itself and to connect its judgments, ideas and feelings with the external world. This principle we call the Consciousness Soul, because the Ego is then able to transform its inner experiences into conscious knowledge of the outer world. When we give form to the feelings we experience, so that they enlighten us concerning the outer world, our thoughts, judgments and feelings become knowledge of the outer world. Through the Consciousness Soul we explore the secrets of the outer world as human beings endowed with knowledge and cognition.

So does the Ego work continually in the Sentient Soul, in the Intellectual or Mind-Soul, and in the Consciousness Soul, releasing the forces inwardly bound up there and enabling man to advance in his evolution by enriching his capacities. The Ego is the actor, the active being through whose agency man himself takes control of his evolution and progresses from life to life, remedying the defects of former lives and widening the faculties of his soul. Such is human evolution from life to life; it consists first of all in the Ego's work on the soul in its threefold aspect.

We must, however, recognise clearly that in its work the Ego has the character of a "two-edged sword". Yes, this human Ego is, on the one hand, the element in man's being through which alone he can be truly man. If we lacked this central point, we should be merged passively with the outer world. Our concepts and ideas have to be taken hold of in this centre; more and more of them must be experienced; and our inner life must be increasingly enriched by impressions from the outer world. Man is truly man to the degree in which his Ego becomes richer and more comprehensive. Hence the Ego must seek to enrich itself in the course of succeeding lives; it must become a centre whereby man is not simply part of the outer world but acts as a stimulating force upon it. The richer the fund of his impulses, the more he has absorbed and the more he radiates from the centre of his individual self, the nearer he approaches to being truly man.

That is one aspect of the Ego; and we are in duty bound to endeavour to make the Ego as rich and as many-sided as we can. But the reverse side of this progress is manifest in what we call selfishness or egoism. If these words were taken as catchwords and it were said that human beings must become selfless, that of course would be bad, as any use of catchwords always is. It is indeed man's task to enrich himself inwardly, but this does not imply a selfish hardening of the Ego and a shutting off of itself with its riches from the world. In that event a man would indeed become richer and richer, but he would lose his connection with the world. His enrichment would signify that the world had no more to give him, nor he the world. In the course of time he would perish, for while striving to enrich his Ego he would keep it all for himself and would become isolated from the world. This caricature of development would impoverish a man's Ego to an increasing extent, for selfishness lays a man inwardly waste. So is it that the Ego, as it works in the three members of the soul, acts as a

two-edged sword. On the one hand, it must work to become always richer, a powerful centre from which much can stream forth; but on the other hand it must bring everything it absorbs back into harmony with the outer world. To the same degree that it develops its own resources, it must go out from itself and relate itself to the whole of existence. It must become simultaneously an independent being and a selfless one. Only when the Ego works in these two apparently contradictory directions — when on one side it enriches itself increasingly and on the other side becomes selfless — can human evolution go forward so as to be satisfying for man and health-giving for the whole of existence. The Ego has to work on each of three soul-members in such a way that both sides of human development are kept in balance.

Now the work of the Ego in the soul leads to its own gradual awakening. Development occurs in all forms of life, and we find that the three members of the human soul are today at very different stages of evolution. The Sentient Soul, the bearer of our emotions and impulses and of all the feelings that are aroused by direct stimuli from the outer world, is the most strongly developed of the three. But at certain lower stages of evolution the content of the Sentient Soul is experienced in a dull, dim way, for the Ego is not yet fully awake. When a man works inwardly on himself and his soul-life progresses, the Ego becomes more and more clearly conscious of itself. But as far as the Sentient Soul is awake, the Ego is hardly more than a brooding presence within it. The Ego gains in clarity when man advances to a richer life in the Intellectual Soul, and achieves full clarity in the Consciousness Soul. Man then comes to be aware of himself as an individual who stands apart from his environment and is active in gaining objective knowledge of it. This is possible only when the Ego is awake in the Consciousness Soul.

Thus we have the Ego only dimly awake in the Sentient Soul. It is swept along by waves of pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, and can scarcely be perceived as an entity. In the Intellectual Soul, when clearly defined ideas and judgments are developed, the Ego first gains clarity, and achieves full clarity in the Consciousness Soul.

Hence we can say: Man has a duty to educate himself through his Ego and so to further his own inner progress. But at the time of its awakening the Ego is still given over to the waves of emotion that

surge through the Sentient Soul. Is there anything in the Sentient Soul which can contribute to the education of the Ego at a time when the Ego is still incapable of educating itself?

We shall see how in the Intellectual Soul there is something which enables the Ego to take its own education in hand. In the Sentient Soul this is not yet possible; the Ego must be guided by something which arises independently within the Sentient Soul. We will single out this one element in the Sentient Soul and consider its two-sided mission for educating the Ego, This element is one to which the strongest objection may perhaps be taken — the emotion we call anger. Anger arises in the Sentient Soul when the Ego is still dormant there. Or can it be said that we stand in a self-conscious relation to anyone if their behaviour causes us to flare up in anger?

Let us picture the difference between two persons: two teachers, let us say. One of them has achieved the clarity which makes for enlightened inner judgments. He sees what his pupil is doing wrong but is not perturbed by it, because his Intellectual Soul is mature. With his Consciousness Soul, also, he is calmly aware of the child's error, and if necessary he can prescribe an appropriate penalty, not impelled by any emotional reaction but in accordance with ethical and pedagogical judgment. It will be otherwise with a teacher whose Ego has not reached the stage that would enable him to remain calm and discerning. Not knowing what to do, he flares up in anger at the child's misdemeanour.

Is such anger always inappropriate to the event that calls it forth? No, not always. And this is something we must keep in mind. Before we are capable of judging an event in the light of the Intellectual Soul or the Consciousness Soul, the wisdom of evolution has provided for us to be overcome by emotion because of that event. Something in our Sentient Soul is activated by an event in the outer world. We are not yet capable of making the right response as an act of judgment, but we can react from the emotional centre of the Sentient Soul. Of all things that the Sentient Soul experiences, let us therefore consider anger.

It points to what will come about in the future. To begin with, anger expresses a judgment of some event in the outer world; then, having learnt unconsciously through anger to react to something wrong, we

advance gradually to enlightened judgments in our higher souls. So in certain respects anger is an educator. It arises in us as an inner experience before we are mature enough to form an enlightened judgment of right and wrong. This is how we should look on the anger which can flare up in a young man, before he is capable of a considered judgment, at the sight of injustice or folly which violates his ideals; and then we can properly speak of a righteous anger. No-one does better at acquiring an inner capacity for sound judgment than a man who has started from a state of soul in which he could be moved to righteous anger by anything ignoble, immoral or crazy. That is how anger has the mission of raising the Ego to higher levels. On the other hand, since man is to become a free being, everything human can degenerate. Anger can degenerate into rage and serve to gratify the worst kind of egoism. This must be so, if man is to advance towards freedom. But we must not fail to realise that the very thing which can lapse into evil may, when it manifests in its true significance, have the mission of furthering the progress of man. It is because man can change good into evil, that good qualities, when they are developed in the right way, can become a possession of the Ego. So is anger to be understood as the harbinger of that which can raise man to calm self-possession.

But although anger is on the one hand an educator of the Ego, it also serves strangely enough, to engender selflessness. What is the Ego's response when anger overcomes it at the sight of injustice or folly? Something within us speaks out against the spectacle confronting us. Our anger illustrates the fact that we are up against something in the outer world. The Ego then makes its presence felt and seeks to safeguard itself against this outer event. The whole content of the Ego is involved. If the sight of injustice or folly were not to kindle a noble anger in us, the events in the outer world would carry us along with them as an easy-going spectator; we would not feel the sting of the Ego and we would have no concern for its development. Anger enriches the Ego and summons it to confront the outer world, yet at the same time it induces selflessness. For if anger is such that it can be called noble and does not lapse into blind rage, its effect is to damp down Ego-feeling and to produce something like powerlessness in the soul. If the soul is suffused with anger, its own activity becomes increasingly suppressed.

This experience of anger is wonderfully well brought out in the vernacular use of *sich giften*, to poison oneself, as a phrase meaning "to get angry". This is an example of how popular imagination arrives at a truth which may often elude the learned.

Anger which eats into the soul is a poison; it damps down the Ego's self-awareness and so promotes selflessness. Thus we see how anger serves to teach both independence and selflessness; that is its dual mission as an educator of humanity, before the Ego is ripe to undertake its own education. If we were not enabled by anger to take an independent stand, in cases where the outer world offends our inner feeling, we would not be selfless, but dependent and Ego-less in the worst sense.

For the spiritual scientist, anger is also the harbinger of something quite different. Life shows us that a person who is unable to flare up with anger at injustice or folly will never develop true kindness and love. Equally, a person who educates himself through noble anger will have a heart abounding in love, and through love he will do good. Love and kindness are the obverse of noble anger. Anger that is overcome and purified will be transformed into the love that is its counterpart. A loving hand is seldom one that has never been clenched in response to injustice or folly. Anger and love are complementary.

A superficial Theosophy might say: Yes, a man must overcome his passions; he must cleanse and purify them. But overcoming something does not mean shirking or shunning it. It is a strange sort of sacrifice that is made by someone who proposes to cast off his passionate self by evading it. We cannot sacrifice something unless we have first possessed it. Anger can be overcome only by someone who has experienced it first within himself. Instead of trying to evade such emotions, we must transmute them in ourselves. By transmuting anger, we rise from the Sentient Soul, where noble anger can flame out, to the Intellectual Soul and the Consciousness Soul, where love and the power to give blessing are born.

Transmuted anger is love in action. That is what we learn from reality. Anger in moderation has the mission of leading human beings to love; we can call it the teacher of love. And not in vain do we call the undefined power that flows from the wisdom of the world and

shows itself in the righting of wrongs the "wrath of God", in contrast to God's love. But we know that these two things belong together; without the other, neither can exist. In life they require and determine each other.

Now let us see how in art and poetry, when they are great, the primal wisdom of the world is revealed.

When we come to speak of the mission of truth, we shall see how Goethe's thoughts on this subject are clearly expressed in his *Pandora*, one of his finest poems, though small in scale. And in a powerful poem of universal significance, the *Prometheus Bound* by Aeschylus, we are brought to see, though perhaps less clearly, the role of anger as a phenomenon in world history.

Probably you know the legend on which Aeschylus based his drama. Prometheus is a descendant of the ancient race of Titans, who had succeeded the first generation of gods in the evolution of the earth and of humanity. Ouranus and Gaia belong to the first generation of gods. Ouranus is succeeded by Kronos (Saturn). Then the Titans are overthrown by the third generation of gods, led by Zeus. Prometheus, though a descendant of the Titans, was on the side of Zeus in the battle against the Titans and so could be called a friend of Zeus, but he was only half a friend. When Zeus took over the rulership of the earth — so the legend continues — humanity had advanced far enough to enter on a new phase, while the old faculties possessed by men in ancient times were dying out. Zeus wanted to exterminate mankind and install a new race on earth, but Prometheus resolved to give men the means of further progress. He brought them speech and writing, knowledge of the outer world, and, finally, fire, in order that by learning to master these tools humanity might raise itself from the low level to which it had sunk.

If we look more deeply into the story, we find that everything bestowed by Prometheus on mankind is connected with the human Ego, while Zeus is portrayed as a divine power which inspires and ensouls men in whom the Ego has not yet come to full expression. If we look back over the evolution of the earth, we find in the far past a humanity in which the Ego was no more than an obscurely brooding presence. It had to acquire certain definite faculties with which to educate itself. The gifts that Zeus could bestow were not adapted to

furthering the progress of mankind. In respect of the astral body, and of everything in man apart from his Ego, Zeus is the giver. Because Zeus was not capable of promoting the development of the Ego, he resolved to wipe out mankind. All the gifts brought by Prometheus, on the other hand, enabled the Ego to educate itself. Such is the deeper meaning of the legend.

Prometheus, accordingly, is the one who enables the Ego to set to work on enriching and enlarging itself; and that is exactly how the gifts bestowed by Prometheus were understood in ancient Greece.

Now we have seen that if the Ego concentrates on this single aim, it finally impoverishes itself, for it will be shutting itself off from the outer world. Enriching itself is one side only of the Ego's task. It has to go out and bring its inner wealth into harmony with the world around it, if it is not to be impoverished in the long run. Prometheus could bestow on men only the gifts whereby the Ego could enrich itself. Thus, inevitably, he challenged the powers which act from out of the entire cosmos to subdue the Ego in the right way, so that it may become self less and thus develop its other aspect. The independence of the Ego, achieved under the sting of anger on the one hand, and on the other the damping down of the Ego when a man consumes his anger, as it were, and his Ego is deadened — this whole process is presented in the historic pictures of the conflict between Prometheus and Zeus.

Prometheus endows the Ego with faculties which enable it to become richer and richer. What Zeus has to do is to produce the same effect that anger has in the individual. Thus the wrath of Zeus falls on Prometheus and extinguishes the power of the Ego in him. The legend tells us how Prometheus is punished by Zeus for the untimely stimulus he had given to the advancement of the human Ego. He is chained to a rock.

The suffering thus endured by the human Ego and its inner rebellion are magnificently expressed by Aeschylus in this poetic drama.

So we see the representative of the human Ego subdued by the wrath of Zeus. Just as the individual human Ego is checked and driven back on itself when it has to swallow its anger, so is Prometheus chained by the wrath of Zeus, meaning that his activity is reduced to

its proper level. When a flood of anger sweeps through the soul of an individual, his Ego, striving for self-expression, finds itself enchained; so was the Promethean Ego chained to a rock.

That is the peculiar merit of this legend: it presents in powerful pictures far-reaching truths which are valid both for individuals and for humanity at large. People could see in these pictures what had to be experienced in the individual soul. Thus in Prometheus chained to the Caucasian rock we can see a representative of the human Ego at a time when the Ego, striving to advance from its brooding somnolence in the Sentient Soul, is restrained by its fetters from indulging in wild extravagance.

We are then told how Prometheus knows that the wrath of Zeus will be silenced when he is overthrown by the son of a mortal. He will be succeeded in his rulership by someone born of mortal man. The Ego is released by the mission of anger on a lower plane, and the immortal Ego, the immortal human soul, will be born from mortal man on a higher plane. Prometheus looks forward to the time when Zeus will be succeeded by Christ Jesus, and the individual Ego will itself be transformed into the loving Ego when the noble anger that fettered it is transformed into love. We behold the birth from the Ego enchained by anger of that other Ego, whose action in the outer world will be that of love and blessing. So, too, we behold the birth of a God of love who tends and cherishes the Ego; the very Ego that in earlier times was fettered by the anger of Zeus, so that it should not transgress its proper bounds.

Hence we see in the continuation of this legend an external picture of human evolution. We must ourselves take hold of this myth in such a way that it gives us a living picture, universally relevant, of how the individual experiences the transformation of the Ego, educated by the mission of anger, into the liberated Ego imbued with love. Then we understand what the legend does and what Aeschylus made of his material. We feel the soul's life-blood pulsing through us; we feel it in the continuation of the legend and in the dramatic form given to it by Aeschylus. So we find in this Greek drama something like a practical application of processes we can experience in our own souls. This is true of all great poems and other works of art: they spring from typical great experiences of the human soul.

We have seen today how the Ego is educated through the purification of a passion. In the next lecture we shall see how the Ego becomes ripe to educate itself in the Intellectual Soul by learning to grasp the mission of truth on a higher plane. We have seen also how in our considerations today the saying of Heraclitus is borne out: "You will never find the boundaries of the soul, by whatever paths you search for them; so wide and deep is the being of the soul."

Yes, it is true that the soul's being is so far-reaching that we cannot directly sound its depths. But Spiritual Science, with the opened eye of the seer, leads into the substance of the soul, and we can progress further and further into fathoming the mysterious being that the human soul is when we contemplate it through the eyes of the spiritual scientist. On the one hand we can truly say: The soul has unfathomable depths, but if we take this saying in full earnest we can add: The boundaries of the soul are indeed so wide that we have to search for them by all possible paths, but we can hope that by extending these boundaries ourselves, we shall progress further and further in our knowledge of the soul.

This ray of hope will illumine our search for knowledge if we accept the true words of Heraclitus not with resignation but with confidence: The boundaries of the soul are so wide that you may search along every path and not reach them, so comprehensive is the being of the soul.

Let us try to grasp this comprehensive being; it will lead us on further and further towards a solution of the riddles of existence.



3. The Mission of Truth

Berlin, 22nd October 1909

We were able to close our lecture on the Mission of Anger (illustrated in *Prometheus Bound*) with the saying of Heraclitus: "Never will you find the boundaries of the soul, by whatever paths you search for them; so all-embracing is the soul's being." We came to know this depth in the working and interplay of the powers of the soul; and the truth of the saying came home to us especially when we turned our attention to the most deeply inward part of man's being. Man is most spiritual in his Ego, and that was our starting-point.

The Ego complements those other elements of man's being which he has in common with minerals, plants and animals. He has his physical body in common with minerals, plants and animals; his etheric body in common with animals and plants; his astral body in common with animals. Through his Ego he first becomes man in the true sense and is able to progress from stage to stage. It is the Ego that works upon the other members of his being; it cleanses and purifies the instincts, inclinations, desires and passions of the astral body, and will lead the etheric and physical bodies on to ever-higher stages. But if we look at the Ego, we find that this high member of man's being is imprisoned, as it were, between two extremes.

Through his Ego, man is intended to become increasingly a being who has a firm centre in himself. His thoughts, feelings and will-impulses should spring from this centre. The more he has a firm and well-endowed centre in himself, the more will he have to give to the world; the stronger and richer will be his activities and everything that goes out from him. If he is unable to find this central point in himself, he will be in danger of losing himself through a misconceived activity of his Ego. He would lose himself in the world and go ineffectually through life. Or he may lapse into the other extreme. Just as he may lose himself if he fails to strengthen and enrich his Ego, so, if he thinks of nothing but developing his Ego, he may fall into the other extreme of selfish isolation from all human community. Here, on this

other side, we find egoism, with its hardening and secluding influence, which can divert the Ego from its proper path. The Ego is confined within these two extremes.

In considering the human soul, we called three of its members the Sentient Soul, the Intellectual Soul and the Consciousness Soul. We also came to recognise — surprisingly, perhaps, for many people — that anger acts as a kind of educator of the Sentient Soul. A one-sided view of the lecture on the mission of anger could give scope for many objections. But if we go into the underlying significance of this view of anger, we shall find in it an answer to many important riddles of life.

In what sense is anger an educator of the soul — especially the Sentient Soul — and a forerunner of love? Is it not true that anger tends to make a man lose control of himself and engage in wild, immoral and loveless behaviour? If we are thinking only of wild, unjustified outbursts of anger, we shall get a false idea of what the mission of anger is. It is not through unjustified outbreaks of anger that anger educates the soul, but through its inward action on the soul.

Let us again imagine two teachers faced with children who have done something wrong. One teacher will burst into anger and hastily impose a penalty. The other teacher, though unable to break out into anger, is also incapable of acting rightly, with perfect tranquility, out of his Ego, in the sense described yesterday. How will the behaviour of two such teachers differ? An outburst of anger by one of them involves more than the penalty imposed on the child. Anger agitates the soul and works upon it in such a way as to destroy selfishness. Anger acts like a poison on selfishness, and we find that in time it gradually transforms the powers of the soul and makes it capable of love. On the other hand, if a teacher has not yet attained inner tranquility and yet inflicts a coldly calculated penalty, he will — since anger will not work in him as a counteracting poison — become increasingly a cold egoist.

Anger works inwardly and can be regarded as a regulator for unjustified outbursts of selfishness. Anger must be there or it could not be fought against. In overcoming anger the soul continually improves itself. If a man insists on getting something done that he considers right and loses his temper over it, his anger will dampen the

egoistic forces in his soul; it reduces their effective power. Just because anger is overcome and a man frees himself from it and rises above it, his selflessness will be enhanced and the selflessness of his Ego continually strengthened. The scene of this interplay between anger and the Ego is the Sentient Soul. A different interplay between the soul and other experiences takes its course in the Intellectual Soul.

Although the soul has attributes which it must overcome in order to rise above them, it must also develop inwardly certain forces which it should love and cherish, however spontaneously they may arise. They are forces to which the soul may initially yield, so that, when it finally asserts itself, it is not weakened, but strengthened, by the experience. If a man were incapable of anger when called upon to assert himself in action, he would be the weaker for it.

It is just when a man lovingly immerses himself in his own soul that his soul is strengthened and an ascent to higher stages of the Ego comes within reach. The outstanding element that the soul may love within itself, leading not to egoism but to selflessness, is truth. Truth educates the Intellectual Soul. While anger is an attribute of the soul that must be overcome if a man is to rise to higher stages, truth should be loved and valued from the start. An inward cultivation of truth is essential for the progress of the soul.

How is it that devotion to truth leads man upwards from stage to stage? The opposites of truth are falsehood and error. We shall see how man progresses in so far as he overcomes falsehood and error and pursues truth as his great ideal.

A higher truth must be the aim of man's endeavour, while he treats anger as an enemy to be increasingly abolished. He must love truth and feel himself most intimately united with it. Nevertheless, eminent poets and thinkers have rightly claimed that full possession of truth is beyond human reach. Lessing, [21] for example, says that pure truth is not for men, but only a perpetual striving towards it. He speaks of truth as a distant goddess whom men may approach but never reach. When the nature of truth stirs the soul to strive for it, the soul can be impelled to rise from stage to stage. Since there is this everlasting search for truth, and since truth is so manifold in meaning, all we can

reasonably say is that man must set out to grasp truth and to kindle in himself a genuine sense of truth. Hence we cannot speak of a single, all-embracing truth.

In this lecture we will consider the idea of truth in its right sense, and it will become clear that by cultivating a sense of truth in his inner life man will be imbued with a progressive power that leads him to selflessness.

Man strives towards truth; but when people try to form views concerning one thing or another, we find that in the most varied realms of life conflicting opinions are advanced. When we see what different people take for truth, we might think that the striving for truth leads inevitably to the most contradictory views and standpoints. However, if we look impartially at the facts, we shall find guidelines which show how it is that men who are all seeking truth, arrive at such a diversity of opinions.

Let us take an example. The American multimillionaire, Harriman, [22] who died recently, was a rarity among millionaires in concerning himself with thoughts of general human interest. His aphorisms, found after his death, include a remarkable statement. He wrote: No man in this world is indispensable. When one goes, another is there to take his place. When I lay down my work, another will come and take it up. The railways will continue running, dividends will be paid; and so, strictly speaking, it is with all men.

This millionaire, accordingly, rose to the point of declaring as a generally valid truth — no man is indispensable!

Let us compare this statement with a remark by a man who worked for many years in Berlin and gained great distinction through his lecture courses on the lives of Michelangelo, Raphael and Goethe — I mean the art-historian Herman Grimm. [23] When Treitschke [24] died, Herman Grimm wrote of him roughly as follows: Now Treitschke is gone, and people only now realise what he accomplished. No-one can take his place and continue his work in the same way. A feeling prevails that in the circle where he taught, everything is changed. Note that Herman Grimm did not add the words, so it is with all men.

Here we have two men, the American millionaire and Herman Grimm, who arrive at exactly opposite truths. How does this come about? If we carefully compare the two statements, we shall find a clue. Bear in mind that Harriman says pointedly: When I lay down my work, someone else will continue it. He does not get away from himself. The other thinker, Herman Grimm, leaves himself entirely out of account. He does not speak about himself, or ask what sort of opinions or truths others might gain from him. He merges himself in his subject. Anyone with a feeling for the matter will have no doubt as to which of the two spoke truth. We need only ask — who carried on Goethe's work when he laid it down? We can feel that Harriman's reflections suffer from the fact that he fails to get away from himself. Up to a point we may conclude that it is prejudicial to truth if someone in search of truth cannot get away from himself. Truth is best served when the seeker leaves himself out of the reckoning. Would it be true to say, then, that truth is already something that gives us a view (*Ansicht*) of things?

A view, in the sense of an opinion, is a thought which reflects the outer world. When we form a thought or reach a decision about something, does it follow that we have a *true* picture of it?

Suppose you take a photograph of a remarkable tree. Does the photograph give a true picture of the tree? It shows the tree from one side only, not the whole reality of the tree. No-one could form a true image of the tree from this one photograph. How could anyone who has not seen the tree be brought nearer to the truth of it? If the tree were photographed from four sides, he could collate the photographs and arrive finally at a true picture of the tree, not dependent on a particular standpoint.

Now let us apply this example to human beings. A man who leaves himself out of account when forming a view of something is doing much the same as the photographer who goes all round the tree. He eliminates himself by conscious action. When we form an opinion or take a certain view, we must realise that all such opinions depend on our personal standpoint, our habits of mind and our individuality. If we then try to eliminate these influences from our search for truth, we shall be acting as the photographer did in our example. The first condition for acquiring a genuine sense of truth is that we should get away from ourselves and see clearly how much depends on our

personal point of view. If the American multimillionaire had got away from himself he would have known that there was a difference between him and other men.

An example from everyday life has shown us, that if a man fails to realise how much his personal standpoint or point of departure influences his views, he will arrive at narrow opinions, not at the truth. This is apparent also on a wider scale. Anyone who looks at the true spiritual evolution of mankind, and compares all the various "truths" that have arisen in the course of time, will find — if he looks deeply enough — that when people pronounce a "truth" they ought first of all to get away from their individual outlooks. It will then become clear that the most varied opinions concerning truth are advanced because men have not recognised to what extent their views are restricted by their personal standpoints.

A less familiar example may lead to a deeper understanding of this matter. If we want to learn more about beauty, we turn to aesthetics, which deals with the forms of beauty. Beauty is something we encounter in the outer world. How can we learn the truth about it? Here again we must free ourselves from the restrictions imposed by our personal characteristics.

Take for example the 19th century German thinker, Solger. [25] He wished to investigate the nature of beauty in accordance with his idea of truth. He could not deny that we meet with beauty in the external world; but he was a man with a one-sided theosophical outlook, and this was reflected in his theory of aesthetics. His interest in a beautiful picture was confined to the shining through it of the only kind of spirituality he recognised. For him, an object was beautiful only in so far as the spiritual was manifest through it. Solger was a one-sided theosophist; he sought to explain sense-perceptible phenomena in terms of the super-sensible; but he forgot that sense-perceptible reality has a justified existence on its own account. Unable to escape from his preconceptions, he sought to attain to the spiritual by way of a misconceived theosophy.

Another writer on aesthetics, Robert Zimmermann, [26] came to an exactly opposite conclusion. As against Solger's misconceived theosophical aesthetics, Zimmermann based his aesthetics on a misconceived anti-theosophical outlook. His sole concern was with

symmetry and anti-symmetry, harmony and discord. He had no interest in going beyond the beautiful to that which manifests through it. So his aesthetics were as one-sided as Solger's. Every striving for truth can be vitiated if the seeker fails to recognise that he must first endeavour to get away from himself. This can be achieved only gradually; but the primary, inexorable demand is, that if we are to advance towards truth we must leave ourselves out of account and quite forget ourselves. Truth has a unique characteristic: a man can strive for it while remaining entirely within himself and yet — while living in his Ego — he can acquire something which, fundamentally speaking, has nothing to do with the egoistic ego.

Whenever a man tries in life to get his own way in some matter, this is an expression of his egoism. Whenever he wants to force on others something he thinks right and loses his temper over it, that is an expression of his self-seeking. This self-seeking must be subdued before he can attain to truth. Truth is something we experience in our most inward being — and yet it liberates us increasingly from ourselves. Of course, it is essential that nothing save the love of truth should enter into our striving for it. If passions, instincts and desires, from which the Sentient Soul must be cleansed before the Intellectual Soul can strive for truth, come into it, they will prevent a man from getting away from himself and will keep his Ego tied to a fixed viewpoint. In the search for truth, the only passion that must not be discarded is love.

Truth is a lofty goal. This is shown by the fact that truth, in the sense intended here, is recognised today in one limited realm only. It is only in the realm of mathematics that humanity in general has reached the goal of truth, for here men have curbed their passions and desires and kept them out of the way. Why are all men agreed that three times three makes nine and not ten? Because no emotion comes into it, Men would agree on the highest truths if they had gone as far with them as they have with mathematics. The truths of mathematics are grasped in the inmost soul, and because they are grasped in this way, we possess them. We would still possess them if a hundred or a thousand people were to contradict us; we would still know that three times three makes nine because we have grasped this fact inwardly. If the hundred or thousand people who take a different view were to get away from themselves, they would come to the same truth.

What, then, is the way to mutual understanding and unity for mankind? We understand one another in the field of reckoning and counting because here we have met the conditions required. Peace, concord and harmony will prevail among men to the extent that they find truth. That is the essential thing: that we should seek for truth as something to be found only in our own deepest being; and should know that truth ever and again draws men together, because from the innermost depth of every human soul its light shines forth.

So is truth the leader of mankind towards unity and mutual understanding, and also the precursor of justice and love. Truth is a precursor we must cherish, while the other precursor, anger, that we came to know yesterday, must be overcome if we are to be led by it away from selfishness. That is the mission of truth: to become the object of increasing love and care and devotion on our part. Inasmuch as we devote ourselves inwardly to truth, our true self gains in strength and will enable us to cast off self-interest. Anger weakens us; truth strengthens us.

Truth is a stern goddess; she demands to be at the centre of a unique love in our souls. If man fails to get away from himself and his desires and prefers something else to her, she takes immediate revenge. The English poet Coleridge has rightly indicated how a man should stand towards truth. If, he says, a man loves Christianity more than truth, he will soon find that he loves his own Christian sect more than Christianity, and then he will find that he loves himself more than his sect.

Very much is implicit in these words. Above all, they signify that to strive against truth leads to humanly degrading egoism. Love of truth is the only love that sets the Ego free. And directly man gives priority to anything else, he falls inevitably into self-seeking. Herein lies the great and most serious importance of truth for the education of the human soul. Truth conforms to no man, and only by devotion to truth can truth be found. Directly man prefers himself and his own opinions to the truth, he becomes anti-social and alienates himself from the human community. Look at people who make no attempt to love truth for its own sake but parade their own opinions as the truth: they care for nothing but the content of their own souls and are the most intolerant. Those who love truth in terms of their own views and opinions will not suffer anyone to reach truth along a quite different

path. They put every obstacle in the way of anyone with different abilities, who comes to opinions unlike their own. Hence the conflicts that so often arise in life. An honest striving for truth leads to human understanding, but the love of truth for the sake of one's own personality leads to intolerance and the destruction of other people's freedom.

Truth is experienced in the Intellectual Soul. It can be sought for and attained through personal effort only by beings capable of thought. Inasmuch as truth is acquired by thinking, we must realise very clearly that there are two kinds of truth. First we have the truth that comes from observing the world of Nature around us and investigating it bit by bit in order to discover its truths, laws and wisdom. When we contemplate the whole range of our experience of the world in this way, we come to the kind of truth that can be called the truth derived from "reflective" thinking — we first observe the world and then think about our findings.

We saw yesterday that the entire realm of Nature is permeated with wisdom, and that wisdom lives in all natural things. In a plant there lives the idea of the plant, and this we can arrive at by reflective thought. Similarly, we can discern the wisdom that lives in the plant. By thus looking out on the world we can infer that the world is born of wisdom, and that through the activity of our thinking we can rediscover the element that enters into the creation of the world. That is the kind of truth to be gained by reflective thought.

There are also other truths. These cannot be gained by reflective thought, but only by going beyond everything that can be learnt from the outer world. In ordinary life we can see at once that when a man constructs a tool or some other instrument, he has to formulate laws that are not part of the outer world. For example, no-one could learn from the outer world how to construct a clock, for the laws of Nature are not so arranged as to provide for the appearance of clocks as a natural product. That is a second kind of truth: we come to it by thinking out something not given to us by observation or experience of the outer world. Hence there are these two kinds of truth, and they must be kept strictly apart, one derived from reflective thought and the other from "creative" thought.

How can a truth of this second kind be verified? The inventor of a clock can easily prove that he had thought it out correctly. He has to show that the clock does what he expects. Anything we think out in advance must prove itself in practice: it must yield results that can be recognised in the external world. The truths of Spiritual Science or Anthroposophy are of this kind. They cannot be found by observing external experience.

For example, no findings in the realm of outer Nature can establish the truth we have often dwelt on in connection with the immortal kernel of man's being: the truth that the human Ego appears again and again on earth in successive incarnations. Anyone who wishes to acquire this truth must raise himself above ordinary experience. He must grasp in his soul a truth that has then to be made real in outer life. A truth of this kind cannot be proved in the same way as truths of the first kind, gained by what we have called reflective thought. It can be proven only by showing how it applies to life and is reflected there. If we look at life with the knowledge that the soul repeatedly returns and ever and again goes through a series of events and experiences between birth and death, we shall find how much satisfaction, how much strength and fruitfulness, these thoughts can bring. Or again, if we ask how the soul of a child can be helped to develop and grow stronger, if we presuppose that an eternally existent soul is here working its way into a new life, then this truth will shine in on us and give proof of its fruitfulness in daily experience. Any other proofs are false. The only way in which a truth of this kind can be confirmed is by giving proof of its validity in daily life. Hence there is a vast difference between these two kinds of truth. Those of the second kind are grasped in the spirit and then verified by observing their influence on outer life.

What then is the educational effect of these two kinds of truth on the human soul? It makes a great difference whether a man devotes himself to truths that come from reflective thought or to those that come from creative thought. If we steep ourselves in the wisdom of Nature and create in ourselves a true reflection of it, we can rightly say that we have in ourselves something of the creative activity from which the life of Nature springs. But here a distinction must be made. The wisdom of Nature is directly creative and gives rise to the reality of Nature in all its fullness, but the truth we derive from thinking about Nature is only a passive image; in our thinking it has lost its

power. We may indeed acquire a wide, open-minded picture of natural truth, but the creative, productive element is absent from it. Hence the immediate effect of this picture of truth on the development of the human Ego is desolating. The creative power of the Ego is crippled and devitalised; the Self loses strength and can no longer stand up to the world, if it is concerned only with reflective thoughts. Nothing else does so much to isolate the Ego, to make it withdraw into itself and look with hostility on the world. A man can become a cold egoist if he is intent only on investigating the outer world. Why does he want this knowledge? Does he mean to place it at the service of the Gods?

If a man desires only this kind of truth, he wants it for himself, and he will be on the way to becoming a cold egoist and misogynist in later life. He will become a recluse or will sever himself from mankind in some other way, for he wants to possess the content of the world as his own truth. All forms of seclusion and hostility towards humanity can be found on this path. The soul becomes increasingly dried up and loses its sense of human fellowship. It becomes ever more impoverished, although the truth should enrich it. Whether a man turns into a recluse or a one-sided eccentric makes no difference; in both cases a hardening process will overtake his soul. Hence we see that the more a man confines himself to this kind of reflective thought, the less fruitful his soul will be. Let us try to understand why this is so.

Consider the realms of nature and suppose that we have before us an array of plants. They have been formed by the living wisdom which calls forth their inherent productive power. Now an artist comes along. His soul receives the picture that Nature sets before him. He does not merely think about it; he opens himself to Nature's productive power and lets it work upon him. He creates a work of art which does not embody merely an act of thinking; it is imbued with productive power. Then comes someone who tries to get behind the picture and to extract a thought from it. He ponders over it. In this way its reality is filtered and impoverished. Now try to carry this process further. Once the soul has extracted a thought from the picture, it has finished with it. Nothing more can be done except to formulate thoughts about the thought — an absurd procedure which soon dries up.

It is quite different with creative thinking. Here a man is himself productive. His thoughts take form as realities in outer life; here he is working after the example of Nature herself. That is how it is with a

man who goes beyond mere observation and reflective thinking and allows something not to be gained from observation to arise in his soul. All spiritual-scientific truths require a productive disposition in the soul. In the case of these truths all mere reflective thinking is bad and leads to deception. But the truths attainable by creative thought are limited, for man is weak in the face of the creative wisdom of the world. There is no end to the things from which we can derive truths by reflective thought; but creative thought, although the field open to it is restricted, brings about a heightening of productive power; the soul is refreshed and its scope extended. Indeed, the soul becomes more and more inwardly divine, in so far as it reflects in itself an essential element of the divine creative activity in the world.

So we have these two distinct kinds of truth, one reached by creative thought, the other by reflective thought. This latter kind, derived from the investigation of existent things or current experience, will always lead to abstractions; under its influence the soul is deprived of nourishment and tends to dry up. The truth that is not gained from immediate experience is creative; its strength helps man to find a place in the world where he can co-operate in shaping the future.

The past can be approached only by reflective thought, while creative thought opens a way into the future. Man thus becomes a responsible creator of the future. He extends the power of his Ego into the future, in so far as he comes to possess not merely the truths derived from the past by reflective thinking, but also those that are gained by creative thinking and point towards the future.

Herein lies the liberating influence of creative thinking. Anyone who is active in the striving for truth will soon find how he is impoverished by mere reflective thinking. He will come to understand how the devotee of reflective thinking fills his mind with phantom ideas and bloodless abstractions. Such a man may feel like an outcast, condemned to a mere savouring of truth and may come to doubt whether his spirit can play any part in shaping the world. On the other hand, a man who experiences a truth gained by creative thinking will find that it nourishes and warms his soul and gives it new strength for every stage in life. It fills him with joy when he is able to grasp truths of this kind and discovers that in bringing them to bear on the

phenomena of life he can say to himself: Now I not only understand what is going on there, but I can explain it in the light of having known something of it previously.

With the aid of spiritual-scientific truths we can now approach man himself. He cannot be understood merely by reflective thinking, but now we can comprehend him better and better, while our feeling of unity with the world and our interest in it are continually enhanced. We experience joy and satisfaction at every confirmation of spiritual-scientific truths that we encounter. This is what makes these truths so satisfying: we have first to grasp them before we can find them corroborated in actual life, and all the while they enrich us inwardly. We are drawn gradually into unity with the phenomena we experience. We get away more and more from ourselves, whereas reflective thinking leads to subtle forms of egoism. In order to find confirmation of truths gained by creative thinking we have to go out from ourselves and look for their application in all realms of life. It is these truths that liberate us from ourselves and imbue us in the highest degree with a sense of truth and a feeling for it.

Feelings of this kind have been alive in every genuine seeker after truth. They were deeply present in the soul of Goethe when he declared: "Only that which is fruitful is true" — a magnificent, luminous saying of far — reaching import. But Goethe was also well aware that men must be closely united with truth if they are to understand one another. Nothing does more to estrange men from one another than a lack of concern for truth and the search for truth. Goethe also said: "A false doctrine cannot be refuted, for it rests on a conviction that the false is true." [27] Obviously there are falsities that can be logically disproved, but that is not what Goethe means. He is convinced that a false viewpoint cannot be refuted by logical conclusions, and that the fruitful application of truth in practical life should be our sole guide-line in our search for truth.

It was because Goethe was so wonderfully united with truth that he was able to sketch the beautiful poetic drama, *Pandora*, which he began to write in 1807. Though only a fragment, *Pandora* is a ripe product of his creative genius — so powerful in every line, that anyone who responds to it must feel it to be an example of the purest, grandest art. We see in it how Goethe was able to make a start towards the greatest truths — but then lacked the strength to go

further. The task was too arduous for him to carry through; but we have enough of it to get some idea of how deeply he had penetrated into the problems of spiritual education. He had a clear vision of everything that the soul has to overcome in order to rise higher; he understood everything we learnt yesterday about anger and the fettered Prometheus, and have learnt today about that other educator of the soul, the sense of truth.

How closely related these two things are in their effects on the soul can be seen also in the facial expressions they call forth. Let us picture a man under the influence of anger, and another man upon whom truth is acting as an inward light. The first man is frowning — why? In such cases the brow is knitted because an excessive force is working inwardly, like a poison, to hold down a surplus of egoism which would like to destroy everything that exists alongside and separate from the man himself. In the clenched fist of anger we see the wrathful self closed up in itself and refusing to go forth into the outer world. Now compare this with the facial expression of someone who is discovering truth. When he perceives the light of truth, he too may frown, but in his case the wrinkled brow is a means whereby the soul expands, as though it would like to grasp and absorb the whole world with devoted love. Observe, too, the eyes of a man who is trying to overhear the world's secrets. His eyes are shining, as though to encompass everything around him in the outer world. He is released from himself; his hand is not clenched, but held out with a gesture that seeks to absorb the being of the world.

The whole difference between anger and truth is thus expressed in human physiognomy and gesture. Anger thrusts the human being deeper into himself. If he strives for truth, his being expands into the outer world; and the more united he becomes with the outer world, the more he turns away from the truths gained by reflective thinking to those gained by creative thinking. Therefore, Goethe in his *Pandora* brings into opposition with each other certain characters who can be taken to represent forces at work in the human soul. They are intended to express symbolically the relationships between the characteristics and capacities of the soul.

When you open *Pandora*, you come upon something remarkable and highly significant at the very start. On the side of Prometheus, the stage is loaded with tools and implements constructed by man. In all

these, human energies have been at work, but in a certain sense it is all rough and ready. On the side of Epimetheus, the other Titan, there is a complete contrast. Here everything is perfectly finished; we see not so much what man creates, but a bringing together of what Nature has already produced. It is all the result of reflective thinking. Here we have combination and shaping, a symmetrical ordering of Nature's work. On the side of Prometheus, unsymmetry and roughness; on the side of Epimetheus, elegant and harmonious products of Nature, culminating in a view of a wonderful landscape. What does all this signify? We need only consider the two contrasted characters: Prometheus the creative thinker, Epimetheus the reflective thinker. With Prometheus we find the products mainly of creative thinking. Here, although man's powers are limited and clumsy, he is productive. He cannot yet shape his creations as perfectly as Nature shapes her own; but they are all the outcome of his own powers and tools. He is also deficient in feeling for scenes of natural beauty.

On the side of Epimetheus, the reflective thinker, we see the heritage of the past, brought into symmetrical order by himself. And because he is a reflective thinker, we see in the background a beautiful landscape which gives its own special pleasure to the human eye. Epimetheus now comes forward and discloses his individual character. He explains that he is there to experience the past, and to reflect upon past occurrences and the visible world. But in his speech he reveals the dissatisfaction that this kind of attitude can at times call forth in the soul. He feels hardly any difference between day and night. In brief, the figure of Epimetheus shows us reflective thinking in its most extreme form. Then Prometheus comes forward carrying a torch and emerging from the darkness of night. Among his followers are smiths; they set to work on the man-made objects that are lying around, while Prometheus makes a remarkable statement that will not be misunderstood if we are alive to Goethe's meaning. The smiths extol productivity and welcome the fact that in the course of production many things have to be destroyed. In a one-sided way they extol fire. A man who is an all-round reflective thinker will not praise one thing at the expense of another. He casts his eye over the whole. Prometheus, however, says at once:

In partiality let the active man

Find his pleasure

He extols precisely the fact that to be active entails the acceptance of limitations. In Nature, the right is established when the wrong destroys itself. But to the smiths Prometheus says: Carry on doing whatever can be done. He is the creative man; he emerges with his torch from the darkness of night in order to show how from the depths of his soul the truth gained by his creative thinking comes forth. Unlike Epimetheus, he is far from a dreamlike feeling that night and day are all one. Nor does he experience the world as a dream. For his soul has been at work, and in its own dark night it has grasped the thoughts which now emerge from it. They are no dreams, but truths for which the soul has bled. By this means the soul advances into the world and gains release from itself; but at the same time it incurs the danger of losing itself. This does not yet apply to Prometheus himself, but when a man introduces one-sidedness into the world, the danger appears among his descendants.

Phileros, the son of Prometheus, is already inclined to love and cherish and enjoy the products of creative work, while his father Prometheus is still immersed in the stream of life's creative power. In Phileros we are shown the power of creative thinking developed in a one-sided way. He rushes out into life, not knowing where to search for enjoyment. Prometheus cannot pass on to his son his own fruitfully creative strength, and so Phileros appears incomprehensible to Epimetheus, who out of his own rich experience would like to counsel him on his headlong career.

We are then magnificently shown what mere reflective thinking involves. This is connected with the myth that Zeus, having fettered Prometheus to the rock, imposes Pandora, the all-gifted, on mankind.

Most beautiful and gifted she approached

The amazed watcher, moving with noble grace,

Her gracious look inquiring whether I,

*Like to my sterner brother, would repel her,
But all too strongly were my heart-beats stirred,
With sense bemused my charming bride I welcomed.
Towards the mysterious dowry then I turned,
The earthen vessel, tall and shapely, stood
Close-sealed ...*

Prometheus had warned his brother against this gift from the gods. But Epimetheus, with his different character, accepts the gift, and when the earthen vessel is opened, all the afflictions that can befall mankind come pouring out. Only one thing is left in the vessel — Hope.

Who, then, is Pandora and what does she signify? Truly a mystery of the soul is concealed in her. The fruits of reflective thinking are dead products, an abstract reflection of the mechanical thoughts forged by Hephaestus. This wisdom is powerless in the face of the universally creative wisdom from which the world has been born. What can this abstract reflection give to mankind?

We have seen how this kind of truth can be sterile and can lay waste the soul, and we can understand how all the afflictions that fall on mankind come pouring out of Pandora's vessel. In Pandora we have to see truth without the powers of creativity, the truth of reflective thinking, a truth which builds up a mechanised thought-picture in the midst of the world's creative life. For the mere reflective thinker only one thing remains. While the creative thinker unites his Ego with the future and gets free from himself, the reflective thinker can look to the future only with hope, for he has no part in shaping it. He can only hope that things will happen. Goethe shows his deep comprehension of the myth by endowing the marriage of Epimetheus and Pandora with two children: Elpore (Hope) and Epimeleia (Care), who safeguards existing things. In fact, man has in his soul two offspring of dead, abstract, mechanically conceived truth. This kind of truth is unfruitful and cannot influence the future; it can only reflect what is

already there. It leaves a man with nothing but the hope that what is true will duly come to pass. This is represented by Goethe with splendid realism in the figure of Elpore, who, if someone asks her whether this or that is going to happen, always gives the same answer, yes, yes. If a Promethean man were to stand before the world and speak of the future, he would say: "I hope for nothing. With my own forces I will shape the future." But a reflective thinker can only reflect on the past and hope for the future; thus Elpore, when asked whether this or that will happen, replies always, yes, yes. We hear it again and again. In this way a daughter of reflective thinking is admirably characterised and her sterility is indicated.

The other daughter of this reflective thinking, Epimeleia, is she who cares for existing things. She sets them all in symmetrical order and can add nothing from her own resources. But all things which fail to develop are increasingly liable to destruction; hence we see how anxiety about them continually mounts, and how through mere reflective thinking a destructive element finds its way into the world. This is wonderfully well indicated by Goethe when he makes Phileros fall in love with Epimeleia. We see him, burnt up with jealousy, pursuing Epimeleia, until she takes refuge from him with the Titan brothers. Strife and dissension come simultaneously on to the scene. Epimeleia complains that the person she loves is the very one to seek her life.

Everything that Goethe goes on to say shows how deeply he had penetrated into the effects of creative thinking and reflective thinking on the soul. The creative thinking of the smiths is set in wonderful contrast to the outlook of the shepherds; whilst the latter take what Nature offers, the former work on the products of Nature and transform them. Therefore Prometheus says of the shepherds: they are seeking peace, but they will not find a peace that satisfies their souls:

Go your ways in peace; but peace

You will not find.

For a wish merely to preserve things as they are leads only to the unproductive side of Nature.

The truths which belong to creative thinking and reflective thinking respectively are thus set before us in the figures of Prometheus and Epimetheus, and in all the characters connected with them. They represent those soul-forces which can spring from an excessive, one-sided predilection for one or other way of striving after truth. And after we have seen how disastrous are the consequences of these extremes, we are shown finally the one and only remedy — the co-operation of the Titan brothers. The drama leads on to an outbreak of fire in a property owned by Epimetheus. Prometheus, who is prepared to demolish a building if it no longer serves its purpose, advises his brother to make all speed to the spot and do all he can to halt the destruction. But Epimetheus no longer cares for that; he is thinking about Pandora and is lost in his recollection of her. Interesting also is a dialogue between the brothers about her:

Prometheus:

.....
*Her form sublime, from ancient dark emerging,
Came near me also. To make another like her,
Even Hephaestus would have failed in that.*
.....

Epimetheus:

.....
*Art thou, too, prating of this fabled birth?
From ancient gods, a mighty race, she springs:
Uranione, Hera's peer, and sister
Of Zeus himself.*
.....

Prometheus:

*And yet Hephaestus, for her rich adornment,
Made for her head a net of shining gold,
Weaving with subtle hand the finest threads.*

In every sentence spoken by Prometheus we see how mechanised, abstract limitations obsess his mind. Then Eos, the Dawn, appears. She is an unlit being who precedes and heralds the sun, but also contains its light within herself already. She does not simply emerge from the darkness of night; she represents a transition to something which has overcome night. Prometheus appears with his torch because he has just come out of the night. The artificial light he carries indicates how his creative work proceeds from the night's darkness. Epimetheus can indeed admire the sunlight and its gifts, but he experiences everything as in a dream. He is an example of pure reflective thinking. The way in which light can escape the attention of a soul absorbed in creative activity is shown by what Prometheus says in the light of day. His people, he says, are called upon not merely to observe the sun and the light, but to be themselves a source of illumination. Now Eos, Aurora, comes forward. She calls upon men to be active everywhere in doing right. Phileros, already having sought death, should unite with the forces which will make it possible for him to rescue himself. The smiths, who are working within the limits of their creative thinking, and the shepherds, who accept things as they are, are now joined by the fishermen. And we see how Eos gives them advice:

*Morning of youth, dawning of day,
More beautiful than ever,
From the unfathomed ocean
I bring you now.*

*Awake, shake off your sleep,
You dwellers in the bay
By cliffs encircled,
You fishermen, arise,
And ply your craft.
With speed spread out your nets
Around the well-known waters,
A splendid catch is certain
When my voice cheers you on.
Swim, you swimmers! Dive, you divers!
Watch, you watchers on the heights!
May the shores and seas together
Swarm with swift abounding life!*

Then we are shown in a wonderful way how Phileros is rescued on the surging flood and unites his own strength with the strength of the waves. The active creative power in him is thus united with the creative power in Nature. So the elements of Prometheus and Epimetheus are reconciled.

Thus Goethe offers a solution rich in promise, by showing how knowledge gained from nature by reflective thinking can be fired with productive energy by the creative thinking element. This latter acquires its rightful strength by receiving, in loyalty to truth, what the gods "up there" bestow:

Take note of this:

What is desirable, you feel down here;

What is to be given, they know up there.

You Titans make a great beginning,

But the way to the eternal good, the forever beautiful,

That is the work of the gods; they ensure it.

The union of Prometheus and Epimetheus in the human soul will bring salvation for them and for mankind. The whole drama is intended to indicate that through an all-round grasping of truth the entire human race, and not only individuals, will find satisfaction. Goethe wished to show that an understanding of the real nature of truth will unite humanity and foster love and peace among men. Then Hope, also, is transformed in the soul — Hope who says yes to everything but is powerless to bring anything about. The poem was to have ended with the transformed Elpore, Elpore thraseia, coming forward to tell us that she is no longer a prophetess but is to be incorporated into the human soul, so that human beings would not merely cherish hopes for the future but would have the strength to cooperate in bringing about whatever their own productive power could create. To believe in the transformation wrought by truth upon the soul — that is the whole perfected truth which reconciles Prometheus and Epimetheus.

Naturally, these sketchy indications can bring out only a little of all that can be drawn from the poem. The deep wisdom that called forth this fragment from Goethe will disclose itself first to those who approach it with the support of a spiritual-scientific way of thinking. They can experience a satisfying, redeeming power which flows out from the poem and quickens them.

We must not fail to mention a remarkably beautiful phrase that Goethe included in his *Pandora*. He says that the divine wisdom which flows into the world must work in harmony with all that we are able to achieve through our own Promethean power of creative thinking. The element that comes to meet us in the world and teaches us what wisdom is, Goethe called the Word. That, which lives in the soul and

must unite itself with the reflective thinking of Epimetheus, is the Deed of Prometheus. So the union of the Logos or Word with the Deed gives rise to the ideal that Goethe wished to set before us in his *Pandora* as the fruit of a life rich in experiences. Towards the end of the poem, Prometheus makes a remarkable statement: "A real man truly celebrates the deed." This is the truth that remains hidden from the reflective thinking element in the soul.

If we open ourselves to this whole poem, we can come to realise the heroic yearning for development felt by men such as Goethe, and the great modesty which prevents them from supposing that by reaching a certain stage they have done enough and need not try to go further. Goethe was an apprentice of life up to his last day, and always recognised that when a man has been enriched by an experience he must overcome what he has previously held to be true.

When as a young man, Goethe was beginning to work on *Faust*, and had occasion to introduce some translations from the Bible, he decided that the words "In the beginning was the Word", should be rendered as "in the beginning was the Deed". At this same time he wrote a fragment on Prometheus. [28] There we see the young Goethe as altogether active and Promethean, confident that simply by developing his own forces, not fructified by cosmic wisdom, he could progress. In his maturity, with a long experience of life behind him, he realised that it was wrong to underestimate the Word, and that Word and Deed must be united. In fact, Goethe revised parts of his *Faust* while he was writing his *Pandora*. We can understand how Goethe came by degrees to maturity only if we realise the nature of truth in all its forms.

It will always be good for man if he wrestles his way to realising that truth can be apprehended only by degrees. Or take a genuine, honest, all-round seeker after truth who is called upon to bring forcibly before the world some truth he has discovered. It will be very good if he reminds himself that he has no grounds for pluming himself on this one account. There are no grounds at any time for remaining content with something already known. On the contrary, such knowledge as we have gained from our considerations yesterday and today should lead us to feel that, although the human being must stand firmly on the ground of the truth he has acquired and must be ready to defend it, he must from time to time withdraw into himself, as Goethe did.

When he does this, the forces arising from the consciousness of the truth he has gained will endow him with a feeling for the right standards and for the standpoint he should make his own. From the enhanced consciousness of truth we should ever and again withdraw into ourselves and say, with Goethe: Much that we once discovered and took for truth is now only a dream, a dreamlike memory; and what we think today, will not survive when we put it to a deeper test. The words often spoken by Goethe to himself in relation to his own honest search for truth may well be echoed by every man in his solitary hours:

A poor wight am I

Through and through.

My thoughts miss the mark,

My dreams, they are not true. [29]

If we can feel this, we shall be in the right relationship to our high ideal, Truth.



4. The Mission of Reverence

Berlin, 28th October 1909

You all know the words with which Goethe concluded his life's masterpiece, *Faust*:

*All things transient
Are but a parable;
Earth's insufficiency
Here finds fulfilment;
The indescribable
Here becomes deed;
The eternal-feminine
Draws us on high.*

It goes without saying that in this context the "eternal-feminine" has nothing to do with man and woman. Goethe is making use of an ancient turn of speech. In all forms of mysticism — and Goethe gives these closing lines to a *Chorus mysticus* — we find an urge in the soul, at first quite indefinite, towards something which the soul has not yet come to know and to unite itself with, but must strive towards. This goal, at first only dimly surmised by the aspiring soul, is called by Goethe, in accord with the mystics of diverse times, the eternal-feminine, and the whole sense of the second part of *Faust* confirms this way of taking the concluding lines.

This *Chorus mysticus*, with its succinct words, can be set against the *Unio mystical* the name given by true mystical thinkers to union with the eternal-feminine, far off spiritually but within human reach.

When the soul has risen to this height and feels itself to be at one with the eternal-feminine, then we can speak of mystical union, and this is the highest summit that we shall be considering today.

In the last two lectures, on the mission of anger and the mission of truth, we saw that the soul is involved in a process of evolution. On the one hand, we indicated certain attributes which the soul must strive to overcome, whereby anger, for example, can become an educator of the soul; and we saw on the other, how truth can educate the soul in its own special way.

The end and goal of this process of development cannot always be foreseen by the soul. We can place some object before us and say that it has developed from an earlier form to its present stage. We cannot say this of the human soul, for the soul is progressing through a continuing evolution in which it is itself the active agent. The soul must feel that, having developed to a certain point, it has to go further. And as a self-conscious soul it must say to itself: How is it that I am able to think not only about my development in the past but also about my development in the future?

Now we have often explained how the soul, with all its inner life, is composed of three members. We cannot go over this in detail again today, but it will be better to mention, it, so that this lecture can be studied on its own account. We call these three members of the soul the Sentient Soul, the Intellectual Soul and the Consciousness Soul. The Sentient Soul can live without being much permeated by thinking. Its primary role is to receive impressions from the outer world and to pass them on inwardly. It is also the vehicle of such feelings of pleasure and pain, joy and grief, as come from these outer impressions. All human emotions, all desires, instincts and passions arise from within the Sentient Soul. Man has progressed from this stage to higher levels; he has permeated the Sentient Soul with his thinking and with feelings induced by thinking. In the Intellectual Soul, accordingly, we do not find indefinite feelings arising from the depths, but feelings gradually penetrated by the inner-light of thought. At the same time it is from the Intellectual Soul that we find emerging by

degrees the human Ego, that central point of the soul which can lead to the real Self and makes it possible for us to purify, cleanse and refine the qualities of our soul from within, so that we can become the master, leader and guide of our volitions, feelings and thoughts.

This Ego, as we have seen already, has two aspects. One possibility of development for it is through the endeavours that man must make to strengthen this inner centre more and more, so that an increasingly powerful influence can radiate out from it into his environment and into all the life around him. To enhance the value of the soul for the surrounding world and at the same time to strengthen its independence — that is one aspect of Ego development.

The reverse side of this is egoism. A self that is too weak will lose itself in the flood of the world. But if a man likes to keep his pleasures and desires, his thinking and his brooding, all within himself, his Ego will be hardened and given over to self-seeking and egoism.

Now we have briefly described the content of the Intellectual Soul. We have seen how wild impulses, of which anger is an example, can educate the soul if they are overcome and conquered. We have seen also that the Intellectual Soul is positively educated by truth, when truth is understood as something that a man possesses inwardly and takes account of at all times; when it leads us out of ourselves and enlarges the Ego, while at the same time it strengthens the Ego and makes it more selfless.

Thus we have become acquainted with the means of self-education that are provided for the Sentient Soul and the Intellectual Soul. Now we have to ask: Is there a similar means provided for the Consciousness Soul, the highest member of the human soul? We can also ask: What is there in the Consciousness Soul which develops of its own accord, corresponding to the instincts and desires in the Sentient Soul? Is there something that belongs by nature to the Consciousness Soul, such that man could acquire very little of it if he were not already endowed with it?

There is something which reaches out from the Intellectual Soul to the Consciousness Soul — the strength and sagacity of thinking. The Consciousness Soul can come to expression only because man is a

thinking being, for its task is to acquire knowledge of the world and of itself, and for this it requires the highest instrument of knowledge—thinking.

We learn about the external world through perceptions; they stimulate us to gain knowledge of our surroundings. To this end, we need only devote our attention to the outer world and not stand blankly in front of it, for then the outer world itself draws us on to satisfy our thirst for knowledge by observing it. With regard to gaining knowledge of the super-sensible world, we are in a quite different situation. First of all, the super-sensible world is not there in front of us. If a man wishes to gain a knowledge of it, so that this knowledge will permeate his Consciousness Soul, the impulse to do so must come from within and must penetrate his thinking through and through. This impulse can come only from the other powers of his soul, feeling and willing. Unless his thinking is stimulated by both these powers, it will never be impelled to approach the super-sensible world. This does not mean that the super-sensible is merely a feeling, but that feeling and willing must act as inner guides towards its unknown realm. What qualities, then, must feeling and willing acquire towards its unknown realm.

What qualities, then, must feeling and willing acquire in order to do this?

First of all, someone might object to the use of a feeling as a guide to knowledge. But a simple consideration will show that in fact this is what feeling does. Anyone who takes knowledge seriously, will admit that in acquiring knowledge we must proceed logically. We use logic as an instrument for testing the knowledge we acquire. How, then, if logic is this instrument, can logic itself be proved? One might say: Logic can prove itself. Yes, but before we begin proving logic by logic, it must be at least possible to grasp logic with our feeling. Logical thought cannot be proved primarily by logical thought, but only by feeling. Indeed, everything that constitutes logic is first proved through feeling, by the infallible feeling for truth that dwells in the human soul. From this classical example we can see how feeling is the foundation of logic and of thinking. Feeling must give the impulse for the verification of thought. What must feeling become if it is to

provide an impulse not only for thinking in general, but for thinking about worlds with which we are at first unacquainted and cannot survey?

Feeling of this kind must be a force which strives from within towards an object yet unknown. When the human soul seeks to encompass with feeling some other thing, we call this feeling love. Love can of course be felt for something known, and there are many things in the world for us to love. But as love is a feeling, and a feeling is the foundation of thinking in the widest sense, we must be clear that the unknown super-sensible can be grasped by feeling before thinking comes in. Unprejudiced observation, accordingly, shows that it must be possible for human beings to come to love the unknown super-sensible before they are able to conceive it in terms of thought. This love is indeed indispensable before the super-sensible can be penetrated by the light of thought.

At this stage, also, the will can be permeated by a force which goes out towards the super-sensible unknown. This quality of the will, which enables a man to wish to carry out his aims and intentions with regard to the unknown, is devotion. So can the will inspire devotion towards the unknown, while feeling becomes love of the unknown; and when these two emotions are united they together give rise to reverence in the true sense of the word. Then this devotion becomes the impulse that will lead us into the unknown, so that the unknown can be taken hold of by our thinking. Thus it is that reverence becomes the educator of the Consciousness Soul. For in ordinary life, also, we can say that when a man endeavours to grasp with his thinking some external reality not yet known to him, he will be approaching it with love and devotion. Never will the Consciousness Soul gain a knowledge of external objects unless love and devotion inspire its quest; otherwise the objects will not be truly observed. This also applies quite specially to all endeavours to gain knowledge of the super-sensible world.

In all cases, however, the soul must allow itself to be educated by the Ego, the source of self-consciousness. We have seen how the Ego gains increasing independence and strength by overcoming certain soul qualities, such as anger, and by cultivating others, such as the sense of truth. After that, the self-education of the Ego comes to an end; its education through reverence begins. Anger is to be overcome

and discarded; a sense of truth is to permeate the Ego; reverence is to flow from the Ego towards the object of which knowledge is sought. Thus, having raised itself out of the Sentient Soul and the Intellectual Soul by overcoming anger and other passions and by cultivating a sense of truth, the Ego is drawn gradually into the Consciousness Soul by the influence of reverence. If this reverence becomes stronger and stronger, one can speak of it as a powerful impulse towards the realm described by Goethe:

All things transient

Are but a parable;

Earth's insufficiency

Here finds fulfilment;

The indescribable

Here becomes deed;

The eternal-feminine

Draws us on high.

The soul is drawn by the strength of its reverence towards the eternal, with which it longs to unite itself. But the Ego has two sides. It is impelled by necessity to enhance continually its own strength and activity. At the same time it has the task of not allowing itself to fall under the hardening influence of egoism. If the Ego seeks to go further and gain knowledge of the unknown and the super-sensible, and takes reverence as its guide, it is exposed to the immediate danger of losing itself. This is most likely to happen, above all, to a human being if his will is always submissive to the world. If this attitude gains increasingly the upper hand, the result may be that the Ego goes out of itself and loses itself in the other being or thing to which it has submitted. This condition can be likened to fainting by the soul, as distinct from bodily fainting. In bodily fainting the Ego sinks into undefined darkness; in fainting by the soul, the Ego loses itself

spiritually while the bodily faculties and perceptions of the outer world are not impaired. This can happen if the Ego is not strong enough to extend itself fully into the will and to guide it.

This self-surrender by the Ego can be the final result of a systematic mortification of the will. A man who pursues this course becomes incapable of willing or acting on his own account; he has surrendered his will to the object of his submissive devotion and has lost his own self. When this condition prevails, it produces an enduring impotence of the soul. Only when a devotional feeling is warmed through by the Ego, so that man can immerse himself in it without losing his Ego, can it be salutary for the human soul.

How, then, can reverence always carry the Ego with it? The Ego cannot allow itself to be led in any direction, as a human Self, unless it maintains in its thinking a knowledge of itself. Nothing else can protect the Ego from losing itself when devotion leads it out into the world. The soul can be led out of itself towards something external by the force of will, but when the soul leaves behind the boundary of the external, it must make sure of being illuminated by the light of thought.

Thinking itself cannot lead the soul out; this comes about through devotion, but thinking must then immediately exert itself to permeate with the life of thought the object of the soul's devotion. In other words, there must be a resolve to think about this object. Directly the devotional impulse loses the will to think, there is a danger of losing oneself. If anyone makes it a matter of principle not to think about the object of his devotion, this can lead in extreme cases to a lasting debility of the soul.

Is love, the other element in reverence, exposed to a similar fate? Something that radiates from the human Self towards the unknown must be poured into love, so that never for a moment does the Ego fail to sustain itself. The Ego must have the will to enter into everything which forms the object of its devotion, and it must maintain itself in face of the external, the unknown, the super-sensible. What becomes of love if the Ego fails to maintain itself at the moment of encountering the unknown, if it is unwilling to bring the light of thinking and of rational judgment to bear on the unknown? Love of that kind becomes more sentimental enthusiasm

(*Schwärmerei*). But the Ego can begin to find its way from the Intellectual Soul, where it lives, to the external unknown, and then it can never extinguish itself altogether. Unlike the will, the Ego cannot completely mortify itself. When the soul seeks to embrace the external world with feeling, the Ego is always present in the feeling, but if it is not supported by thinking and willing, it rushes forth without restraint, unconscious of itself. And if this love for the unknown is not accompanied by resolute thinking, the soul can fall into a sentimental extreme, somewhat like sleep-walking, just as the state reached by the soul when submissive devotion leads to loss of the Self is somewhat like a bodily fainting-fit. When a sentimental enthusiast goes forth to encounter the unknown, he leaves behind the strength of the Ego and takes with him only secondary forces. Since the strength of the Ego is absent from his consciousness, he tries to grasp the unknown as one does in the realm of dreams. Under these conditions the soul falls into what may be called an enduring state of dreaming or somnambulism.

Again, if the soul is unable to relate itself properly to the world and to other people, if it rushes out into life and shrinks from using the light of thought to illuminate its situation, then the Ego, having fallen into a somnambulistic condition, is bound to go astray and to wander through the world like a will-o-the-wisp.

If the soul succumbs to mental laziness and shuns the light of thought when it meets the unknown, then, and only then, will it harbour superstitions in one or other form. The sentimental soul, with its fond dreams, wandering through life as though asleep, and the indolent soul, unwilling to be fully conscious of itself — these are the souls most inclined to believe everything blindly. Their tendency is to avoid the effort of thinking for themselves and to allow truth and knowledge to be prescribed for them.

If we are to get to know an external object, we have to bring our own productive thinking to bear on it, and it is the same with the super-sensible, whatever form this may take. Never, in seeking to gain a knowledge of the super-sensible, must we exclude thinking. Directly we rely on merely observing the super-sensible, we are exposed to all possible deceptions and errors. All such errors and superstitions, all the wrong or untruthful ways of entering the super-sensible worlds, can be attributed in the last instance to a refusal to allow

consciousness to be illuminated by the light of creative thought. No one can be deceived by information said to come from the spiritual world if he has the will to keep his thinking always active and independent. Nothing else will suffice, and this is something that every spiritual researcher will confirm. The stronger the will is to creative thinking, the greater is the possibility of gaining true, clear and certain knowledge of the spiritual world.

Thus we see the need for a means of education which will lead the Ego into the Consciousness Soul and will guide the Consciousness Soul in the face of the unknown, both the physical unknown and the unknown super-sensible. Reverence, consisting of devotion and love, provides the means we seek. When the latter are imbued with the right kind of self-feeling, they become steps which lead to ever-greater heights.

True devotion, in whatever form it is experienced by the soul, whether through prayer or otherwise, can never lead anyone astray. The best way of learning to know something is to approach it first of all with love and devotion. A healthy education will consider especially how strength can be given to the development of the soul through the devotional impulse. To a child the world is largely unknown: if we are to guide him towards knowledge and sound judgment of it, the best way is to awaken in him a feeling of reverence towards it; and we can be sure that by so doing we shall lead him to fullness of experience in any walk of life.

It is very important for the human soul if it can look back to a childhood in which devotion, leading on to reverence, was often felt. Frequent opportunities to look up to revered persons, and to gaze with heartfelt devotion at things that are still beyond its understanding, provide a good impulse for higher development in later life. A person will always gratefully remember those occasions, when as a child in the family circle, he heard of some outstanding personality of whom everyone spoke with devotion and reverence. A feeling of holy awe, which gives reverence a specially intimate character, will then permeate the soul. Or someone may relate how with trembling hand, later on, he rang the bell and shyly made his way into the room of the revered personality whom he was meeting for the first time, after having heard him spoken of with so much respectful admiration. Simply to have come into his presence and exchanged a few words

can confirm a devotion which will be particularly helpful when we are trying to unravel the great riddles of existence and are seeking for the goal which we long to make our own. Here reverence is a force which draws us upward, and by so doing fortifies and invigorates the soul. How can this be? Let us consider the outward expression of reverence in human gestures — what forms does it take? We bend our knees, fold our hands, and incline our heads towards the object of our reverence. These are the organs whereby the Ego, and above all the higher faculties of the soul, can express themselves most intensively.

In physical life a man stands upright by firmly extending his legs; his Ego radiates out through his hands in acts of blessing; and by moving his head he can observe the earth or the heavens. But from studying human nature, we learn also that our legs are stretched out at their best in strong, conscious action if they have first learnt to bend the knee where reverence is really strong, conscious action if they have first learnt to bend the knee where reverence is really due. For this genuflection opens the door to a force which seeks to find its way into our organism. Knees which have not learnt to bend in reverence give out only what they have always had; they spread out their own nullity, to which they have added nothing. But legs which have learnt to genuflect receive, when they are extended, a new force, and then it is this, not their own nullity, which they spread around them. Hands which would fain bless and comfort, although they have never been folded in reverence and devotion, cannot bestow much love and blessing from their own nullity. But hands which have learnt to fold themselves in reverence have received a new force and are powerfully penetrated by the Ego. For the path taken by this force leads first through the heart, where it kindles love; and the reverence of the folded hands, having passed through the heart and flowed into the hands, turns into blessing.

The head may turn its eyes and strain its ears to survey the world in all directions, but it presents nothing but its own emptiness. If, however, the head has been bent in reverence, it gains a new force; it will bring to meet the outer world the feelings it has acquired through reverence.

Anyone who studies the gestures of people, and knows what they signify, will see how reverence is expressed in external physiognomy; he will see how this reverence enhances the strength of the Ego and

so makes it possible for the Ego to penetrate into the unknown. Moreover, this self-education through reverence has the effect of raising to the surface our obscure instincts and emotions, our sympathies and antipathies, which otherwise make their way into the soul unconsciously or subconsciously, unchallenged by the light of judgment. Precisely these feelings are cleansed and purified through self-education by reverence and through the penetration by the Ego of the higher members of the soul. The obscure forces of sympathy and antipathy, always prone to error, are permeated by the light of the soul and transformed into judgment, aesthetic taste and rightly guided moral feeling. A soul educated by reverence will convert its dark cravings and aversions into a feeling for the beautiful and a feeling for the good. A soul that has cleansed its obscure instincts and will-impulses through devotion will gradually build up from them what we call moral ideals. Reverence is something that we plant in the soul as a seed; and the seed will bear fruit.

Human life offers yet another example. We see everywhere that the course of a man's life goes through ascending and declining stages. Childhood and youth are stages of ascent; then comes a pause, and finally, in the later years, a decline. Now the remarkable thing is, that the qualities acquired in childhood and youth reappear in a different form during the years of decline. If much reverence, rightly guided, has been part of the experience of childhood, it acts as a seed which comes to fruition in old age as strength for active living. A childhood and youth during which devotion and love were not fostered under the right guidance will lead to a weak and powerless old age. Reverence must take hold of every soul that is to make progress in its development.

How is it, then, with the corresponding quality in the object of our reverence? If we look with love on another being, then the reciprocated love of the latter will reveal what can perhaps arise. If a man is lovingly devoted to his God, he can be sure that God inclines to him also in love. Reverence is the feeling he develops for whatever he calls his God out there in the universe. Since the reaction to reverence cannot itself be called reverence, we may not speak of a divine reverence towards man. What, then, precisely is the opposite of reverence in this context? What is it that flows out to meet reverence when reverence seeks the divine? It is *might*, the Almighty power of the Divine. Reverence that we learn to feel in youth returns to us as

strength for living in old age, and if we turn in reverence to the divine, our reverence flows back to us as an experience of the Almighty. That is what we feel, whether we look up to the starry heavens in their endless glory and our reverence goes out to all that lies around us, beyond our compass, or whether we look up to our invisible God, in whatever form, who pervades and animates the cosmos.

We look up towards the Almighty and we come to feel with certainty that we cannot advance towards union with that which is above us unless we first approach it from below with reverence. We draw nearer to the Almighty when we immerse ourselves in reverence. Thus we can speak of an Almighty in this sense, while a true feeling for the meaning of words prevents us from speaking of an All-loving. Power can be increased or enhanced in proportion to the number of beings over which it extends. It is different with love. If a child is loved by its mother, this does not prevent her from loving equally her second, third or fourth child. It is false for anyone to say: I must divide up my love because it is to cover two objects. It is false to speak either of an "all-knowledge" or of an indefinite "all-love". Love has no degree and cannot be limited by figures.

Love and devotion together make up reverence. We can have a devoted attitude to this or that unknown if we have the right feeling for it. Devotion can be enhanced, but it does not have to be divided up or multiplied when it is felt for a number of beings. Since this is true also of love, the Ego has no need to lose or disperse itself if it turns with love and devotion towards the unknown. Love and devotion are thus the right guides to the unknown, and the best educators of, the soul in its advance from the Intellectual Soul to the Consciousness Soul.

Whereas the overcoming of anger educates the Sentient Soul, and the striving for truth educates the Intellectual Soul, reverence educates the Consciousness Soul, bringing more and more knowledge within its reach. But this reverence must be led and guided from a standpoint which never shuts out the light of thought. When love flows forth from us, it ensures by its own worth that our Self can go with it, and this applies also to devotion. We could indeed lose our Self, but we need not. That is the point, and it must be kept especially in mind if an impulse of reverence enters into the education of the

young. A blind, unconscious reverence is never right. The cultivation of reverence must go together with the cultivation of a healthy Ego-feeling.

Whereas the mystics of all ages, together with Goethe, have spoken of the unknown, undefined element to which the soul is drawn, as the eternal-feminine, we may without misunderstanding, speak of the element which must always animate reverence as the eternal-masculine. For just as the eternal-feminine is present in both man and woman, so is this eternal-masculine, this healthy Ego-feeling, present in all reverence by man or woman. And when Goethe's *Chorus mysticus* comes before us, we may, having come to know the mission of reverence which leads us towards the unknown, add the element which must permeate all reverence — the Eternal-masculine.

Thus we are now able to reach a right understanding of the experience of the human soul when it strives to unite itself with the unknown and attains to the *Unio mystica*, wherein all reverence is consummated.

But this mystical union will harm the soul if the Ego is lost while seeking to unite itself with the unknown in any form. If the Ego has lost itself, it will bring to the unknown nothing of value. Self-sacrifice in the *Unio mystica* requires that one must have become something, must have something to sacrifice. If a weak Ego, with no strength in itself, is united with what lies above us, the union has no value. The *Unio mystica* has value only when a strong Ego ascends to the regions of which the *Chorus mysticus* speaks. When Goethe speaks of the regions to which the higher reverence can lead us, in order to gain there the highest knowledge, and when his *Chorus mysticus* tells us in beautiful words:

All things transient

Are but a parable;

Earth's insufficiency

Here finds fulfilment;

The indescribable
Here becomes deed;
The eternal-feminine
Draws us on high —

Then, if we rightly understand the *Unio mystica*, we can reply: Yes

All things transient
Are but a parable;
Earth's insufficiency
Here finds fulfilment;
The indescribable
Here becomes deed;
The eternal-masculine
Draws us on high.



5. Human Character

Munich, 14th March 1909

The words written by Goethe after contemplating Schiller's skull can make a deep impression on the human soul. Goethe was present when Schiller's body was removed from its provisional grave and taken to the princely vault at Weimar. Holding Schiller's skull in his hands, Goethe believed he could recognise in the form and cast of this wonderful structure the whole nature of Schiller's spiritual being, and he was inspired to write these beautiful lines:

What greater gift can life on man bestow

Than that to him God-Nature should disclose

How solid to spirit it attenuates,

How spirit's work it hardens and preserves. [30]

Anyone who understands Goethe's feelings on this occasion will easily turn his mind to all those phenomena where something inward is working to reveal itself in material form, in plastic shapes, as drawing, and so on. We have a most eminent example of this shaping, whereby an inner being reveals itself through outward form, in what we call human character. For human character gives the most varied and manifold expression to the direction and purpose of man's life. We think of human character as having a basic consistency. Indeed, we feel that character is inseparable from a person's whole being, and that something has gone wrong if their thinking, feeling and doing do not make up in some way a harmonious unity. We speak of a split in a man's character as evidence of a real fault in his nature. If in private life a man upholds some principle or ideal, and then in public life says something contrary to it or at least discrepant, we speak of a break in his character, of his inner life falling apart. And we know very well that this can bring a man into difficult situations or may even wreck his life.

The significance of a divided character is indicated by Goethe in a remarkable saying that he assigns to Faust — a saying that is often wrongly interpreted by people who believe that Goethe's innermost intentions are known to them:

*Two souls, alas, are pent within my breast,
To tear themselves apart, forever striving;
One, in pursuit of passions' crude delights,
Clings close with avid senses to the world;
The other, thrusting earthly dust away,
Aspires to rise to longed-for higher realms.* [31]

This divided condition of the soul is often spoken of as though it were a desirable achievement, but Goethe certainly does not say so. On the contrary, the passage shows clearly how unhappy Faust feels in that period under the pressure of these two drives, one aspiring towards ideal heights, the other striving towards the earthly. An unsatisfying state of soul which Faust has to overcome — that is what Goethe is describing. It is wrong to cite this schism in human nature as though it were justified; it is something to be abolished by the unified character that we must always strive to achieve.

If now we wish to look more deeply into human character, the facts outlined in previous lectures must be kept in mind. We must remember that the human soul, embracing the inner life of man, is not merely a chaos of intermingled feelings, instincts, concepts, passions and ideals, but has three distinct members — the Sentient Soul, the lowest; in the middle the Intellectual Soul; and finally the highest, the Consciousness Soul. These three soul-members are to be clearly distinguished, but they must not be allowed to fall apart, for the human soul must be a unity. What is it, then that holds them together? It is what we call the Ego in its true sense, the bearer of self-consciousness; the active element within our soul which plays

upon its three members as a man plays upon the strings of an instrument. And the harmony or disharmony which the Ego calls forth by playing on the three soul-members is the basis of human character.

The Ego is indeed something of an inner musician, who with a powerful stroke calls one or other soul-member into activity; and the effects of their combined influence, resounding from within a human being as harmony or disharmony, make up the real foundation of his character.

However, that is no more than an abstract description. If we are to understand how character comes out in people, we must enter somewhat more deeply into human life and the being of man. We must show how the harmonious or disharmonious play of the Ego on the three soul-members sets its stamp on man's entire personality as he stands before us, and how personality is outwardly revealed.

Human life — as we all know — alternates between waking and sleeping. At night, when a man falls asleep, his feelings, his pleasure and pain, his joys and griefs, his urges, desires and passions, his perceptions and concepts, his ideas and ideals, all sink down into indefinite darkness; and his inner life passes into an unconscious or subconscious condition. What has happened?

As we have often explained, when a man goes to sleep his physical and etheric bodies remain in bed, while his astral body, including the Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul, withdraw, as does the Ego. During sleep the astral body and Ego are in a spiritual world. Why does a man return every night to this spiritual world? Why does he have to leave behind his physical and etheric bodies? There are good reasons for it. Spiritual Science says that the astral body is the bearer of pleasure and pain, joy and grief, instincts, desires and passions. Yes, but these are precisely the experiences that sink into indefinite darkness on going to sleep. Yet is it asserted that the astral body and the Ego are in spiritual worlds? Is there not a contradiction here?

Well, the contradiction is only apparent. The astral body is indeed the bearer of pleasure and pain, of joy and sorrow, of all the inner experiences that surge up and down in the soul during waking hours, but in man as he is today, the astral body cannot perceive these

experiences directly. It can perceive them only when they are reflected from outside itself, and for this to be possible the Ego and astral body must come back into the etheric and physical bodies at the time of awakening from sleep. Everything that a man experiences inwardly, his pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, is reflected by the physical and etheric bodies — especially by the etheric body — as from a mirror. But we must not suppose that this active process, which goes on every day from morning to evening, requires no effort to sustain it. The inner self of man, his Ego and astral body, his Consciousness Soul, Intellectual Soul and Sentient Soul, all have to work on the physical and etheric bodies, so that through the reciprocal interaction of his inner forces and his outer bodies the surging life of the daytime is engendered.

This reciprocal interaction involves a continual using up of soul-forces. When in the evening a man feels tired, this means that he is no longer able to draw from his inner life a sufficiency of the forces which enable him to work on his physical and etheric bodies. When he is nearing sleep and the faculty that required the most intensive play of his spirit into the physical, the faculty of speech, begins to weaken; when sight, smell, taste and finally hearing, the most spiritual of the senses, gradually fade away, because he is no longer able to draw on his inner forces to sustain them — then we see how these forces are used up through the day.

What is the origin of these forces? They come from the nightly condition of sleep. During the period between going to sleep and waking up the soul absorbs to the full the forces it needs for conjuring up before us all that we live through by day. During waking hours the soul can deploy its powers, but it cannot draw on the forces necessary for recuperation. Naturally, Spiritual Science is familiar with the various theories advanced by external science to account for the replenishment of forces used up by day, but we need not go into that now. Thus we can say that when the soul passes back from sleep into waking life, it brings from its spiritual home the forces which it devotes all day long to building up the soul-life which it conjures before us.

Now let us ask: When the soul goes off to sleep in the evening, does it carry anything with it into the spiritual world? Yes; and if we want to understand what this is, we must above all closely observe man's personal development between birth and death. This development is

evident when in later years a man shows himself to be riper, richer in experience and wisdom learnt from life, while he may also have acquired certain capabilities and powers that he did not possess in his younger days.

A man does indeed receive from the outer world something that he transforms inwardly, as the following consideration clearly shows. Between 1770 and 1815 certain events of great significance for the development of the world took place. They were witnessed by the most diverse contemporaries, some of whom were unaffected by them, while others were so deeply moved that they became imbued with experience and wisdom and their soul-lives progressed to a higher stage.

How did this come about? It is best illustrated by a simple event in ordinary human life. Take the process of learning to write. What really happens before the moment when we are able to put pen to paper and express our thoughts in writing? A great deal must have happened — a whole series of experiences, from the first attempt to hold the pen, then to making the first stroke, and so on through all the efforts which lead at last to a grasp of the craft of writing. If we recall everything that must have occurred during months or years, and all we went through, perhaps by way of punishments and reproofs, until at last these experiences were transformed into knowing how to write, then we must say: These experiences were recast and remoulded, so that later on they appear like the essential core of what we call the ability to write.

Spiritual Science shows how this transformation comes about. It is possible only because human beings pass repeatedly through the condition of sleep. In daily life we find that when we are at pains to absorb something, the process of imprinting and retentions is considerably aided if we sleep on it; in that way we make it our own. The experiences we go through have to be united with the soul and worked on by the soul if they are to coalesce and be transformed into faculties. This whole process is carried through by the soul during sleep, and thereby our life is enhanced.

Present-day consciousness has little inkling of these things, but in times of ancient clairvoyance they were well known. An example will show how a poet once indicated in a remarkable way his knowledge of

this transforming process. Homer, who can rightly be called a seer, describes in his *Odyssey* [32] how Penelope, during the absence of her husband, Odysseus, was besieged by a throng of suitors. She promised them that she would give her decision when she had completed a robe she was weaving; but every night she undid the work of the day. If a poet wishes to indicate how a series of experiences, such as those of Penelope with her suitors, are *not* to merge into a faculty — in this case the faculty of decision — he must show how these experiences have to be unwoven at night, or they would unfailingly coalesce.

To anyone imbued with a typical modern consciousness these ideas may sound like hair-splitting, or they may seem to be imposing something arbitrary on the poet; but the only really great men are those, whose work derives from the great world-secrets, and many people today who talk glibly of originality and the like have no inkling of the depths from which the truly great achievements in the arts have been born.

If now we look further at the progress of human life between birth and death, we have to recognise that it is confined within certain narrow limits. We can indeed work at and enhance our faculties; in later life we can acquire qualities of soul which were lacking earlier on; but all this is subject to the fact that we can accomplish nothing that would require us to transform our physical and etheric bodies. These bodies, with their particular aptitudes, are there at birth; we find them ready-made. For example, we can reach a certain understanding of music only if we are born with a musical ear. That is a crude example, but it shows how transformation can be frustrated; in such cases the experiences can indeed be united with the soul, but we must renounce any hope of weaving them into our bodily life.

If, then, we consider human life from a higher standpoint, the possibility of breaking free from the physical body and laying it aside must be regarded as enormously wholesome and significant for our entire human existence. Our capacity to transform experiences into faculties is limited by the fact that every morning, on returning from sleep, we find our physical and etheric bodies waiting for us. At death we lay them aside and pass through the gate of death into a spiritual

world. There, unhampered by these bodies, we can carry to spiritual completion those experiences between birth and death that we could not embody because of our corporeal limitations.

When we descend once more from the spiritual world to a new life on earth, then, and only then, can we take the powers we have woven into our spiritual archetype and give them physical existence by impressing them plastically into the initially soft human body. Now for the first time we can weave into our being those fruits of experience that we had indeed garnered in our previous life but could not then carry into physical embodiment. Seen in this light, death provides for the enhancement of life.

Moreover, this comparatively crude work that a man can do on his physical body, whereby he moulds into it what he could not impress on it in his previous life, is not the only possibility open to him. He is able also to imprint on his entire being certain finer fruits of foregoing lives.

When someone is born, his Ego and astral body, including his Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul, are by no means featureless; they are endowed with definite attributes and characteristics brought from previous lives. The cruder work, whereby the fruits of past experiences are impressed on the plastic physical body, is accomplished before birth, but a more delicate work — and this distinguishes man from the animals — is performed after birth. Throughout childhood and youth a man works into the finer Organisation of his inner and outer nature certain determining characteristics and motives for action, brought by his Ego from a previous life. While the Ego thus impresses itself from within on its vehicles of expression, the fact of its activity and its way of working combine to form the character which a man presents to the world. Between birth and death the Ego works on the organs of the soul, the Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul, in such a way that they respond to what it has made of itself. But the Ego does not stand apart from the urges, desires and passions of the Sentient Soul. No, it unites itself with these emotions as though they were its own; and equally unites itself with the cognitions and the knowledge that belong to the Consciousness Soul.

So it is, that the harmony or disharmony that a human being has wrought in his soul-members is impressed by his Ego on his exterior being in his next earthly life. Human character, therefore, although it appears to us as determined and inborn, can yet be seen to be developing gradually in the course of his life.

With animals, character is determined entirely at birth; an animal cannot work plastically on its exterior nature. Man has the advantage of appearing at birth with no definite character manifest externally, but in the depths of his being he has slumbering powers brought from previous lives; they work into his undeveloped exterior and gradually shape his character, in so far as this is determined by previous lives.

Thus we see how in a certain sense man has an inborn character, but one that gradually develops in the course of life. If we keep this in mind, we can understand how even eminent personalities can go wrong in judging character. There are philosophers who argue that character is inwardly determined and cannot change, but that is a mistake. It applies only to attributes which derive from a previous life and appear as inborn character. Man's inward centre, his Ego, sends out its influence and gives a common stamp and character to every member of his organism. This character extends into the soul and even into the external limbs of the body. We see this inner centre pouring itself forth, as it were, shaping everything in accord with itself, and we feel how this centre holds the members of the human organism together. Even in the external parts of his physical body the imprint of a man's inner being can be discerned.

In this connection, an artist once gave wonderful expression to something which generally receives only theoretical attention. The work he produced portrays human nature at the moment when the human Ego, the centre which holds the organism together as a unity, is lost, and the limbs, each going its own way, strain apart in different directions. The work I mean seizes precisely this moment, when a man loses the foundation of his character, of his being as a whole. But this work, a great and famous one, has been very often misunderstood. Do not suppose that I am about to level cheap criticism at men for whose work I have the highest respect. But the fact that even great minds can make mistakes in face of certain phenomena, just when they are most earnestly striving for truth, shows how difficult the path to truth really is.

One of the greatest German authorities on art, Winckelmann, [33] was impelled by his whole disposition to err in interpreting the work of art known as the Laocoon. [34] His interpretation has been widely admired. In many circles it has been thought that nothing better could be said about this portrayal of Laocoon, the Trojan priest who, with his two sons, was crushed to death by serpents. Winckelmann, filled with enthusiasm for this example of the sculptor's art, said that here we are shown how the priest, Laocoon, whose every limb bespeaks his nobility and greatness, is torn with anguish, above all the anguish of a father. He is placed between his two sons, with the serpents coiled round their bodies. Conscious of the pain inflicted on his sons, he himself, as a father, is so agonised by it that the lower part of his body is contracted, as though pressing out the full degree of pain. He forgets himself, consumed with immeasurable pity for his sons.

This is a beautiful explanation of a father's ordeal, but if — just because we honour Winckelmann as a great personality — we look repeatedly and conscientiously at the Laocoon, we are obliged finally to say that Winckelmann must be mistaken, for it is not possible for pity to be the dominating motif in the scene portrayed. The father's head is aligned at such an angle that he cannot see his sons. Winckelmann's view of the group is quite wrong. The immediate impression we get from looking at the figures is that here we are witnessing the quite definite moment when the encircling pressure of the snakes has driven the human Ego out of Laocoon's body, and the separate instincts, deprived of the Ego, make their way into the physical body. Thus we see the head, the lower body and the limbs each taking its own course, not brought into natural harmony with the figure as a whole because the Ego is absent. The Laocoon group shows us, in external bodily terms, how a man loses his unified character when bereft of the Ego, the strong central point which holds together the members of his bodily organism. And if we allow this spectacle to work on our souls, we can come to experience the unifying element which naturally expresses itself in the harmonising of the limbs, and imprints on a man what we call his character.

But now we must ask: If it is true that a man's character is to some extent inborn — if the characteristics given by birth cannot by any effort be altered beyond a certain limit, as every glance at human life will tell us — is it then possible for a man to change his character in a certain way?

Yes, in so far as character belongs to the life of the soul and is not subject to the bodily limitations we encounter every morning on waking from sleep, and so can help to harmonise and strengthen the Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul. To this extent there can be a development of character during a person's life between birth and death.

Some knowledge of all this is of special importance in education.

Essential as it is to understand the temperaments and the differences between them, it is necessary also to know something about human character and what can be done to change it between birth and death, even though it is in some measure determined by the fruits of a previous life. If we are to make good use of this knowledge, we must be clear that personal life goes through four typical periods of development. In my small book, *Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*, you will find further information on these stages; here I can only sketch them in outline.

The first period runs from birth up to the beginning of the change of teeth around the age of seven. It is during this period that external influence can do most to develop the physical body. During the next period, from the seventh year up to the onset of puberty at about the thirteenth, fourteenth or fifteenth year, the etheric body, particularly, can be developed. Then comes a third period when the lower astral body, especially, can be developed, until finally, from about the 21st year onwards, the time comes when a human being meets the world as a free, independent being and can himself work on the progress of his soul.

The years from 20 to 28 are important for developing the forces of the Sentient Soul. The next seven years up to the age of 35 — these are all only average figures — are important for the development of the Intellectual Soul, especially through intercourse with the outer world.

All this may be regarded as nonsense by those who fail to observe the course of human life, but anyone who studies life with open eyes will come to know that certain elements in the human being are most open to development during particular periods. During our early twenties we are particularly well placed to bring our desires, instincts,

passions and so on into relation with the impressions and influences received from our dealings with the outer world. We can feel our powers growing through the corresponding interaction between the Intellectual Soul and the world around us, and anyone who knows what true knowledge is, will realise that all earlier acquisitions of knowledge were no more than a preparation for this later stage. The ripeness of experience which enables one to survey and evaluate the knowledge one acquires is not attained, on average, before the thirty-fifth year. These laws exist. Anyone unwilling to recognise them is unwilling to observe the course of human life.

If we keep this in mind, we can see how human life between birth and death is structured. The work of the Ego in harmonising the soul-members, and its necessary endeavour to impress the fruits of its work on the physical body, will show you how important it is for an educator to know how the physical body goes through its development up to the seventh year. It is only during this period that influences from the outer world can be brought in to endow the physical body with power and strength. And here we encounter a mysterious connection between the physical body and the Consciousness Soul, a connection which exact observation can thoroughly confirm.

If the Ego is to gain strength, so that in later life, after the thirty-fifth year, it can permeate itself with the forces of the Consciousness Soul, and through this permeation can go forth to acquire knowledge of the world, it ought to encounter no boundaries in the physical body. For the physical body can set up the greatest obstacles to the Consciousness Soul and the Ego, if the Ego is not content to remain enclosed in the inner life but wishes to go out and engage in free intercourse with the world. Now since in bringing up a child during his first seven years we are able to strengthen the forces of his physical body, within certain limits, a remarkable connection between two periods of life is apparent. What can be accomplished for a child during these years by those who care for him is not a matter of indifference! People who fail to realise this have not learnt how to observe human life. Anyone who can compare the early years of childhood with the period after the thirty-fifth year will know that if a man is to go out into the world and engage in free intercourse with it, the best thing we can do for him is to bring him the right sort of influence during his early years. Anything we can do to help the child

to find joy in immediate physical life, and to feel that love surrounds him, will strengthen the forces of his physical body, making it supple, pliant and open to education. The more joy, love and happiness that we can give the child during his early years, the fewer obstacles and hindrances he will encounter later on, when the work of his Ego on his Consciousness Soul should enable him to become an open character, associating in free give-and-take with the outer world. Anything in the way of unkindness pain or distressing circumstances that we allow the child to suffer up to his seventh year has a hardening effect on his physical body, and this creates obstacles for him in later life. He will tend to become a closed character, a man whose whole being is imprisoned in his soul, so that he is unable to achieve a free and open intercourse with the world and the impressions it yields.

Again, there are connections between the etheric body and the second period of life, and therefore with the Intellectual Soul. The play of the Ego on the Intellectual Soul releases forces which can either endow a man with courage and initiative or incline him to cowardice, indecision, sluggishness. Which way it goes depends on the strength of the Ego. But when a man has the best opportunity to use the Intellectual Soul for strengthening his character through intercourse with the world, between the ages of 28 and 35, he may encounter hindrances in his etheric body. If during the period from the seventh to the fourteenth year we supply the etheric body with forces that will prevent it from creating these hindrances in later life, we shall be doing something for his education that should earn his gratitude.

If during the period from seven to fourteen in a child's life we can stand towards him as an authority, and as a source of truth whom he can trust, this is particularly health-giving. Through this relationship, we, as parents or teachers, can strengthen his etheric forces so that in later life he will encounter the least possible obstacles in his etheric body. Then he will be able, if his Ego has the disposition for it, to become a man of courage and initiative. If we are aware of these hidden connections, we can have an enormously health-giving influence on human beings while they are growing up.

Our chaotic education has lost all knowledge of these connections; they were known instinctively in earlier times. It is always a pleasure to see that some old teachers knew of these things, whether by instinct or by inspiration. Rotteck's old *World History*, for example: it

was to be found in our fathers' libraries and it may now be out of date here and there, but if we approach it with understanding we encounter a quite individual method of presentation which shows that Rotteck, who taught history in Freiburg, had a way of teaching which was the very reverse of dry or insipid. We have only to read the Foreword, which is quite out of the ordinary in spirit, to feel: here is a man who knows that in addressing young people of this age — from 14 to 21, when the astral body is developing — he must bring them into touch with the power of great, beautiful ideals. Rotteck is always at pains to show how we can be inspired by the great thoughts of the heroes and to kindle the enthusiasm that can be felt for all that men and women have striven for and suffered in the course of human evolution.

This approach is entirely justified, for the influence thus poured into the astral body during these years is of direct benefit to the Sentient Soul, when the Ego is working to develop a person's character through free intercourse with the world. All that has flowed into the soul from high ideals and enthusiasm is imprinted on the Sentient Soul and embodied accordingly in character.

Thus we see that because the physical, etheric and astral bodies are still plastic in young people, this or that influence can be impressed on them through education, and this makes it possible for a man to work on his character in later life. If education has not helped him in this way, he will find it difficult to work on his character and he will have to resort to the strongest measures. He will need to devote himself to deep meditative contemplation of certain qualities and feelings in order to impress them consciously on his soul. He must try, for example, to experience inwardly the content of those religious confessions which can speak to us as more than theories. He must devote himself again and again to contemplation of those great philosophies in the widest sense which in later life can lead through our thoughts and feelings into the great, all-embracing cosmic secrets. If we can immerse ourselves in these secrets, ever and again willingly devoting ourselves to them; if through daily prayer we make them part of ourselves, then through the play of the Ego, we can re-mould our characters in later life.

In this connection the essential thing is that the qualities acquired by and embodied in the Ego are imprinted on the Sentient Soul, the Intellectual Soul and the Consciousness Soul. Generally speaking, man has little power over his external body. We have seen how he encounters a boundary in his physical body, with its innate pre-dispositions. Nevertheless, observation shows that in spite of this limitation, man can do some work on his physical body between birth and death.

Who has not noticed that a man who devotes himself for a decade to knowledge of a really deep kind — knowledge that does not remain grey learning but is transformed into pleasure and pain, happiness and sorrow, thus becoming real knowledge and uniting itself with the Ego — who has not noticed that such a man's physiognomy, his gestures, his entire behaviour have changed, showing how the working of the Ego has penetrated right into his external physique!

However, the extent to which the outer body can be influenced by powers acquired between birth and death is very limited. For the most part man has to resign himself to keeping them for his next earthly life.

On the other hand, the various attributes brought over from previous lives can be enhanced by working on them between birth and death, if the faculty for doing so has been acquired.

Thus we see how character is not confined to the inner life of the soul, but penetrates into a man's external physique and limbs. It finds expression, first, in his gestures; second, in his physiognomy; and third, in the plastic formation of the skull, the origin of what we call phrenology.

How, then, does character achieve this outward expression in gesture, physiognomy and bone-formation? The Ego works formatively first of all in the Sentient Soul, which embraces all the instincts, desires, passions — in short, everything that belongs to the inner impulses of the will. The note sounded by the Ego on this member of the soul is manifest externally as gesture, and this play of gestures, springing from a man's inner being, can tell us a great deal about his character.

When the Ego is active chiefly in the Sentient Soul, the note it sounds there resonates in the Intellectual Soul and the Consciousness Soul, and this, too, is evident in gesture. The coarser elements of the Sentient Soul come to expression in gestures connected with the lower part of the body. If, for instance, a man pats his stomach with a feeling of satisfaction, we can see how his character is bound up with his Sentient Soul, and how volitions connected with his higher soul-members come to expression hardly at all.

When, however, the activity of the Ego resonates in the intellectual Soul, we can often observe a gesture related to the organ which serves the Intellectual Soul as its chief means of outer expression. Speakers who have the so-called "breast-tone of conviction" are given to striking themselves over the heart. They are men who speak with passion and are not concerned with objective judgment. Here we have the passionate character who lives entirely in the Sentient Soul but has so strong an Ego that his emotions resonate in the Intellectual Soul; we recognise him by his expansive attitudes. For example, there are popular speakers who thrust their thumbs into their waistcoats and swell out their chests when they are facing an audience. Far from being objective, they speak directly out of the Sentient Soul, putting into words their personal egoistic feelings and reinforcing them with this gesture — thumbs in waistcoat.

When the note struck by the Ego in the Sentient Soul resonates in the Consciousness Soul, we see a gesture bearing on the organ which gives the Consciousness Soul its chief outer expression. If a person finds it particularly difficult to bring his inner feelings to the point of reaching a decision, he will lay a finger on his nose — a gesture indicating how hard it is for him to fetch up a decision from the depth of his Consciousness Soul.

When someone lives chiefly in the Intellectual Soul, this is apparent in his physiognomy and facial expression. The experience of the Intellectual Soul lies closer to man's inner life and is not subject to the outer pressure under which he might sigh like a slave. He feels it to be more his own property, and this is reflected in his face. If a man is indeed capable of living in the Intellectual Soul, but presses down its content into the Sentient Soul, if any judgment he forms gets hold of him so strongly that he glows with enthusiasm for it, we can see this expressed in his sloping forehead and projecting chin. If something is

actually experienced in the Intellectual Soul and only resonates in the Sentient Soul, this is expressed in the lower part of the face. If a man achieves the special virtue of the Intellectual Soul, a harmony between inner and outer, so that he neither secludes himself in inward brooding nor depletes his inner life by complete surrender to outer impressions, and if his Ego's work in the shaping of character is accomplished chiefly through the Intellectual Soul, then all this will be manifest in the middle part of his face, the external expression of the Intellectual Soul.

Here we can see how fruitful Spiritual Science can be for the study of civilisations: we are shown how successive characteristics are imprinted on successive peoples. Thus the Intellectual Soul made its imprint particularly on the ancient Greeks, among whom we can discern the beautiful harmony between inner and outer that is the characteristic manifestation of the Intellectual Soul. And here, accordingly, we find the Greek nose in its perfection. True it is that we cannot fully understand these things unless we relate them to their spiritual background.

Again, when someone carries the content of the Intellectual Soul into the realm of cognition and experiences it in the Consciousness Soul, the outward sign of this is a projecting forehead, as though the working of the Ego in the Intellectual Soul were flowing up into the Consciousness Soul.

If, however, someone lives in close unity with his Ego, so that the character of the Ego is impressed on the Consciousness Soul, he can then carry the note sounded by the Ego in his Consciousness Soul down into his Intellectual Soul and his Sentient Soul. This goes with a higher stage of human development. Only the Consciousness Soul can be permeated by high moral and aesthetic ideals and by great, wide-ranging conceptions of the world.

All this has to come to life in the Consciousness Soul, but the forces engendered by the Ego in the Consciousness Soul on this account can penetrate down into the Sentient Soul, where they are fired with enthusiasm and passion and with what we may call the inner warmth of the Sentient Soul, This comes about when a man can glow with enthusiasm for some knowledge he has gained. Then the noblest aspiration to which man can rise at present is carried down into the

Sentient Soul. And the Sentient Soul itself is enhanced when permeated by forces from the Consciousness Soul. But what the Ego can accomplish for a character — ideal through its work in the Consciousness Soul may encounter obstacles caused by inborn predispositions, so that it cannot be impressed on the physical body. Then we have to practise resignation; the work of the Ego in the Consciousness Soul may give rise to a noble quality of soul, but this cannot come to expression in the physical body during that single lifetime. But the ardent passion for high moral ideals that a person has experienced in the Sentient Soul can be taken through the gate of death and carried over into his next life as a most powerful formative force. We can see how this comes to expression in the contours of the skull, showing that what a man has made of himself penetrates into his very bones.

A study of the contours of the skull can indeed throw some light on character, but always in a strictly individual context. It is absurd to suppose that phrenology can lay down general schemes and typical principles that will be universally valid. Everyone has a phrenology that applies to himself alone, for his skull is shaped by forces derived from his previous life, and in every individual this must be recognised. Only abstract theorists addicted to diagrams would think of founding a phrenology on general principles. Anyone who knows about the formative forces that work into man's very bones would speak only of recognising their effects in individuals. The formation of the skull is different with everyone and can never be accounted for in terms of a single earthly life. Here we touch on what is called reincarnation, for in the contours of the skull we can discern what a man has made of himself in previous lives. Here reincarnation becomes a palpable fact. We need only know where to read the evidence for it.

Thus we see how the effects of human character have to be followed from their origin all the way into the hardest structures, and then human character stands before us as a wonderful riddle. We have begun to describe how the Ego impresses character into the forms of the Sentient Soul, the Intellectual Soul and the Consciousness Soul. Then we saw how this work by the Ego has results which make their mark on man's external physique and are manifest in gesture and physiognomy and even in the bones. And since man is led from birth to death and on again to a new birth, we saw how his inner being works on the outer, impressing character both on the inner life and on

the physical body, which is an image of the inner life. Hence we can very well understand the deep impression made on us by the Laocoon, where we see the bodily character failing asunder into the several limbs; we see, as it were, the character, which belongs to the very essence of man, vanishing in the outward gestures of this work of art. Here we have plain evidence of the working of inner forces in the material realm, and of how the dispositions brought from earlier lives are determining factors in any given life; and we see how the spirit, by breaking life asunder, brings to expression in a new life the character acquired as the outcome of a previous one.

We can now enter into Goethe's feelings when he held Schiller's skull in his hand and said: In the contours of this skull I see how the spirit sets its stamp on matter. This form, full of character, calls up for me the voice that I heard sounding through Schiller's poems and in the words of friendship he so often spoke to me. Yes, I see here how the spirit has worked in the material realm. And when I contemplate this piece of matter, its noble forms show me how previous lives prepared the radiance that shone out so powerfully for me from Schiller's mind.

So we are led to repeat as our own conviction the words written by Goethe after contemplating Schiller's skull:

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*What greater gift can life on man bestow
Than that to him God-Nature should disclose
How solid to spirit it attenuates,
How spirit's work it hardens and preserves.*

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6. Asceticism and Illness

Berlin, 11th November 1909

Human life swings between work and idleness. The activity we are to discuss today, known as asceticism, is regarded either as work or as idleness according to the preconceptions of one person or another. An objective, unbiased study, such as Spiritual Science demands, is impossible unless we observe how what is called asceticism — in the highest sense excluding misuse of the word — influences human life, and either helps or harms it.

It is quite natural that most people today should have a somewhat false idea of what the word asceticism ought to mean. In its original Greek form it could apply as well to an athlete as to an ascetic. But in our time the word has acquired a particular colouring from the form taken by this way of life during the Middle Ages; and for many people the word has the flavour that Schopenhauer gave it in the 19th century. [35] Today the word is again acquiring a certain colouring through the manifold influences of oriental philosophy and religion, particularly through what the West usually calls Buddhism. Our task in this lecture is to find the true origin in human nature of asceticism; and Spiritual Science, as characterised in previous lectures, is called upon to bring clarity into this discussion, the more so because its own outlook is connected with the original meaning of the Greek word, *askesis*.

Spiritual Science and spiritual research, as they have been represented here for some years, take a quite definite attitude towards human nature. They start from the postulate that at no stage in the evolution of mankind is it justifiable to say that here or there are the limits of human knowledge. The usual way of putting the question, "What can man know, and what can he not know?", is for Spiritual Science misdirected. It does not ask what man can know at a certain stage in his evolution; or what the boundaries of knowledge are at that stage; or what remains hidden because at that time human cognition cannot penetrate it. All these matters are not its immediate concern; for Spiritual Science takes its stand on the firm ground of evolution, in particular the evolution of human soul-forces. It says that

the human soul can develop. As in the seed of a plant the future plant sleeps and is called forth by the forces within the seed and those which work on it from without, so are hidden forces and capacities always sleeping in the human soul. What we cannot know at one stage of development we may know later, when we have advanced a little in developing our spiritual faculties.

Which are the forces that we can develop in ourselves for a deeper understanding of the world and the attainment of an ever-wider horizon? That is the question asked by Spiritual Science. It does not ask where the boundaries of our knowledge are, but how man can surpass the bounds that exist at any given period by developing his capacities. Not through vague talk, but in a quite definite way, it shows how man can surpass the cognitive faculties that have been bestowed on him by an evolutionary process in which his own consciousness has not participated. In the first instance, these faculties are concerned only with the world perceived by our senses and grasped by our reason. But by means of the forces latent in the soul, man is able to penetrate into the worlds which are at first not open to the senses and cannot be reached by a reason bound up with the senses. In order that we may from the beginning avoid the charge of vagueness, I will describe quite briefly what you will find given fully in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds: How is it Achieved?*

When we speak of passing beyond the ordinary bounds of knowledge, we must take care not to wander off into the blue, but rather find our way from the solid ground under our feet into a new world. How is it to be done?

In the normal human being of today, we have an alternation of the two conditions called "waking" and "sleeping". [36] Without going into details, we may say that for ordinary knowledge the difference lies in this, that while man is awake, his senses and the sense-bound intellect are under constant stimulus. It is this stimulus which wakens his external cognition, and during waking hours he is given up to the external sense-world. In sleep we are removed from that world. A simple logical consideration shows that it is not irrational for Spiritual Science to maintain that there is something in human nature which separates itself during sleep from what we usually call the human body. We know that for Spiritual Science the physical body, which can be seen with the eyes and touched with the hand, is only part of man.

He has a second part, the so-called etheric or life-body. When we are asleep, the physical and etheric bodies remain in bed, and we separate from them what we call the consciousness body or — don't be put off by the terminology — the astral body, the bearer of desire and pain, pleasure and sorrow, of impulse and passion. In addition we have a fourth part, one which makes man the crown of earthly creation: the ego. These last two parts split off during sleep from the physical and the etheric bodies. A simple consideration, as I said, can teach us that it is not irrational for Spiritual Science to declare that what we have as pleasure and pain, or as the ego's power of judgment, cannot vanish during the night and be reborn anew every morning, but must remain in existence. Think, if you will, of this withdrawal of the astral body and the ego as a mere picture; in any case it is undeniable that the ego and the astral body withdraw from what we call the physical and the etheric bodies.

Now the peculiar thing is that these inmost parts of the human being, the astral body and the ego, within which we live through what we call soul-experience, sink down during sleep into an indefinite obscurity. But this means simply that this inmost part of the human being needs the stimulus of the external world if it is to be conscious of itself and of the external world. Hence we can say that at the moment of falling asleep, when this stimulus ceases, man cannot develop consciousness in himself. But if, in the normal course of his existence, a human being were able so to stimulate the inner parts of his being, so to fill them with energy and inner life, that he had a consciousness of them even when there were no sense-impressions and the sense-bound intellect was inactive and free from the stimulus of the external world, he would then be able to perceive other things than those which come through the stimulus of the senses. However strange and paradoxical it may sound, it is true that if a man could reproduce a condition which on the one hand resembles sleep, and yet is essentially different from it on the other, he could reach super-sensible knowledge. His condition would resemble sleep in not depending on any external stimulus; the difference would be that he would not sink into unconsciousness but would unfold a vivid inner life.

As may be shown from spiritual-scientific experience, man can come to such a condition: a condition of clairvoyance, if the word is not misused, as it so often is today. I will give you briefly one example of

the numerous inner exercises through which this condition can be attained.

If we wish to experience this condition safely, we must always start from the external world. The external world gives us mental images, and we call them true if we find that they correspond with external facts. But this kind of truth cannot raise us above external reality. Our task, therefore, is to bridge the gulf between external perception and a perception which is independent of the senses and yet can give us truth. One of the first stages towards this form of knowledge is concerned with pictorial or symbolic concepts. As an example, let us take a symbol which is of use for spiritual development, and expound it in the form of a conversation between a teacher and his pupil.

In order to make his pupil understand this kind of symbolic picture, [37] the teacher might speak as follows: "Think of the plant, how it is rooted in the earth and grows from it, sends forth green leaf after green leaf and develops to flower and fruit." (We are not here concerned with ordinary scientific ideas, for, as we shall see, we are not discussing the essential difference between man and plant, but trying to get hold of a useful pictorial idea). The teacher may continue: "And now look at man. He certainly has a great deal that is not present in the plant. He can experience impulses, desires, emotions, a whole range of concepts which can lead him up the ladder from blind sensation and instinct to the highest moral ideals. Only a scientific fantasy could attribute similar consciousness to plants and to men; but on a lower level a plant has certain advantages. It has certainty of growth, without possibility of error, while man can deviate at any moment from his right place in the world. We can see how in his whole structure he is permeated with instincts, desires and passions which may bring him into error, delusion and falsehood. In contrast, the plant is in substance untouched by these things; it is a pure, chaste being. Only when man has purified his whole life of instinct and desire can he hope to be as pure on his higher level as the plant is in its certainty and security on the lower level."

Then we can pass to a further picture. The plant is permeated with the green colouring matter, chlorophyll, which steeps the leaves in green colour. Man is permeated with the vehicle of instincts and emotions, his red blood. That is a sort of evolution upwards, and in its course man has had to accept characteristics not found in the plant.

He must hold before his eyes the high ideal of one day attaining on his own level to the inner purity, certainty and self-control of which we have a picture at a lower level in the plant. So we may ask what we must do in order to rise to that level.

Man must become lord and master of the instincts, passions and cravings which surge around, unsought, within him. He must grow beyond himself, kill within him all that normally dominates him, and raise to a higher level all that is dominated by the lower. This is how man has developed from the plant, and all that has been added since the plant stage he must look on as something to be conquered, in order to derive from it a higher life. That is the proper direction of man's future, indicated by Goethe in the fine stanza:

Whoever cannot say

Die and renew thyself!

On our dark earth will be

A mournful guest! [38]

This does not mean that man must kill his instincts and emotions, but that he cleanses and purifies them by removing their mastery over him. So, in looking at the plant, he can say: "Something in me is higher than the plant, but I have to conquer and destroy it."

As a picture of what we have to overcome in ourselves, let us take that part of the plant which is no longer capable of life, the dry wood, and set it up in the form of a cross. The next task is to cleanse and purify the red blood, the vehicle of our instincts, impulses and cravings, so that it may be a pure, chaste expression of our higher being, of what Schiller meant when he spoke of "the higher man in man". The blood will then be, as it were, a copy in man of the pure sap which flows through the plant.

"Now" — the teacher will resume — "let us look at a flower in which the sap, rising up continuously, stage by stage, through the leaves, finally merges into the colour of the flower, the red rose. Picture the

red rose as an image of your blood when your blood has been cleansed and purified. The sap of the plant pulses through the red rose and leaves it without impulses or desires; but your impulses and desires must come to be the expression of your purified ego." Thus we supplement our picture of the wood of the cross, which symbolises what we have to overcome, by hanging a garland of red roses upon the cross. Then we have a picture, a symbol, which does not appeal only to dry reasoning, but by stirring our feelings gives us an image of human life raised to the level of a higher ideal.

Someone may now say: Your picture is an invention which corresponds to nothing true. All that you conjure up, the black cross and the red rose is mere fancy. Yes, undoubtedly, this picture, as brought before the inner eye of anyone who wishes to rise into spiritual worlds, is an invention. That is just what it has to be! Its purpose is not to portray something that exists in the external world. If that were its function, we would not need it. We would be satisfied with the impressions of the outer world that come to us directly through our sense-perceptions. But the picture we create, though its elements are drawn from the external world, is based on certain feelings and ideas that belong to our own inner being. The essential thing is that we should be fully conscious of each step, so that we keep a firm hold on the threads of our inner processes; otherwise we should be lost in illusion.

Anyone who wants to rise to higher worlds through inner meditation and contemplation does not live only in abstract pictures, but in a world of concepts and feelings which flow from these pictures he creates. The pictures call forth a number of activities in his soul, and by excluding every external stimulus he concentrates all his powers on contemplating the pictures. They are not meant to reflect external circumstances, but to awaken forces that slumber within him. If he is patient and perseveres — for progress comes slowly — he will notice that quiet devotion to pictures of this kind will give him something that can be further developed. He will soon find that his inner life is changing: a condition emerges that is in some respects akin to sleep. But while sleep brings a submergence of conscious soul-life, the devotion I have mentioned, and meditation on the symbolic pictures, cause inner forces to awaken. Very soon he feels that a change is

going on within him, although he has excluded all impressions of the outer world. So through these quite unrealistic symbols he awakens inner forces, and he soon realises that he can put them to good use.

Someone may object again by saying: "That is all very well, but even if we develop these forces and really penetrate into the spiritual world, how can we be sure that what we perceive is reality?" Nothing can prove this except experience, just as the external world can be proved to exist only by experience. Mere concepts can be very strictly distinguished from perceptions and the two categories will be confused only by someone who has lost touch with reality. Especially in philosophical circles today, a certain misunderstanding has been gaining ground. Schopenhauer, ^[39] for instance, in the first part of his philosophy starts with the assumption that the world of man is a concept. Now you can see the difference between a percept and a concept by looking at your watch. As long as you are in contact with your watch, that is percept; if you turn round, you have a picture of the watch in your mind; that is concept. In practical life we very soon learn to distinguish between percept and concept, or we should go badly astray. If you picture a red-hot iron, however hot it is, you will not be burnt, but if you touch it you will soon realise that a percept is something other than a concept.

It is the same with an example given by Kant; ^[40] from a certain point of view it is justified, but during the last century it has been the source of much error. Kant tried to upset a certain concept of God by showing that there is no difference in content between the idea of a hundred shillings and a hundred real shillings. It is wrong, however, to maintain that there is no difference in the content, for then it is easy to confuse a perception, which gives us direct contact with reality, with the content of a mere concept. Anyone who has to pay a debt of a hundred shillings will soon find out the difference.

It is the same with the spiritual world. When we awaken the forces and faculties which are latent within us, and when around us is a world we have not known before, a world which shines out as though from a dark spiritual depth, then someone who enters this realm uninitiated might well say that it is all illusion and auto-suggestion. But anyone who has had real experiences on this level will be well able to distinguish reality from fantasy, just as in ordinary life we can distinguish between an imaginary piece of hot steel and a real one.

Thus we can see that it is possible to call forth a different form of consciousness. I have given you only one brief example of how inner exercises can work on the sleeping faculties of the soul. Of course, while we are still practising the exercises, we do not see a spiritual world; we are occupied in awakening the faculties required. In some circumstances this may last not merely for years, but for a whole life or lives. In the end, however, the result of these exercises is that the sleeping forces of cognition are awakened and directed towards a spiritual world, just as we have learnt to adapt the eye with the help of unknown spiritual powers to observing the external world. This work on one's own soul, this development of the soul to the stage of perceiving a world in which we are not yet living but to which we gain access through what we bring to it — this training can be called *asceticism* in the true sense of the word. For in Greek the word means working on oneself, making oneself capable of accomplishing something, transforming sleeping forces into active ones. This original meaning of the word can still be its meaning today if we refuse to be led astray by the false use of the term which has become common down the centuries. We shall understand the true meaning of asceticism as described here, only if we remember that the purpose of this working on oneself is to develop faculties which will open up a new world.

Now, having discussed asceticism in relation to the spiritual world only, it will be helpful to see how the term applies to certain activities in the external world. There it can signify the training of certain forces and capabilities which are not going to be used immediately for their final purpose, but are first to be exercised and made ready for it. An example close at hand will illustrate this, and will also show how an incorrect use of the term can have harmful results. The term can be rightly applied to military manoeuvres; this is quite in keeping with the original Greek usage. The deployment and testing of military forces on these occasions, so that in real war they may be ready and available in the right numbers — that is asceticism exercise. Whenever forces are not used for their final purpose, but are tested in advance for efficiency and reliability, we have asceticism. Manoeuvres bear the same relation to warfare as asceticism does to life in general.

Human life, I said earlier, swings between work and idleness. But there are all sorts of intermediate stages: for example, play. Play, when it really is play, is the opposite of asceticism. And from its

opposite one can see very well what asceticism is. Play is the active use of energies in the outer world for the sake of immediate gratification. The material of play is not, so to speak, the hard, unyielding substance of the external world that we encounter during hours of work. In relation to our energies it is malleable, amenable to our exertions. Play is play only when we do not knock up against the resistance of outer forces, as we do in work. Play is concerned with a direct release of energies which are transformed into achievement, and therein lies the satisfaction we get from it. Play does not prepare us for anything; it finds fulfillment in and through itself.

It is just the opposite with asceticism, if we take the term in its proper sense. In this case no gratification is gained from anything in the outer world. Whenever we combine things in asceticism, if only the cross and the red roses, the combination is not significant in itself, but only in so far as it calls our inner forces into activity, an activity which will find application only when it has ripened fully within ourselves. Renunciation comes in because we work inwardly on ourselves while knowing that at first we are not to be stimulated by the outer world. Our aim is to bring into activity our inner forces, so that they may be applied to the outer world later on. Play and asceticism, accordingly, are opposites.

How does asceticism, in our sense of the word, enter practically into human life? Let us keep to a sphere where asceticism can be practised both in a right and in a wrong way. We will take the case of someone who makes it his aim to ascend into spiritual worlds. If, then, a super-sensible world comes by some means or other to his attention, whether through another person or through some historical document, he may say: There are statements and communications concerning the super-sensible worlds, but at present they are beyond my comprehension; I lack the power to understand them. Then there are others who reject these communications, refuse to have anything to do with them. What is the source of this attitude? It arises because a person of this type rejects asceticism in the best sense of the word; he cannot find in his soul the strength to use the means I have described for developing higher faculties. He feels too weak for it.

I have repeatedly emphasised that clairvoyance is not necessary for understanding the findings of clairvoyant research. Clairvoyance is indeed necessary for gaining access to spiritual facts, but once the

facts have been communicated, anyone can use unprejudiced reason to understand them. Impartial reason and healthy intellect are the best instruments for judging anything communicated from the spiritual worlds. A true spiritual scientist will always say that if he could be afraid of anything, he would be afraid of people who accept communications of this kind without testing them strictly by means of reason. He is never afraid of those who make use of unclouded intelligence, for that is what makes all these communications comprehensible.

However, a man may feel too weak to call forth in himself the forces necessary for understanding what he is told concerning the spiritual world. In that case he turns away from all this through an instinct for self-preservation which is right for him. He feels that to accept these communications would throw his mind into confusion. And in all cases where people reject what they hear through Spiritual Science, an instinct of self-preservation is at work; they know that they are incapable of doing the necessary exercises — that is, of practising asceticism in the true sense. A person prompted by the instinct for self-preservation will then say to himself: If these things were to permeate my spiritual life, they would confuse it; I could make nothing of them and therefore I reject them. So it is with a materialistic outlook which refuses to go a step beyond the doctrines of a science it believes to be firmly founded on facts. But there are other possibilities, and here we come to a dangerous side of asceticism. People may have a sort of avidity for information about the spiritual world while lacking the inner urge and conscience to test everything by reason and logic. They may indulge a liking for sensationalism in this field. Then they are not held back by an instinct for self-preservation, but are driven on by its very opposite, a sort of urge for self-annihilation. If anyone takes something into his soul without understanding it, and with no wish to apply his reason to it, he will be swamped by it. This happens in all cases of blind faith, or when communications from the spiritual worlds are accepted merely on authority. This acceptance corresponds to an asceticism which derives not from a healthy instinct for self-preservation, but from a morbid impulse to annihilate the self, to drown in a flood of revelations. This has a significant shadow-side in the human soul: it is a bad form of asceticism when someone gives up all effort and chooses to live in faith and in reliance on others.

This attitude has existed in many forms in many epochs. But we must not assume that everything which looks like blind faith is so. For example, we are told that in the old Pythagorean Mystery Schools [41] there was a familiar phrase: The Master has said. But this never meant: The Master has said, therefore we believe it! For his students it meant something like this: The Master has said; therefore it demands that we should reflect on it and see how far we can get with it if we bring all our forces to bear upon it. To "believe" need not always imply a blind belief springing from a desire for self-annihilation. It need not be blind belief if you accept communications springing from spiritual research because you trust the researcher. You may have learnt that his statements are in strictly logical form, and that in other realms, where his utterances can be tested, he is logical and does not talk nonsense. On this verifiable ground the student can hold a well-founded belief that the speaker, when he is talking about things not yet known to the student, has an equally sure basis for his statements. Hence the student can say: I will work! I have confidence in what I have been told, and this can be a guiding star for my endeavours to raise myself to the level of the faculties which will make themselves intelligible of their own accord, when I have worked my way up to them.

If this healthy foundation of trust is lacking and a person allows himself to be stirred by communications from the invisible worlds without understanding them, he will drift into a very wretched condition that is not compatible with asceticism. Whenever a person accepts something in blind faith without resolving to work his way to an understanding of it, and if therefore he accepts another person's will instead of his own, he will gradually lose those healthy soul-forces which provide the inner life with a sure centre and endow us with a true feeling for what is right. Lies and a proneness to error will beset a person who is unwilling to test inwardly, with his reason, what he is told; he will tend to drown and to lose himself in it. Anyone who does not allow himself to be guided by a healthy sense of truth will soon find how prone he is to lies and deceptions even in the outer world. When we approach the spiritual world we need to reflect very seriously that through this surrender of our judgment we can very easily fall into a life which no longer has any real feeling for truth and reality. If we seriously practise the exercises and wish to train our inner powers, we must never give up bringing before our souls the kind of knowledge I have been describing.

We can now penetrate further into what may be called the ascetic training of the soul in a deeper sense. So far we have considered only people who are not capable of developing these inner forces in a healthy way. In one case a sound instinct of self-preservation made a person refuse to develop these forces because he did not want to develop them; in the other case a person did not absolutely refuse to develop them, but he refused to bring his judgment and intelligence to bear on them. In all such cases the impulse is always to remain on the old level, at the old standpoint. But let us suppose a case where a person really does try to develop these inner faculties, and makes use of such forms of training as those we have described. Again there may be a dual result. It may be the result we always aim at, where Spiritual Science is taken seriously and worthily. A person will then be guided to develop his inner forces only in so far as he is capable of using them in a right and orderly way. Here, then, we are concerned with how a person has to work on himself — as is described in greater detail in my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds: How is it Achieved?* — in order to awaken the faculties which will open the spiritual world to his inner sight. But at the same time he must be competent to discipline his faculties and to establish the right balance between his work on himself and his dealings with the outer world. The necessity of this has been proved by spiritual researchers down the ages.

If a person fails to apply his inner forces properly to his handling of the outer world and gives way to an almost uncontrollable urge to develop his soul-powers more and more to bring about all possible movement in his soul, so that he may thereby open his spirit-eyes and spirit-ears; and if he is too indolent to absorb slowly and in the right way the available facts of Spiritual Science and to work on them with his reason, then his asceticism may do him great harm. A person can develop all sorts of faculties and powers and yet not know what to do with them or how to apply them to the outer world. This, indeed, is the outcome of many forms of training and it applies to those who fail to pursue energetically the methods we have described, whereby the student is continually strengthening himself.

There are other methods with a different aim: they may be more comfortable but they can easily cause harm. Such methods aim at doing away with the hindrances imposed on the soul by the bodily nature, in order to enhance the inner life. This was in fact the sole

endeavour of mediaeval ascetics, and it survives in part today. Instead of true asceticism, which sets out to give the soul an ever-richer content, false asceticism leaves the soul as it is and sets out to weaken the body and to reduce the activity of its forces. There are indeed ways of damping down these forces, so that the functioning of the body gradually weakens, and the result may then be that the soul, though itself remaining weak, gets the upper hand over the weakened body. A correct asceticism leaves the body as it is and enables the soul to master it; the other asceticism leaves the soul as it is, while all sorts of procedures, fasting, mortifications and so on, are used to weaken the body. The soul is then relatively the stronger and can achieve a kind of consciousness, although its own powers have not increased. That is the way of many ascetics in the Middle Ages: they kill the vigour of the body, lower its activities, leave the soul as it is, and then live in the expectation that the content of the spiritual world will be revealed to them with no contribution on their part.

That is the easier method, but it is not a truly strengthening one. The true method requires a person to cleanse and purify his thinking, feeling and willing, so that these faculties will be strengthened and able to prevail over the body. The other method lowers the tone of the body, and the soul is then supposed to wait, without having acquired any new capacities, until the divine world flows into it.

You will find plenty of references to this method under the heading of "asceticism" in the Middle Ages. It leads to estrangement from the world and is bound to do so. For at the present stage of human evolution there is a certain relationship between our capabilities of perception and the outer world, and if we are to rise above this stage we can do so only by heightening our capabilities and using them to understand the outer world in its deeper significance. But if we weaken our normal forces, we make ourselves incapable of maintaining a normal relationship with the outer world; and especially if we tone down our thinking, feeling and willing and give our souls over to passive expectation, something will then flow into our souls which has no connection with our present-day world, makes us strangers there, and is useless for working in the world. While the true asceticism makes us more and more capable in our dealings with the world, for we see more and more deeply into it, the other asceticism, associated with the suppression of bodily functions, draws a person out of the world, tends to make him a hermit, a mere settler there. In

this isolation he may see all sorts of psychic and spiritual things — this must not be denied — but an asceticism of this kind is of no use for the world. True asceticism is work, training for the world, not a withdrawal of oneself into remoteness from the world.

This does not imply that we have to go to the opposite extreme; there can be accommodation on both sides. Even though it is true in general that for our period in human evolution a certain normal relationship exists between the external world and the forces of the soul, yet every period tends to drive the normal to extremes as it were, and if we want to develop higher faculties we need pay no attention to opposition that comes from abnormal trends. And because we find the opposition in ourselves, we can under certain circumstances go rather further than would be necessary if the times were not also at fault.

I say this because you have perhaps heard that many followers of Spiritual Science lay great stress on a certain diet. This does not at all imply that such a mode of life can do anything for the attainment or even the understanding of higher worlds and higher relationships. It can be no more than an external aid, and should be seen only in relation to the fact that anyone wishing to gain understanding of the higher worlds may find a certain obstacle in the customs and conventions he has to live with at the present day. Because these conventions have drawn us down too deeply into the material world, we must go beyond the normal in order to make the exercises easier. But it would be quite mistaken to regard this as a form of asceticism which can be a means of leading us to higher worlds. Vegetarianism will never lead anyone to higher worlds; it can be no more than a support for someone who thinks to himself: I wish to open for myself certain ways of understanding the spiritual worlds; I am hindered by the heaviness of my body, which prevents the exercises from having an immediate effect. Hence I will make things easier by lightening my body. Vegetarianism is one way of producing this result, but it should never be presented as a dogma; it is only a means which can help some people to gain understanding of the spiritual worlds. No-one should suppose that a vegetarian way of life will enable him to develop spiritual powers. For it leaves the soul as it is and serves only to weaken the body. But if the soul is strengthened, it will be able though the effects of vegetarianism to strengthen the weakened body from the centre of its own forces. Anyone who develops spiritually

with the aid of vegetarianism will be stronger, more efficient and more resistant in daily life; he will be not merely a match for any meat-eater but will be superior in working capacity. That is the very opposite of what is believed by many people when they say of vegetarians within a spiritual movement: How sad for these poor folk who can never enjoy a little bit of meat!

So long as a person has this feeling about vegetarianism, it will not bring him the slightest benefit. So long as a desire for meat persists, vegetarianism is useless. It is helpful only when it results from an attitude that I will illustrate with a little story.

Not very long ago, someone was asked: "Why don't you eat meat?" He replied with a counter-question: "Why don't you eat dogs or cats?" "One just can't", was the answer. "Why can't you?" "Because I would find it disgusting." "Well, that is just what I feel about all meat."

That is the point. When pleasure in eating meat has gone, then to abstain from meat may be of some use in relation to the spiritual worlds.

Until then, breaking the meat-eating habit can be helpful only for getting rid of the desire for meat. If the desire persists, it may be better to start eating meat again, for to go on tormenting oneself about it is certainly not the right way to reach an understanding of Spiritual Science.

From all this you can see the difference between true and false asceticism. False asceticism often attracts people whose sole desire is to develop the inner forces and faculties of the soul; they are indifferent towards gaining real knowledge of the outer world. Their aim is simply to develop their inner faculties and then to wait and see what comes of it. The best way of doing this is to mortify the body as far as possible, for this weakens it, and then the soul, though itself remaining weak, can see into some kind of spiritual world, however incapable it may be of understanding the real spiritual world. This, however, is a path of deception, for directly a person closes off his means of return to the physical world, he encounters no true spiritual world, but only delusive pictures of his own self. And these are what he is bound to encounter as long as he leaves his soul as it is. Because his ego keeps to its accustomed standpoint, it does not rise to higher

powers, and he puts up a barrier between himself and the world by suppressing the functions which relate him to the world. It is not only that this kind of asceticism estranges him from the world; he sees pictures which can deceive him as to the stage his soul has reached, and in place of a true spiritual world he sees a picture clouded over by his own self.

There is a further consequence which leads into the realm of morality. Anyone who believes that humility and surrender to the spiritual world will set him on the right course of life fails to see that he is involving himself most strongly in his own self and becoming an egoist in the worst sense, for it means that he is content with himself as he is and has no wish to progress any further. This egoism, which can degenerate into unrestrained ambition and vanity, is the more dangerous because the victim of it cannot see it for himself. Generally he looks on himself as a man who sinks down in deepest humility at the feet of his God, while really he is being played on by the devil of megalomania. A genuine humility would tell him something he refuses to recognise, for it would lead him to say to himself: The powers of the spiritual world are not to be found at the stage where I am standing now: I must climb up to them; I must not rest content with the powers I already have.

So we see the results of the false asceticism which relies primarily on killing off external things instead of strengthening the inner life: it conduces to deception, error, vanity and egotism. In our time, especially, it would be a great evil if this course were followed as a means of entering the spiritual world. It serves merely to engross man in himself. Today the only true asceticism must be sought in modern Spiritual Science, founded on the firm ground of reality. Through it a person can develop his own faculties and forces and thus rise to a comprehension of a spiritual world which is itself a real world, not one that a man spins round himself.

This false asceticism has yet another shadow-side. If you look at the realms of nature around us, leading up from plants through animals to man, you will find the vital functions changing in character stage by stage. For example, the diseases of plants come only from some external cause, from abnormal conditions of wind and weather, light and sunshine. These external circumstances can produce illness in plants. If we go on to consider animals, we find that they also, if left

to themselves are greatly superior to human beings in their fund of natural health. A human being may fall ill not only through the life he leads or through external circumstances, but also as a result of his inner life. If his soul is not well suited to his body, if the spiritual heritage he brings from earlier incarnations cannot adapt itself completely to his bodily constitution, these inner causes may bring about illnesses which are very often wrongly diagnosed. They can be symptoms of a maladjustment between soul and body.

We often find that people with these symptoms are inclined to rise to higher worlds by killing off their bodily nature. This is because the illness itself induces them to separate their souls from bodies which the soul has not fully permeated. In such people the body hardens itself in the most varied ways and closes in on itself; and since they have not strengthened the soul, but have used its weakness in order to escape from the influence of the bodily nature, and have thus drawn away from the body the health-giving strengthening forces of the soul, the body is made susceptible to all sorts of ailments. While a true asceticism strengthens the soul, which then works back on the body and makes it resistant to illness coming from outside, a false asceticism makes a person vulnerable to any illness of that kind.

That is the dangerous connection between false asceticism and the illnesses of our time. And it is this that gives rise in wide circles, where such things are easily misunderstood, to manifold errors as to the influence a spiritual-scientific outlook can have on those who adopt it. For people who seek to come to a sight of the spiritual world by way of a false asceticism are a fearful spectacle for onlookers. Their false asceticism opens up a wide field of action for harmful influences from the outer world. For these people, far from being strengthened to resist the errors of our time, are well and truly exposed to them.

Examples of this can be seen in many theosophical tendencies today. Merely calling oneself a "Theosophist" does not automatically guarantee the ability to act as a spiritual impulse against the adverse currents of the present time. When materialism prevails in the world, it is to some extent in tune with the concepts which are formed in observing the sense-world. Hence we can say that the materialism which applies to the external world and knows nothing of a spiritual world is in a certain sense justified. But in the case of an outlook which sets out to impart something about the spiritual world and takes

into itself a caricature of the materialistic prejudices of our day because it is not founded on a real strengthening of spiritual forces, the result is much worse. A theosophical outlook permeated by contemporary errors may in some circumstances be much more harmful than a materialistic outlook; and it should be remarked that thoroughly materialistic concepts have spread widely in theosophical circles. So we hear the spirit spoken of not as *Spirit*, but as though the spirit were only an infinitely refined form of nebulous matter. In speaking of the etheric body, these people picture only the physical refined beyond a certain point, and then they speak of etheric "vibrations". On the astral level the vibrations are still finer; on the mental level they are finer still, and so on. "Vibrations" everywhere! Anyone who relies on these concepts will never attain to the spiritual world; he will remain embedded in the physical world to which these concepts ought to be confined.

In this way a materialistic haze can be thrown over the most ordinary occasions in daily life. For instance, if we are at a social gathering which has a pleasant atmosphere, with people in harmony, and someone remarks on it in those terms, that may be a humdrum way of putting it; but it is a true way and leads to a better understanding than if at a gathering of theosophists one of them says how good the vibrations are. To say that, one has to be a theosophical materialist with crude ideas. And for anyone with a feeling for such things, the whole atmosphere goes out of tune when these vibrations are said to be dancing around. In these cases one can see how the introduction of materialistic ideas into a spiritual outlook produces a horrifying impression on outsiders, who may then say: These people talk about a spiritual world, but they are really no different from us. With us, the light waves dance; with them the spiritual waves dance. It is all the same materialism.

All this needs to be seen in its true light. Then we shall not get a wrong idea of what the spiritual-scientific movement has to offer in our time. We shall see that asceticism, by strengthening the soul, can itself lead to the spiritual world and so bring new forces into our material existence. These are forces that make for health, not for illness; they carry healthy life-forces into our bodily organism. Of course it is not easy to determine how far a given outlook brings healthy or unhealthy forces with it, for the latter are strongly evident, as a rule, while healthy forces are usually not noticed. However, a

close observer will see how persons who stand in the stream of true Spiritual Science are fertilised by it and draw from it health-giving forces which work right down into the physical. He will see also that signs of illness appear only if something alien to a spiritual stream is introduced into it. Then the result can be worse than when the alien influence takes its course in the outer world, where people are shielded by conventions from carrying certain errors to an extreme.

If we see things in this light, we shall understand true asceticism as a preparatory training for a higher life, a way of developing our inner forces; and we shall then be taking the good old Greek word in its right sense. For to practise asceticism means training oneself, making oneself strong, even "adorning" oneself (*sich schmucken*), so that the world can see what it means to be human. But if asceticism leads you to leave the soul as it is and to weaken the bodily organism, the effect is that the soul is sundered from the body; the body is then exposed to all sorts of harmful influences and the asceticism is actually the source of all manner of ailments.

The good and bad sides of egoism will emerge when we come to consider its nature. Today I have shown how true asceticism can never be an end in itself, but only a means of reaching a higher human goal, the conscious experiencing of higher worlds. Anyone wishing to practise this asceticism must therefore keep his feet firmly planted on solid ground. He must not be a stranger to the world in which he lives, but must always be extending his knowledge of the world. Whatever he can bring back from higher worlds must always be measured and assessed in relation to his work in the world; otherwise those who say that asceticism is not work but idleness could well be right. And idleness can easily give occasion for false asceticism, especially in our time. Anyone, however, who keeps a firm foothold on the earth, will regard asceticism as his highest ideal in relation to so serious a subject as our human faculties. Our ideas can indeed rise high if we have before us an ideal picture of how our faculties should work in the world.

Let us look for a moment at the opening of the Old Testament: "And God said, Let there be light." Then we hear how God caused the physical sense-world to arise day by day from the spiritual, and how at the end of each day God looked at his creation and "saw that it was good."

Similarly we must maintain our healthy thinking, our reliable character, our unerring feelings on the firm ground of reality, in order that we may rise to higher worlds and discover there the facts which give birth to the entire physical world. Then, when as searchers we come to know the spirit, and when we apply to the world around us the forces we have developed and see how well adapted to it they are, we can see that this is good. If we test the forces we have acquired through true asceticism by putting them to work in the world, then we have the right to say: Yes, they are good.



7. Human Egoism

Berlin, 25th November 1909

Once upon a time a Society was founded with a programme announcing as its central aim: "The abolition of egoism". All its members had to pledge themselves to cultivate selflessness and freedom from egoism in any form. This Society had elected a President, as all societies do, and the thing now, was to gain support for its fundamental principle in the world at large.

It was emphatically laid down over and over again and in the most diverse ways that no member at any time or place (and especially within the Society) should cherish the slightest egoistic wish or give utterance to any kind of selfish desire.

Now this was certainly a Society with an uncommonly praiseworthy programme and an exalted human goal. But one could not immediately say that the members were seeking to exemplify in themselves the primary point in their programme, for they scarcely allowed themselves to become acquainted with unselfish human wishes. The following scene was often enacted within the Society. A member would say: "Yes, I would like this and that. But if I were to put it to the Chairman, I would be advancing an egoistic wish, and that would never do." Another member would reply: "Quite simple — I'll go on your behalf. I shall be acting as your representative, and in putting forward your wish I shall be doing something entirely selfless. But listen — there is something I would like. Naturally, it is something quite egoistic, so according to our programme I can't propose it." The first member would then say: "If you are to be so unselfish on my account, I will do something for you. I will go to the Chairman on your behalf and ask him for what you want." And so it turned out. One of the two went first to the Chairman and then, two hours later, the other member went. Both had put forward quite unselfish wishes.

"Once upon a time", I said — of course this Society has never existed. But anyone who looks round him in daily life will perhaps agree that a little of this Society is always present everywhere. At all events, my intention was only to indicate how "egoism" is one of those

words which most readily become catch-words unless they are used in a direct connection with whatever they designate; otherwise they appear in disguise and deceive us into passing casually over them.

Today we will take this catch-word, egoism, and its opposite, altruism or selflessness. We shall not treat them as catch-words, but will try to penetrate a little way into the nature of egoism. When we examine these things from the standpoint of Spiritual Science, we are not so much concerned with whatever sympathy or antipathy may be evoked by this or that human characteristic, or how it may be assessed in accordance with some prevailing judgment — these are not important points. What matters much more, is to show how the relevant characteristic originates in the human soul, and within what limits it is valid; and if it must be fought against, to determine how far it can be combated through human nature or through other existent beings.

In its literal sense, egoism is the characteristic which impels a man to give first place to his own advantage and the enhancement of his own personality, while its opposite, altruism, aims at placing human faculties at the service of others, indeed, of the whole world.

A simple consideration will show us how precarious our position is if we think only of the word egoism, and fail to enter into the thing itself. Suppose that someone proves himself to be a great benefactor in one way or another. It could well be that he is a benefactor only out of egoism, perhaps out of quite petty forms of egoism, perhaps out of vanity and the like. On the other hand, if a man is dubbed an egoist without more ado, this is by no means the last word on his character. For if a man seeks only to satisfy himself but otherwise has noble qualities, so that he sees the service of others as the best way forward for himself, we might perhaps be well pleased with such an "egoist". This may sound like a mere play on words, but is more than that, for in fact this playing on words permeates our entire life and shows itself in all realms of existence.

For everything we find in man we can find something analogous in the rest of the world. Schiller has a verse which indicates how in the realms of Nature something symbolical of an outstanding human quality can be found:

.....

Seek you the highest, the greatest?

The plant can teach it to you.

What the plant does without willing it,

Go you and do by willing it. [42]

Schiller here brings before us the being of the plant and urges man to develop in his own character something as noble as the plant is on its own level. And the great German mystic, Angelus Silesius, says much the same:

Not asking why or wherefore blooms the rose

Cares not for herself or whether men behold her. [43]

Here again we are called to look at the plant world. The plant draws in whatever it needs for growth; it asks no why or wherefore; it flowers because it flowers and cares not whom it may concern. And yet, it is by drawing its life-forces and everything it needs for itself from its environment that the plant acquires whatever worth it can have for its environment and finally for men. Indeed, it attains the highest degree of usefulness that can be imagined for a created being, if it belongs to those realms of the plant world which can be of service to higher beings. And it will now be an idle triviality to repeat here a familiar saying, although it has been quoted so often:

When herself the rose adorns,

She adorns the garden. [44]

When the rose is as beautiful as it can be, the garden is adorned. We can connect this with the word, egoism, and say: When the rose strives quite egoistically to be as beautiful as she can, and to grace herself with the finest possible form, then through her the garden becomes as beautiful as possible. Can we take this result from a lower level of existence and apply it in some way to man? We have no need to do this, for it has been done already by many others, and by Goethe best of all.

When Goethe wishes to express what man is in the most authentic sense, and how he manifests most truly his worth and the entire content of his existence, he says: "When a man's healthy nature works as a whole, when he feels himself to be living in the world as in a great and beautiful and worthy whole, when this harmony brings him a pure, free joy, then the universe, if it could come to be aware of its own self, would cry out in exultation at having reached its goal and would marvel at the height which its own being and becoming had attained."

This passage is from Goethe's splendid book on Winckelmann, [45] and elsewhere in the same book he says: "Placed upon the summit of Nature, man sees himself as another complete nature, with the task of achieving another summit in himself. To this end he heightens his powers, imbuing himself with all perfections and virtues, invoking choice, order, harmony and meaning, and finally rising to the creation of a work of art."

Goethe's whole mood shows that he is referring here to the artist only as a specialised example and that he really means: Placed upon the summit of Nature, man gathers together everything that the world can express in him and finally displays to the world its own image, mirrored from within himself; and Nature would rejoice if she could perceive in the human soul this reflected image of herself.

What else does this mean than that everything which surrounds us in the world, as Nature and as spirit, concentrates itself in man, rises to a summit, and becomes in individual men, in the individual human Ego, as beautiful, true and perfect as it can? Hence, man will best fulfil his existence if he draws in as much as possible from the outer world and makes his own everything that can blossom and bear fruit in himself.

This view of things implies that man can never do enough to combine in himself whatever the surrounding world offers, in order to manifest through himself a kind of supreme achievement of Nature. Anyone who wishes to call that "egoism" may do so. Then one could say: The human ego is there to be an organ for elements in Nature which would otherwise remain forever hidden and which can come to expression only through being concentrated in the spirit of man. But although it is natural for man to gather these elements from the natural world into himself, it also lies in his nature to bring error and confusion into the general law which leads the lower realms in outer existence towards the highest levels. This is bound up with what we call human freedom. Man could never enjoy a free existence if he were not capable of misusing in a one-sided way certain forces within him — forces which can lead to the heights and can also pervert existence and perhaps even make a caricature of it. A simple comparison will make this clear. Let us go back to the plant.

It does not generally occur to us to speak of egoism in connection with the plant. It was only in order to bring out clearly the law of egoism that we said: What comes to expression in the plants could be called egoism. Normally, we do not speak of egoism in their case. If we consider the plant world in a spiritual and not a materialistic sense, we can see that the plant is in a certain sense proof against egoism. On the one hand, the conditions of its life require it to make itself as beautiful as it can, without asking who will benefit from its beauty.

But when the plant has risen to the highest expression of its individual being, it is on the verge of having to give all this up. The plant world has a peculiar characteristic. Goethe puts this finely in his Prose Sayings: "The law of vegetable growth reaches its highest manifestation in the blossom and of this, in him, the rose is the summit. ... The fruit can never be beautiful, for then the vegetable law retreats and becomes again merely a law." [46] Thus it was clear to Goethe that the plant gives expression to its own law most vividly when it flowers. At this moment, however, it must be prepared to yield up its beauty to the process of fructification, for it is now called upon to sacrifice its highest self on behalf of its successor in the form of the seed-bud. There is something great in this act of self-sacrifice by the plant at the moment when it is rising to the point of imprinting its Ego, as it were, on its appearance. So on this lower level, we see how in Nature egoism progresses to a certain stage, and how it then

destroys and surrenders itself in order that something new may emerge. The highest manifestation of the plant, its individuality — as we may call it — which achieves its summit of beauty in the flower, begins to fade directly the new plant-seed is produced.

Now let us ask: Does anything similar occur on the human level? Yes, if we consider Nature and spiritual life in terms of the spirit, we find that something quite similar does occur in man. For man is not intended merely to reproduce his kind and to carry on the human species; he is called upon to transcend the species and to exist as an individual. We shall come to know the true form and nature of egoism in man only if we look at his being in the light of previous lectures.

In Spiritual Science, we do not regard man as consisting only of a physical body, which he has in common with the mineral kingdom. We speak of higher members of his being: the etheric body which he has in common with all living things, and the astral body, or consciousness body, the bearer of pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, which he has in common with the animal kingdom. And we say, that within these three members lives the true kernel of his being, the Ego. We must regard the Ego as the bearer of egoism both when the latter is justified and when it is unjustified. Man's development depends entirely on the work accomplished by the Ego in transforming the other three members of his being. At first, on a primitive level, his Ego is the slave of these other members; he follows all the urges, desires and passions that come from his astral body. But the further his development goes, the more will he be doing to purify his astral body, so that he transforms it into something which is ruled by his higher nature, by his Ego, and his Ego becomes increasingly the ruler and purifier of the other members of his being.

As you have heard in previous lectures, man is now in the midst of this development. In so far as he transforms his astral body, he creates what we call Spirit-self, or, in the terminology of oriental philosophy, Manas. In the future it will be possible for him to transform by degrees his etheric body, and so to create what we call Life-spirit, or Buddhi. And when finally he masters the processes in his physical body, the transformed part of it will be what we call Atman, or Spirit-man. So we look towards a future condition in which man will rule consciously, from out of his Ego, over all his activities.

These future faculties have been in preparation for a very long time. The Ego has already worked, unconsciously or subconsciously, on the three other members of man's being. In the far distant past the Ego transformed a part of the astral body, also called the sentient body, into the Sentient Soul; a part of the etheric body into the Intellectual Soul, and a part of the physical body into the Consciousness Soul. Today we shall be concerned especially with the relationship of the sentient body to the Sentient Soul.

When we observe a human being from the time of his birth and see how his faculties gradually emerge — as though from the hidden depths of his bodily nature, we can say: Here the Sentient Soul is working its way out into the light of day. The Sentient Soul, as we have seen, is fashioned by the Ego out of the sentient body, and the sentient body is built up from the young child's entire environment. We can understand this if we recall Goethe's saying: "The eye is formed by light for light." [47] If we consider any sense-organ whereby man becomes conscious of the external physical world, we must set against Schopenhauer's one-sided statement, [48] that we could not see the light if we had no eyes, the equally valid statement that if there were no light, there would be no eyes. Through endless ages, as Goethe says, the all-pervading light worked on the human organism so as to fashion the sense-organ which is now able to look on the light. We can discern in the world around us the forces which have produced in man the faculties which enable us to become conscious of it. Thus the entire sentient body, the whole fabric whereby we enter into a relationship with the outer world, has been woven from its living forces. We have no share in this achievement. The astral body is a product, a flowering, of the surrounding world. Within the astral body the Sentient Soul emerges, formed by the work of the Ego from the substance of the sentient body. So the Ego lives in the sentient body and draws from it the substance of the Sentient Soul.

Now the Ego can work in a twofold way. First, it can develop in the Sentient Soul those faculties which are in harmony with the faculties and characteristics of the sentient body. An example from the field of education will make this clear. It is precisely from the field of education that we can draw the most beautiful and practical examples of what Spiritual Science is.

The sentient body is built up from a child's environment. Hence all those concerned with bringing up and educating a child have an influence on the sentient body, from the very beginning of its physical existence. They can help the sentient body to acquire the soul-qualities that are in harmony with its characteristics, as indicated by the Ego; but they can also pass on things which contradict these characteristics. If a child is brought up and educated in such a way that he can feel a living interest in everything that meets his eyes, if he can rightly rejoice in colours and forms, if musical tones give him happiness, if he can gradually bring about harmony between the impressions that come to him from outside and the feelings of joy and pleasure, of sympathetic interest in life, that arise in the Sentient Soul — then the child's inner response will be in consonance with a true picture of existence; then the inner life of his soul will harmonise with outer existence. Then, secondly, we can say that a human being does not live only within himself, capable only of fashioning a Sentient Soul in his sentient body; he can go out beyond himself. Nor is he capable only of seeing and hearing; he can pour himself out into the surrounding world and live in whatever his sentient body transmits to him. Then we have not only harmony between sentient body and Sentient-Soul; we have harmony also between the outer world and the experiences of the Sentient Soul. Then man is truly a kind of mirror of the universe; a kind of microcosm which — as Goethe said — enjoys the feeling of living in the wide expanse of a great and beautiful world.

We can take another example. If a child were to grow up on a desert island, far from any human society, some of its faculties would not develop. It would be deprived of speech, of thinking power, and of all those noble qualities which can light up only through living together with other human beings, for these are qualities which belong to man's inner being, to his soul.

Now man can develop in such a way that he goes out from himself, with his attributes, and creates harmony between himself and the world around him. Or he can let his endowments harden and dry up within himself. This happens if he fails to respond to the colours, tones and so on that he receives from the outer world, and so is unable to give them back enriched with his own interest and pleasure. A man becomes inwardly hardened if he keeps to himself whatever he acquires from associating with other people, instead of making it

contribute to human intercourse. If he secludes himself, choosing to live entirely within himself, a disharmony arises between him and his environment. A cleft opens between his Sentient Soul and his sentient body. If, after enjoying the advantages of human progress, he fails to place at the service of mankind the benefits that can flourish only in a social milieu, a gap arises between himself and his surroundings, whether it be the outer world, to which he can no longer respond, or his human environment, to which he owes his finest interests. The result is that he becomes inwardly dried up, for he cannot be advanced or enlivened by anything that comes to him from outside if it is torn from its roots, and this is what happens if he fails to allow his soul-life to flow out into the world around him. And if he continually reinforces his seclusion from the outer world, the effect is that his soul-life tends to wither and die away. This is precisely the bad side of egoism, and we must now characterise it in greater detail.

When egoism takes this form, so that man is not continually nourished and vitalised by the outer world, he is heading for his own extinction. That is the check generally imposed on egoism, and thereby the true nature of egoism is made clear. For whereas man, by absorbing the forces of the surrounding world, enables the world to attain a summit in himself, he then has to do consciously what the plant does unconsciously. At the very moment when the plant is in course of imprinting its inner being on its visible form, the power behind the plant leads its egoistic principle over into a new plant. But man, as a self-conscious being and an Ego-bearer, is required to bring about by his own efforts this development in himself. At a certain stage he must be prepared to surrender whatever he has received from outside and to give birth, within his own Ego, to a higher Ego; and this higher Ego will not become hardened, but will enter into a harmonious relationship with the entire world.

The knowledge that a one-sided egoism destroys itself can be verified by ordinary observation of life. One needs only to look at people who are unable to take any active interest in the great and beautiful ordering of nature from which the human organism draws its form and substance. How painful it is for anyone who understands these things to see how some people pass indifferently by the world to which they owe their eyes and ears; how they cut themselves off from the world in which their existence is rooted and wish only to be left alone with their inward brooding. Then we see how this perverted way

of living brings its own penalty. Anyone who follows it goes through life in a state of chronic boredom; he pursues one desire after another, not realising that he is seeking satisfaction in vague phantoms, when he should be giving himself out to the world from which his own existence has come about. Anyone who goes through life saying: People are a burden, I have no use for them, they disturb my life, I am too good for this world — anyone who talks like that should merely reflect that he is repudiating the origin of his existence. If he had grown up on a desert island, far from the human society that he regards as not good enough for him, he would have remained dumb and would never have developed the faculties he now has. All that he finds so great and praiseworthy in himself would be absent, were it not for the people he has no use for. He should realise that he has separated himself from his environment by his own willful choice, and that in fact he owes to his environment the very faculties which now repudiate it.

If a man pursues this course, he not only kills the interest he might have taken in nature and human life, his own life-force declines and he condemns himself to a desolate, dissatisfied existence. All those people who indulge in world-weariness because they find nothing anywhere to interest them, should for once ask themselves: What is my egoism doing to me? Here a cosmic law is indicated. Wherever egoism takes a perverted form, it has a desolating effect on living. That is the good thing about egoism: if it is carried to an extreme, it destroys the egoist.

If now we take the great law that we have gained from studying egoism and apply it to the various faculties of the human soul, we can ask, for example: How does egoism affect the Consciousness Soul, through which man acquires knowledge of the world around him? In other words, when can a piece of knowledge prove fruitful? It will be truly fruitful only if it brings a man into harmony with the rest of the world. This means that the only concepts and ideas that can invigorate the human soul are those drawn from the life of the great outer world, and then only if we are in harmony with the outer world. That is why all ways of knowledge which seek, above all, to reach the great truths of existence, step by step, are so health-giving for the soul, and also, therefore, for the physical body. On the other hand, anything that

leads us away from a living connection with the world, as solitary inward brooding does, or anything that brings us into discord with the world, will have a hardening effect.

Here is an appropriate occasion to refer once more to the widely misunderstood saying, "Know thyself!", which has a meaning valid for all epochs. Only when a man realises that he belongs to the whole world, that his Self is not confined within his skin but is spread out over the whole world, over sun and stars, over all earthly creatures, and that this Self has only created an expression of itself within his skin — only if he recognises that he is interwoven with the entire world — only then can he make proper use of the saying, "Know thyself". For self knowledge is then world-knowledge. A man who fails to realise this is like a finger which imagined it could achieve an individual existence apart from the rest of the organism. Cut it off, and in three weeks it will quite certainly no longer be a finger. The finger has no illusions about that; only man supposes that he could do without any connections with the world. World-knowledge is self-knowledge and self-knowledge is world-knowledge. Any sort of inward brooding is merely a sign that we cannot get away from ourselves. Very great harm is therefore done when in certain theosophical circles today it is said: A solution of the riddle of existence will not be found in the world outside, or in phenomena permeated by the spirit, but in your own self. "Look for God in your own breast" — that is the injunction often heard. "You need not exert yourself to seek for revelations of the cosmic Spirit out there in the universe. You have only to look within yourself; you will find it all there." This kind of instruction does the student very bad service. It makes him proud and egoistic with regard to knowledge. The result is that certain theosophical directives, instead of training a person in selflessness, instead of freeing him from himself and bringing him into relation with the great riddles of existence, have a hardening effect on him. One can appeal to man's pride and vanity by telling him: "You need learn nothing from the world; you will find it all in yourself." We appeal to truth when we show that to be in harmony with the great world can enable a man to become greater in himself and therefore greater in the world.

This applies also to human feeling and to the entire content of the Intellectual Soul, which gains in strength when a man knows how to achieve harmony between himself and the outer world. Strength and

power are not acquired by sitting down and brooding all day long over such questions as — "What shall I think now? What shall I do? What's that pain I feel coming on again?" — but by opening the heart to everything great and beautiful in our surroundings, and by showing interest and understanding for everything that warms the hearts of others, as well as for their wants and privations. In this way we strengthen the life-forces in the realm of feeling within us; we overcome narrow minded egoism and we enhance and enrich our Ego by bringing the true form of egoism into harmony with our environment.

This comes out very clearly when we consider the human will and the Consciousness Soul itself. A man who exerts his will only for himself and his own advantage will always feel inwardly dissatisfied. Only when he can see his resolves reflected in the outer world and his will-impulses realised in action — only then can he say that he has brought his willing into harmony with outer events. And here we learn that our inner strength and power are not developed by anything we will for ourselves, but by whatever we will for the outer world and for other people. Our willing becomes reality and its reflection shines back to us. As our eyes are formed by light, so is our strength of soul developed by our actions and activities.

Thus we see how man, as a self-conscious being, is able through a right comprehension of his "I", his Ego, to arrive at harmony between himself and the world around him, until he grows out of himself and accomplishes the birth of what we may call a higher man. In this way he brings forth something in himself, even as a plant on a lower level brings forth out of itself a new being at the moment when it is in danger of becoming hardened in its own existence. That is how we must understand egoism. The human Ego, having been fructified by the surrounding world, brings forth on the heights of existence a new Ego, and will then be ripe to flow out into actions which would otherwise give expression only to worthless demands and useless moral postulates. For only through world-knowledge can the will be fired to act on the world in return. Whatever points may be set out in the programmes of societies, however many societies may have "universal human love" at the head of their programmes, these moral injunctions will have no practical effect.

All the ordinary preaching of human love is as though a stove were standing in a cold room and someone says to it: "Dear stove, your moral duty as a stove is to warm the room". You could go on like that for hours or days — the stove would not be moved to make the room warm. Similarly, men will not be moved by sermons to practise human love, even if you were to preach to them for centuries that men ought to love one another. But bring the human Ego into connection with the content of the whole world, let people participate in the radiance of flowers and in all the beauties of Nature, and you will soon see that this participation is a foundation for the higher participation that can arise between human being and human being.

By gaining knowledge of human beings and human nature, man learns to meet the faults and good qualities of others with understanding. Wisdom of this kind, derived from approaching the world with living insight, passes over into the blood, into action and will. And what we call human love is born from it. Just as babbling to the stove is useless, when what we need to do is simply to bring wood and start a fire, so should we bring to human beings the fuel that will kindle, warm and illuminate their souls; and the fuel required is knowledge of the world, so that understanding of human nature and harmonious consonance between the human Ego and the outer world are brought about. Then we shall in fact be kindling human love — a love that can flow from heart to heart and draw human beings together, teaching them that actions performed only for ourselves have a deadly, desolating effect upon us, while actions that have a helpful influence on the lives of others are reflected back to enhance our own strength. Through a right understanding of egoism, accordingly, our Ego is enriched and enabled to develop, if, as far as possible, we realise our own Self in the service of another, and strive to cultivate not only personal feeling, but fellow feeling, as far as we can. That is how the nature of Egoism is seen by Spiritual Science.

The subject we have touched on today has deeply interested all the thinkers who have pondered seriously on human existence. The nature of egoism was bound to concern outstanding men during the 18th century, a time when man as an individual had broken free from certain ties with his social environment. One of these outstanding men was Goethe. And he has given us a work, *Wilhelm Meister's Years of*

Apprenticeship and its sequel *Wilhelm Meister's Year's of Travel*, which we can take as an example, as if drawn from the world, of his thoughts on the nature of egoism.

Just as Faust occupied Goethe throughout his life, so did *Wilhelm Meister*. As early as the seventeen-sixties, Goethe felt that he had the task of depicting, in the peculiar life of Wilhelm Meister, a kind of mirror-image of his own life, and it was in his old age, when he was nearing his death, that he completed the *Years of Travel*. It would take us too far to go into the details of *Wilhelm Meister*, but perhaps you will allow me to outline the problem of egoism as we meet it here in Goethe.

A thoroughgoing, refined egoist, one might say, is portrayed here. Wilhelm Meister was born into the merchant class, but he is enough of an egoist to abandon this calling, in spite of the claims of duty. What, then, does he really want? We are shown how he wants to develop his own Self to the highest degree and with the utmost freedom. He has a dim presentiment of becoming some kind of perfected man. Thus Goethe leads Wilhelm Meister through the most varied experiences, so as to show how life works upon this individuality in order to raise it to a higher level. Of course, Goethe is well aware that Wilhelm Meister is driven around by all sorts of circumstances and reaches no definite goal. Hence at one point he calls him a "poor wretch". [49] But at the same time he knows that although a man may have to work his way through folly and errors, he is led by certain forces to a certain goal, or at least along a certain path. It was Goethe's opinion, which never left him, that human life is never completely at the mercy of chance, but is subject, like all things, to laws — indeed, spiritual laws. Therefore Goethe says that the whole human race can be regarded as a great individual, striving upwards and making itself the master of chance. [50]

Goethe's intention, accordingly, is to show Wilhelm Meister as intent always on heightening, enriching and perfecting his Ego. At the same time, he leads Wilhelm Meister into a way of life which is, strictly speaking, at one remove from actuality. The whole character of the 18th century can help us to understand why Wilhelm Meister is led away from pursuing a career in the world of real events and brought into the theatre, where he mingles with people who present an appearance, a picture, of life. Art itself is, in a certain sense, an image

of life. It is not part of immediate reality but raises itself above this reality. Goethe knew very well that the artist, standing alone with his art, is in danger of losing the firm ground of reality from under his feet. It has been well said that the Muse may accompany a man but cannot lead him through life.

To begin with, Wilhelm Meister gives himself over entirely to the forces that belong to art, and especially the art of the theatre, with its beautiful illusions. If we follow the course of his life, we find that he is habitually torn to and fro between dissatisfaction and joy, and these swings of feeling are evident already during his time in the theatre. At last he experiences a kind of model performance of *Hamlet*, and this gives him a certain satisfaction within the limits of the theatrical world. His Ego is enhanced.

Two episodes are particularly important for understanding this first part of the story, the *Years of Apprenticeship*, and they show clearly that Goethe had the nature of egoism at the back of his mind. The first episode concerns little Mignon, who is found by Wilhelm Meister in somewhat dubious company and accompanies him as a wonderful attendant for a while.

Some very significant remarks about Mignon were made to Chancellor von Müller [51] by Goethe in his old age. He referred to Madame von Stael's comment that all the part about Mignon was an episode which did not really belong to the story. Goethe agreed that anyone interested only in the external narrative might say that the Mignon episode could be left out. But it would be quite wrong to suppose, Goethe continued, that the part about Mignon was *only* an episode; in fact, the whole of *Wilhelm Meister* had been written on account of this remarkable figure.

Goethe was apt to express himself somewhat radically in conversation and to say things that are not to be taken literally. But if we go more deeply into the matter, we can come to see why he spoke in this way to Chancellor von Müller. In the figure of Mignon — this is not a personal name but means simply "the darling" — we are shown a human being who lives just long enough for the germ of anything that can properly be called egoism to develop in her. The whole psychology of Mignon is most remarkable. In her own naive way she expresses everything that could be called participation in the whole

world. She never gives any sign of acting from selfish motives. Things that other people do out of self-interest are done by her quite naturally. She is naive in the sense that egoism has not yet awoken in her. Directly Wilhelm Meister embarks on an episode in his life which breaks his bond of union with Mignon, she fades away and dies, just as a plant withers when it has reached a certain stage in its existence. She is not yet a fully human person, not yet an "Ego"; she represents a childlike naiveté in relation to everything in the world around her. She dies as a plant dies, and one could indeed apply to her the lines:

.....
Not asking why or wherefore blooms the rose,

Cares not for herself or whether men behold her.
.....

One might say that two apparently identical actions are different when they are performed by different persons! What other people do out of egoism Mignon does naturally, and directly that there could be a question of an egoistic impulse arising in her soul, she dies. That is the enchantment of her character: we have before us a human being without ego-hood who slips through our fingers at the first stirring of egoism within her. And since Goethe was specially interested in egoism in *Wilhelm Meister*, it is quite conceivable that he should have said in effect at the time: What you are looking for in Wilhelm Meister, you will find in his counterpart, Mignon. The impulse that shows itself in the little creature, and dies with her at the moment of its appearance, is the same impulse that plagues Wilhelm Meister with so many difficulties when he tries to develop his Ego, and on account of which he has to go through a complete education in the school of life.

We then find woven into the story of Wilhelm Meister the apparently unconnected part called *Confessions of a Beautiful Soul*. It is known that these confessions are taken almost word for word from a diary kept by Goethe's friend, Susanne von Klettenberg. They show, one might say, the nature of egoism at its highest point. This beautiful soul, Susanne von Klettenberg, rose indeed to high levels, but these confessions bring out the danger of egoism, the reverse side of the enrichment of the Ego, for it is her own development that Susanne von Klettenberg describes.

First, she relates how, like other people, she delighted in the world around her. Then, one day, something awakens in her soul and tells her: "Living within you is something that will bring you nearer to the God within you." These inward experiences have the effect of estranging her from the outer world; she no longer feels any interest in it. But she finds continual joy and blessedness and inward happiness in her experience of communion with what she inwardly calls her "God". She withdraws entirely into her inner life. Yet this beautiful soul cannot escape from the feeling that her chosen way of life is nothing else than a refined form of egoism.

The dawning of this type of spiritual element in the soul, where it estranges a person from the outer world, shuts him off from his environment and makes him cold and heartless towards it, may bring him some satisfaction and a certain happiness, but in the long run it does him no good. By alienating him from the world around him it has a desolating effect on his soul. But this beautiful soul is also an energetic, striving soul, and she goes on from stage to stage.

She is not able to sever herself entirely from the impressions that come from the outer world and can lead to harmony with it. So she is forever seeking the mysteries that underlie the symbols of the various religions, hoping to see reflected there the divinity that had arisen in her soul. But whatever she can experience in these outer forms is not enough for her; she is resolved to go further. Finally, she is led to a remarkable stage in her life. One day she says to herself: Everything human on our earth was not too mean for God to descend and incarnate himself in a man. And at that moment she feels that the outer world is not debased by being only an expression of the spiritual rather than the spiritual itself, or because it represents a decadence of the spiritual; for now she feels that the outer world is permeated by the spirit and that man has no right to detach himself from his environment.

Then another experience comes to her and she says to herself: It was a true event that is said to have taken place in Palestine at the beginning of our era. She enters into this and experiences in herself the whole life of Christ Jesus up to His crucifixion and death. She experiences the divine in herself in such a way that — as she clearly describes — everything which appears to the physical senses as external image recedes and becomes purely spiritual experience; the

invisible becomes visible and the inaudible, audible. Now she feels herself united not with an abstract divinity, but with a divine presence belonging to the earthly world. But she has again withdrawn in a certain sense and cannot find her way back into ordinary life. Then something comes to her which enables her to see in every natural object, in every detail and circumstance of daily life, the imprint of the spiritual; and she regards this as a kind of highest stage. And it is characteristic of Goethe that it was for him a kind of confession to be able to communicate the *Confessions of a Beautiful Soul*.

What was it that Goethe wished to indicate here as an important point in Wilhelm Meister's education? Wilhelm Meister was to read the manuscript and be led by it to a higher stage. He was to be shown that a man cannot do enough to develop in himself an active life of soul; he cannot go far and high enough in what may be called intercourse with the spiritual world; but also that to shut himself off from the outer world cannot lead to a satisfying existence, and that he can understand the great world around him only when his own enriched inner being flows out to meet it.

Thus Goethe wishes to show that a man can take the surrounding world just as it is; he will then see it as ordinary and trivial and will remain bound to the commonplace. But then he will perhaps say to himself: All that is commonplace: the spiritual can be found only by looking within oneself. And we can indeed find the spiritual there, on a very high level. But we are then all the more in duty bound, for our own sake, to return to the outer world; and now we find that the commonplace has a spiritual dimension. The same world stands before a trivially minded man and a man who has found the spirit within himself. The former accepts the ordinary trivial world of present-day Monism; the latter, having first enriched his spiritual faculties and developed the appropriate organs in himself, is aware of the spiritual behind everything perceived by the senses. Thus, for Goethe, inner development is an indirect way of gaining knowledge of the world. This is evident, above all, in the soul characterised as Wilhelm Meister. He is helped to progress by the influences that work on him from the hidden side of life.

Towards the end of the *Years of Apprenticeship* we are shown that behind Wilhelm Meister there is something like an occult society, which guides a human being while remaining invisible to him. Some

critics have complained that this kind of thing belongs to the 18th century and can have no interest for people today. For Goethe, however, something quite different was involved. He wished to show that Wilhelm Meister's Ego really had to find its way through the various labyrinths of life, and that a certain spiritual guidance of mankind does exist. The "Society of the Tower", by which Wilhelm Meister is guided, was meant to be only the outer garment of spiritual powers and forces by which a man is led, even though the course of his life may lie through "folly and confusion"; and by these invisible powers Wilhelm Meister was guided.

In our time, such things are dismissed with a condescending smile. But in our time, also, the Philistines have acquired the sole right to pass judgment on personalities such as Goethe. Anyone who knows the world will concede that no-one can find more in a man than he has in himself. And anyone could say it in relation to Goethe. But that is just what the Philistine does not say; he believes he has found in Goethe everything there is to find. For he possesses the entire range of wisdom and can survey it from his vantage-point! Naturally, he makes Goethe into a Philistine, but that is not Goethe's fault.

Wilhelm Meister's life is continued in the *Years of Travel*. Both Philistines and non-Philistines have been moved to protest at the lack of composition and the inartistic character of this sequel. Yes, indeed, Goethe served up something rather dreadful here. In his prime, out of his life-experience, he had wanted to show a person finding their way through the labyrinths of life, had wanted to present a mirror-image of himself in a certain sense; and he has told us how this was composed. He had taken great pains over the first part of the *Years of Travel*, but printing began before the later part was finished, and the printer set the type faster than Goethe could write. Goethe then had somehow to sketch out the rest. In earlier years he had written various tales and stories, for example the story of the "Holy Family", the story of the "Nutbrown Maiden", the "Tale of the New Melusine", and others. All these are included in the *Years of Travel* volume, although never intended for it. Goethe inserted these stories at various points and made quick transitions between them. Obviously, anything like orderly composition was ruled out; but still the work did not go fast enough.

Goethe had various other writings left over from earlier years, and these he now gave to his secretary, Eckermann, saying: "Slip in somewhere whatever can be slipped in!" So Eckermann patched in these remnants, and naturally the separate items are often very loosely connected. Hence it can well be said that this is an entirely formless work, and anyone is at liberty to judge it in this way from an artistic standpoint. But, after all, not a line of it was written by Eckermann. It is all by Goethe, and throughout he was giving expression to experiences of his own, with the figure of Wilhelm Meister constantly before him. Thus he was able to bring in events from his own life which had set their mark on his soul. And since Wilhelm Meister is a reflected image of himself, the various episodes meander through the story even as they had meandered through his own life, and the picture we gain from them is by no means irrelevant.

It has been said that the narrative lacks tension and is repeatedly interrupted by sagely discourses. Some people criticise the book from the ground up without having read it. They are, of course, right from their own point of view, but it is not the only one. We can learn an immense amount from these *Years of Travel* if we can muster the interest and the goodwill to raise ourselves to the level of the experiences from which Goethe learnt so much. And that is something. Must every piece of writing be skillfully composed if it can be of service to us in some other way? Is a lack of formal design so fatal? Perhaps the wealth of wisdom in *Wilhelm Meister* is fatal for those who know everything and have nothing more to learn.

It is precisely in this second part of *Wilhelm Meister* that we find described in a wonderful way how the Ego can rise to ever higher levels and become the peak of existence. We are shown in a particularly beautiful way how Wilhelm Meister takes his son Felix to a remarkable educational establishment. This, too, has been condemned by the Philistines. They have not stopped to think that Goethe had no intention of presenting this establishment as though it existed somewhere or other in the real world. He wished to give a kind of symbolic survey of the nature of education in his "pedagogical province".

People who visit this establishment are surprised to see how the life of the soul is given expression in certain gestures. In one gesture the hands are folded on the breast and the eyes turned upwards. In

another, the hands are clasped behind the back while the pupils stand side by side. Especially significant is the gesture which gives an impression of the soul bowing towards the earth. If questions are asked about the meaning of all this, one is told that the boys are taught to kindle in their souls the "three venerations", whereby the soul's development can be carried to ever higher levels. The three venerations are presented as the most important of all educational principles. First, a man must learn to look up with veneration to what is above him. Then he must learn to venerate what lies beneath him, so that he may realise how he himself has grown up from it. Then he must learn to venerate what stands beside him as equality between man and man, for only thus can he learn to venerate his own Ego in the right way. By these means he will be brought into harmony with the world around him and egoism cannot go astray.

We are then shown how the most important religions are to carry their influences into the human soul. The folk or ethnic religions should take the form of gods or spirits standing above man. The philosophical religions, as they could be called, are to inculcate veneration for our equals. And the teaching that leads us down into existence and enables us to look with proper veneration on death, sorrow and the hindrances in the world — this teaching, though it can easily be despised, leads to a right understanding of the Christian religion. For it is emphasised that the Christian religion shows how God came down into a physical body, took on himself all the misery of life and went through everything human. Veneration for what is below us should especially promote a right understanding of the Christian religion.

Thus the development of the human being is set before us with precision. Goethe describes how Wilhelm Meister is led to a kind of temple, where deeply significant pictures of the three religions are brought before the souls of the pupils from their earliest youth, and we are shown how everything in this utopian school is intended to produce a harmonious whole. But the school gives expression even more to the wise principle that from his earliest years a human being should grow up in such a way that, on the one hand, he finds harmony with his environment, while, on the other, he finds it possible to lead his Ego to ever-greater heights.

This principle is applied to all details. For example, a boy's age is not indicated by the clothes he wears. He is offered a varied range of garments and has to choose those he prefers. In this way the individual characteristics of the pupils are brought out. Moreover, since a kind of *esprit de corps* is always apt to develop, with the result that a weaker boy will imitate a stronger by choosing the same outfit, to the detriment of his own individuality, the rule is that garments are exchanged for others at frequent intervals. In brief, Goethe wished to show how the growing boy should be educated, even down to his gestures and clothes, in a way that will lead him to a life in harmony with the world around him, while promoting his inner freedom as an individual.

It has been said that all this is a fantasy and that nothing like it has ever existed. But Goethe meant to imply only that the plan could be realised somewhere at some time; the thoughts in question would flow out into the "all and everywhere" and would find an embodiment when and where they could. Those who think this impossible might be advised to read Fichte; [52] he set a high ideal before his students, but he knew what he was doing, and to those who called themselves realists while knowing little about reality, he said: We know as well as you do: and perhaps better, that ideals cannot be realised immediately in ordinary life, but ideals must be there, in order to act as regulators in life and to be transmuted into living. That must be emphasised ever and again. And of those who reject all ideals, Fichte said that in the reckoning of Providence they were left out; but may a good God — he added — grant them rain and sunshine at the right times, a good digestion and, where possible, good thoughts! This saying could be turned against those who assert that the educational establishment in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* could never exist in reality. It could exist, both in its principles and in its details, if there were people ready to give effect to such principles in a setting of everyday life.

A second episode in the *Years of Travel* introduces a remarkable personality, Makarie, who exemplifies in the highest degree a union of the individual Ego with the great Self of the world. Goethe shows us here a personality who is inwardly awakened and has developed the spirit in herself to such an extent that she lives in the spirit that permeates the world. The liberation of her inner powers gives her the knowledge that an expert astronomer acquires from calculating the courses of the stars. The highest spiritual-scientific researches are

indicated by Goethe when he describes how through spiritual science the soul can enter into the life of the universe, and how self-knowledge can become world-knowledge and world-knowledge, self-knowledge. Thus in a series of pictures we are shown how the human self must pursue its development. Rightly understood, *Wilhelm Meister* is from beginning to end an example of how the development of man is related to the nature of egoism.

If we find in a writer an exposition of a problem so important for Spiritual Science, this is for us a further proof — already apparent in our considerations of *Faust*, the *Tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*, and *Pandora* [53] — that in Goethe we have a genius who is at one with our Spiritual Science in its true sense. Goethe himself speaks in this sense when he says, in effect: We can grasp the nature of egoism only if we know that the wisdom of the cosmos had to lead man out of spiritual existence to the point where he could fall into the temptations of egoism. If this possibility had not been open to him, he could not have become the flower of all that surrounds him in the outer world. But if he succumbs to the temptations of egoism, he incurs a sentence of death on himself. The wisdom of the cosmos has ensured that everything good in the world can be overturned and appear in man as freedom, but directly he misuses his freedom and overturns himself, a measure of self-correction comes in.

Here again we have a chapter which shows us how everything bad and sinful in human nature, if we consider it from a higher standpoint, can be transmuted into good — into a pledge of man's eternal, ever ascending progress. And so, if we are not afraid to descend into the depths of pain and evil, all the teachings of spiritual science will lead us eventually to the heights, and will confirm the beautiful words which resound to us from the wisdom and poetry of ancient Greece:

Man is the shadow of a dream, but when

The sun-ray, Heaven-sent,

Shines in upon him, then

His day is bright,

And all his life transfused with sheer delight. [54]



8. Buddha and Christ [55]

Berlin, 2nd December 1909

Ever since its foundation, the spiritual-scientific movement has suffered from being confused with all sorts of other tendencies and strivings of the present day. Particularly it is accused of trying to transplant certain eastern spiritual currents, especially that of Buddhism, into the culture of the West. Hence our subject today has a special relevance for spiritual research: we are going to consider the significance of the Buddhist religion on the one hand and that of Christianity on the other, from the standpoint of Spiritual Science. Those who have often attended my lectures here will know that we intend a study in the scientific sense, ranging widely over world-events from the point of view of spiritual life.

Anyone who has thought at all seriously about Buddhism will know that its founder, Gautama Buddha, always refused to answer questions concerning the evolution of the world and the foundations of our human existence. He wished to speak only about the means whereby a man could come to a way of existence that would be satisfying in itself. This fact alone should be enough to distinguish Buddhism from Spiritual Science, for Spiritual Science never refuses to speak about world origins and the great facts of evolution. And if one particular aspect of Spiritual Science is being more and more confused with Buddhism — namely our treatment of repeated earth-lives and the working of spiritual causes from earlier lives into later ones — it is strange that Spiritual Science should be charged on this account with being a form of Buddhism. By now people should surely have grasped that Spiritual Science is not concerned with names but with ascertainable truth, independently of any name that may be given to it. The fact that the doctrine of reincarnation or repeated earth-lives is to be found among the ideas of Gautama Buddha, though in a quite different form, has no more significance for Theosophy or Spiritual Science than the fact that the elements of geometry are found in Euclid. Just as it would be absurd to accuse a geometry teacher of practising "Euclidism", so is it absurd to bring a charge of Buddhism against Spiritual Science because it has a doctrine of reincarnation and similar ideas are to be found in the Buddha. At the same time we must

make it clear that Spiritual Science provides a means of testing the spiritual sources of every religion — including Christianity, the basis of European culture, on the one hand, and Buddhism on the other.

The notion that Spiritual Science wants to be "Buddhism" is not confined to persons who know nothing of Theosophy. Even the great Orientalist, Max Muller, [56] who has done so much to make oriental religions better known in Europe, cannot rid himself of it. In discussing it with another writer he used the following analogy. If, he says, a man were to be seen somewhere with a pig that was a good grunter, no-one would be surprised; but if a man could mimic the grunting to perfection, people would gather round and look on it as a miracle! By the grunting pig Max Muller means the real Buddhism, which by then had become known in Europe. But its teaching, he continues, was attracting no attention, while false Buddhism, or what he calls "Madame Blavatsky's theosophical swindle", [57] was gaining wide acceptance.

The analogy is not very happy. Even apart from the fact that it is hardly polite to represent the true Buddhist teaching, which came to birth with so much travail, by the grunting of a pig, the analogy implies that Madame Blavatsky succeeded extremely well in producing an exact imitation of Buddhism. Madame Blavatsky deserves credit for having set the ball rolling, but nowadays very few thoughtful theosophists believe that she was successful in reproducing true, genuine Buddhism. Just as a teacher of geometry is not required to produce a replica of Euclid, so a teacher of Theosophy is not required to reproduce Buddhism.

If we wish to immerse ourselves in the spirit of Buddhism in the sense of Spiritual Science, so that we may then compare it with the spirit of Christianity, we had better not proceed immediately to its deeper doctrines, which can readily be interpreted in various ways. We will rather try to gain an impression of its significance from its whole way of thinking and forming ideas. Our best course is to start with a document that is very highly regarded in Buddhist circles: the questions put by King Milinda to the Buddhist sage, Nagasena. [58] Here we find a conversation which brings out the inner character of the Buddhist way of thinking. Milinda, the mighty and brilliant King who has never been defeated by a sage, being always able to repulse

any objections brought against his own ideas, wants to converse with Nagasena about the significance of the immortal, eternal element in human nature which passes from one incarnation to the next.

Nagasena asks the King: "How did you come here — on foot or in a chariot?" "In a chariot", the King replies. "Now", says Nagasena, "let us inquire into this question of the chariot — what is it? Is the axle the chariot? No. Is it the wheel? No. Is it the yoke? No. And so", says Nagasena, "we may go through all the parts of the chariot; none of them is the chariot. Yet the chariot we have before us is made up entirely of these separate parts. 'Chariot' is only a name for the sum total of these parts. If we set aside the parts, we have nothing left but the name."

Nagasena's aim in all this is to lead the eye away from the physical world. He wants to show that the composite form designated by a "name" does not actually exist as such in the physical world, so that he may thus bring out the worthlessness and meaninglessness of the physical sense-perceptible as the sum of its parts.

In order to make the point of this parable quite clear, Nagasena says: "Thus it is also with the composite form that is man, which passes from one earth-life to another. Is it the hands and head and legs that pass from one earth-life to another? No. Is it what you are doing today or will do tomorrow? No. What then is it that constitutes a human being? The name and the form. But just as with the chariot, when we look on the sum of the parts we only have a name. We have nothing more than the parts!"

We can bring out the argument even more clearly by turning to another parable that Nagasena sets before King Milinda. The King speaks: "You say, O wise Nagasena, that what passes from one incarnation to another are the name and form of the human being. When they appear again on earth in a new incarnation, are they the name and form of the same being?" Nagasena answers: "Behold, your mango-tree is bearing fruit. Then a thief comes and steals the fruit. The owner of the mango-tree cries: 'You have stolen my fruit!' 'It is not your fruit', the thief replies. 'Your fruit was the one you buried in the ground, where it dissolved. The fruit now growing on the tree has the same name, but it is not your fruit.'" Nagasena then continued: "Yes, it is true — the fruit has the same name and form, but it is not

the same fruit. Yet the thief can still be punished for his theft. So it is with what re-appears in an earthly life compared with what appeared in previous lives. It is only because the owner of the mango-tree planted a fruit in the earth that fruit now grows on the tree. Hence we must regard the fruit as his property. It is similar with the deeds and destiny of a man's new life on earth: we must look on them as the effects, the fruit, of his previous life. But what appears is something new, as is the fruit on the mango-tree."

In this way Nagasena sought to dissolve everything that makes up an earth-life, in order to show how only its effects pass over into the next life on earth.

This approach can give us a much better idea of the whole spirit of Buddhist teaching than we could gain from its general principles, for these — as I said — can be interpreted in various ways. If we allow the spirit of Nagasena's parables to work upon us, we can see clearly enough how the Buddhist teacher wishes to draw his disciples away from everything that stands here before us as a separate human Ego, a definite personality; how he wishes to direct attention above all to the idea that, although what appears in a new incarnation is indeed an effect of the previous personality, we have no right to speak in any true sense of a coherent Ego which passes on from one earth-life to the next.

If now we turn from Buddhism to Christianity, we could — though it has never been done — rewrite Nagasena's examples in a Christian sense, somewhat as follows. Let us suppose that King Milinda has arisen from death as a Christian and that the ensuing conversation is permeated, with the spirit of Christianity. Nagasena would then have to say: "Look at your hand! Is the hand a man? No — the hand alone does not make a man. But if you cut off the hand from the man, it will decay, and in two or three weeks it will no longer be a hand. What then is it makes the hand a hand? It is the man who makes the hand a hand! Is the heart a man? No! Is the heart something self-sufficient? No, for if we separate the heart from the man, it will soon cease to be heart — and the man will soon cease to be a man. Hence it is the man who makes the heart a heart and the heart that makes the man a man. The man is a man living on earth only because he has the heart as an instrument. Thus in the living human organism we have parts which in themselves are nothing; they exist only in relation to our

entire make-up. And if we reflect on how it is that the separate parts cannot exist on their own, we find that we must look beyond them to some invisible agency which rules over them, holds them together and uses them as instruments to serve its needs."

Nagasena could then return to his parable of the chariot and might say, speaking now in a Christian sense: "True, the axle is not the chariot, for with the axle alone you cannot drive. True, the wheels are not the chariot, for with the wheels alone you cannot drive. True, the yoke is not the chariot, for with the yoke alone you cannot drive. True, the seat is not the chariot, for with the seat alone you cannot drive. And although the chariot is only a name for the assembly of parts, you do not drive with the parts but with something that is not the parts. So the 'name' does stand for something specific! It leads us to something that is not in any of the parts."

Thus the spirit of Buddhist teaching aims at diverting attention from the visible in order to get beyond it, and it denies the significance of anything visible. The Christian approach sees the parts of a chariot, or of any other object, in such a way that the mind is directed towards the whole. From this contrast we can see that both the Christian and the Buddhist approach to the outer world have definite consequences. And if now we follow the Buddhist approach to its logical conclusion, its consequences will be plain to see.

A man, a Buddhist, stands before us. He plays his part in the world and performs various actions. His Buddhist teaching tells him that everything around him is worthless. The nothingness and non-existence of everything visible is impressed upon him. Then he is told that he ought to free himself from dependence on this nothingness in order to reach a real, higher state of being. With this aim in mind he should avert his gaze from the sense-world and from everything he could learn about it through his human faculties. Turn away from the sense-world! For if we reduce to name and form everything offered by the sense-world, its nothingness is revealed. No truth is to be found in the sense-world displayed before us!

What does the Christian way of thinking make of all this? It regards any single part of the human organism not as a separate unit, but as embraced by a real, unified whole. The hand, for example, is a hand only because man uses it as a hand. Here the thing we see points

directly to something behind it. This way of thinking thus leads to findings very different from those that derive from the Buddhist way. Hence we can say: A man stands before us. He exists as a man only because behind him stands a spiritual man who activates his constituent parts and is the directing source of whatever he does or accomplishes. That which animates the parts of his organism and lives in them has poured itself into the visible being, where it experiences the fruits of action. From thus experiencing the sense-world it extracts something we may call a "result", and this is carried over into the next incarnation, the next life on earth. Behind the external man there is this active man, this doer, who does not reject the outer world but handles it in such a way that its fruits are garnered and carried over to the next life.

If we look at this question of repeated earth-lives from the standpoint of Spiritual Science, we must say: For Buddhism, the principle that holds a man together during life does not endure; only his actions work on into his next earth-life. For Christianity, the principle that holds a man together is a complete Ego; and this Ego endures. It carries over into the next earth-life all the fruits of the preceding one.

Hence we see that what keeps these two world-outlooks decisively apart is the quite definite difference between their respective ways of thinking, and this counts for much more than theories or principles. If in our time people were not so wedded to theories about everything, they would find it easier to recognise the character of a spiritual movement from its typical concepts.

All this is connected with a final difference between the Christian and Buddhist outlooks. The core of Buddhist doctrine has been set forth in immensely significant words by the founder of Buddhism himself. Now this lecture is truly not being given in order to promote opposition to the great originator of Buddhist teaching. My intention is to describe the Buddhist world-outlook quite objectively. It is precisely Spiritual Science that is the right instrument for penetrating without sympathy or antipathy into the heart of the various spiritual movements in the world.

The Buddha-legend brings out clearly enough, even if in a pictorial form, what the founder of Buddhism was aiming at. We are told that Gautama Buddha, the son of King Suddhodana, was brought up in a royal palace, where everything around him was designed to enhance the quality of life. Throughout his youth he knew nothing of human suffering or sorrow; he was surrounded by nothing but happiness, pleasure and diversions. One day he left the palace, and for the first time the pains and sorrows, all the shadow-side of human life, met him face to face. He saw an old man withering away; he saw a man stricken with disease; above all, he saw a corpse. Hence it came to him that life must be very different from what he had seen of it in the royal palace. He saw now that human life is bound up with pain and suffering.

It weighed heavily on the Buddha's great soul that human life entails suffering and death, as he had seen them in the sick man, the aged man and the corpse. For he said to himself: "What is life worth if old age, sickness and death are inescapably part of it?"

These reflections gave rise to the Buddha's monumental doctrine of suffering, which he summarised in the words: Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering. All existence is filled with suffering. That we cannot always be united with that which we love — this is how Buddha himself later developed his teaching — is suffering. That we have to be united with that which we do not love, is suffering. That we cannot attain in every sphere of life what we want and desire, is suffering. Thus there is suffering wherever we look. Even though the word "suffering", as used by the Buddha, does not have quite the meaning it has for us today, it did mean that everywhere man is exposed to things that come against him from outside and against which he can muster no effective strength. Life is suffering, and therefore, said the Buddha, we must ask what the cause of suffering is.

Then there came before his soul the phenomenon he called "thirst for existence". If there is suffering everywhere in the world then man is bound to encounter suffering as soon as he enters this world of suffering. Why does he have to suffer in this way? The reason is that he has an urge, a thirst, for incarnation in this world. The passionate desire to pass from the spiritual world into a physical-corporeal existence and to perceive the physical world — therein lies the basic

cause of human existence. Hence there is only one way to gain release from suffering: to fight against the thirst for existence. And this can be done if we learn to follow the eight-fold path, in accordance with the teaching of the great Buddha. This is usually taken to embrace correct views, correct aims, correct speech, correct actions, correct living, correct endeavour, correct thoughts, and correct meditation. This taking hold of life in the correct way and relating oneself correctly to life, will gradually enable a man to kill off the desire for existence, and will finally lead him so far that he no longer needs to descend into a physical incarnation and so is released from existence and the suffering that pervades it. Thus the four noble truths, as the Buddha called them, are:

1. Knowledge of suffering
2. Knowledge of the causes of suffering
3. Knowledge of the need to end suffering
4. Knowledge of the means to end suffering

These are the four holy truths that were proclaimed by the Buddha in his great sermon at Benares in the fifth or sixth century, B.C. after his illumination under the Bodhi tree.

Release from the sufferings of existence — that is what Buddhism puts in the foreground, above all else. And that is why it can be called a religion of redemption, in the most eminent sense of the word, a religion of release from the sufferings of existence, and therefore — since all existence is bound up with suffering — of release from the cycle of repeated lives on earth.

This is quite in keeping with the conceptions described in the first part of this lecture. For if a thought directed to the outer world finds only nothingness, if that which holds together the parts of anything is only name and form, and if nothing carries over the effects of one incarnation into the next, then we can say that "true existence" can be achieved only if a man passes beyond everything he encounters in the outer sense-world.

It would obviously not be right to call Christianity a "religion of redemption" in the same sense as Buddhism. If we wish to put Christianity in its right relationship to Buddhism from this standpoint, we could call it a "religion of rebirth". For Christianity starts from a recognition that everything in an individual life bears fruits which are of importance and value for the innermost being of man and are carried over into a new life, where they are lived out on a higher level of fulfillment. All that we extract from a single life becomes more and more nearly perfect, until at last it appears in a spiritual form. Even the least significant elements in our existence, if they are taken up by the spiritual and given new life on an ever more perfect level, can be woven into the spiritual. Nothing in human existence is null and void, for it goes through a resurrection when the spirit has transformed it in the right way.

It is as a religion of rebirth, of the resurrection of the best that we have experienced, that we should look on Christianity — a religion for which nothing we encounter is worthless, but is rather a building-stone for the great edifice that is to arise by a bringing together of everything spiritual in the sense-world around us. Buddhism is a religion of release from existence, while Christianity is a religion of rebirth on a spiritual level. This is evident in their ways of thinking about things great and small and in their final principles.

If we look for the causes of this contrast, we shall find them in the quite opposite characteristics of Western and Eastern culture. The fundamental difference between them can be put quite simply. All genuine Eastern culture which has not yet been fertilised by the West is non-historical, whereas all Western culture is historical. And that is ultimately the difference between the Christian and the Buddhist outlooks. The Christian outlook is historical: it recognises not only that repeated earth-lives occur but that they form an historical sequence, so that what is first experienced on an imperfect level can rise in the course of further incarnations to ever higher and more nearly perfect levels. While Buddhism sees release from earth-existence in terms of rising to Nirvana, Christianity sees its aim as a continuing process of development, whereby all the products and achievements of single lives shine forth in ever-higher stages of perfection, until, permeated by the spirit, they experience resurrection at the end of earth-existence.

Buddhism is non-historical, quite in the sense of the cultural background out of which it grew. It turns its gaze to earlier and later incarnations of man and sees him in opposition to the external world. It never asks whether in earlier times man may have stood in a different relationship to the external world or whether in the future this relationship may again be different — though these are questions that Christianity does ask. So Buddhism comes to the view that man's relationship to the world in which he incarnates is always the same. Driven into incarnation by his thirst for existence, he enters a world of suffering; it matters not whether the world called forth this same thirst in him in the past or will do so in the future. Suffering, and again suffering, is what he is bound always to experience during life on earth. So earth-lives are repeated, and Buddhism never truly connects them with any idea of historical development. That is why Buddhism can see its Nirvana, its state of bliss, as attainable only by withdrawing from the ever-repeated cycle of lives on earth, and why it has to regard the world itself as the source of human suffering. For it says that if we ever enter the physical world, we are bound to suffer: the sense-world cannot but bring us suffering.

That is not Christian, for the Christian outlook is historical through and through. It recognises that man, in being born again and again, faces an external world; but if these encounters bring him suffering, or leave him unsatisfied, deprived of an inwardly harmonious existence, this is not because earthly life is always such that man must suffer, but because he has related himself wrongly to the external world.

Christianity and the Old Testament both point to a definite event, as a result of which man has developed his inner life in such a way that he can make his existence in the world around him a source of suffering. Suffering is not inflicted on us by the world we perceive through our eyes and ears, the world in which we are incarnated; humanity once developed something within itself which placed it in a wrong relation to the world. And as this is inherited from generation to generation, it is still the cause of human suffering today. In the Christian sense we can say that from the beginning of the earth-existence human beings have not had a right relation to the outer world.

This comparison can be extended to the fundamental doctrines of the two religions. Buddhism emphasises again and again that the outer world is Maya, illusion. Christianity, on the contrary, says: Man may indeed believe that what he sees of the outer world is an illusion, but that is because his organs are so constituted that he cannot see through the external veil to the spiritual world. The outer world is not an illusion; the illusion has its source in the limitations of human seeing. Buddhism says: Look at the rocks around you; look where the lightning flashes and the thunder rolls — it is all Maya, the great illusion. Christian thinking would reply that it is wrong to call the outer world an illusion. No, it is man who has not yet found the way to open the spiritual senses — his spirit-eyes and spirit-ears, in Goethe's words — which could show him how the outer world is to be seen in its true form. Christianity, accordingly, looks for a pre-historical event which has prevented the human heart from forming a true picture of the outer world. And human development through a series of incarnations must be seen as a means whereby man can regain, in a Christian sense, his spirit-eyes and spirit-ears in order to see the external world as it really is. Repeated earth-lives are therefore not meaningless: they are the path which will enable man to look at the outer world — from which Buddhism wishes to liberate him — and to see it irradiated by the spirit. To overcome the physical appearance of the world by acquiring the spiritual vision that man does not yet possess, and to dispel the human error whereby the outer world can seem to be only Maya — that is the innermost impulse of Christianity.

In Christianity, therefore, we do not find a great teacher who, as in Buddhism, tells us that the world is a source of suffering and that we must get away from it into another world, the quite different world of Nirvana. Christianity presents a powerful impulse to lead the world forward: the Christ, who has given us the strongest indication of the forces that man can develop out of his inner life-forces that will enable him to make use of every incarnation in such a way that its fruits will be carried into every succeeding incarnation through his own powers. The incarnations are not to cease in order to open the way to Nirvana; but all that we can acquire in them is to be used and developed in order that it may experience resurrection in the spiritual sense.

Herein lies the deepest distinction between the non-historical philosophy of Buddhism and the historical outlook of Christianity. Christianity looks back to a *Fall* of man as the source of pain and

suffering and onward to a *Resurrection* for their healing. We cannot gain freedom from pain and suffering by renouncing existence, but only by making good the error which has placed man in a false relationship with the surrounding world. If we correct this error, we shall indeed see that the sense-perceptible world dissolves like a cloud before the sun, and also that all our actions and experiences within it can be resurrected on the spiritual plane.

Christianity is thus a doctrine of reincarnation, of resurrection, and only in that light may we place it beside Buddhism. This, however, involves contrasting the two faiths in the sense of Spiritual Science and entering into the deepest impulses of both.

All that I have said in general terms can be substantiated down to the smallest details. For example, we can find in Buddhism something like the Sermon on the Mount in the Matthew Gospel:

He that hears the law — that is, the law imparted by the Buddha — is blessed. He who raises himself above the passions is blessed. He who can live in loneliness is blessed. He who can live with the creatures of the world and do them no harm is blessed. And so on.

Thus we could regard the Buddhist beatitudes as a counterpart of the beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. We have only to understand them in the right way. Let us compare them with the text of the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount in St. Matthew's Gospel. [59] There we hear at the beginning the powerful words: "Blessed are they who are beggars for the spirit, for they will find within themselves the kingdom of heaven." It is not said only "Blessed are they who hear the law"; there is an addition. We are told: Blessed are the poor in spirit so that they have to beg for it, for "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." What does that mean? We can understand such a saying only if we keep before our souls the whole historical character of the Christian outlook.

First of all, we must remember that all the faculties of the human soul have a history; they have evolved. Spiritual Science takes this word "evolved" very seriously, as meaning that what is there today has not been there always. It tells us that what we call our intellect, our scientific way of thinking, did not exist in primitive times; in place of it there was something we might call a dim, hazy clairvoyance. The

way in which we now achieve knowledge of the world was unknown to these early people. But there dwelt in them a kind of primitive wisdom which went far beyond anything we have been able to establish today. Anyone who understands history knows that such a primitive wisdom did exist. In those early times human beings did not know how to build machines or railway engines, or how to dominate their environment with the aid of natural forces, but their vision of the divine-spiritual foundations of the world went far beyond our present knowledge.

This vision did not come from thinking things out. Men could not then proceed as modern science does. They were given inspirations, revelations, which arose dimly in their souls. They were not wholly conscious of them, but they could recognise them as true reflections of the spiritual world and of the ancient wisdom. But as in the course of evolution man passed from life to life, he was destined to lose the old hazy clairvoyance and the ancient wisdom and to learn to grasp things with his intellect. In the future he will unite the two faculties: he will be able to look clairvoyantly into the spiritual world while retaining the forms of modern knowledge. Today we are living in a transition stage. The old clairvoyance has been lost, and what we now are has developed in the course of time. How has man reached the point of being able, as a self-conscious being, to get to know the world through his intellect? In particular, when did self-consciousness first come to man?

It was at the time — though world-evolution is not usually interpreted so exactly — when Christ Jesus appeared on earth. Men were at a turning-point given for what has produced the finest achievements of our own time. The coming of the Christ into human evolution marked the transition from the old to the new. When John the Baptist proclaimed "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand", [60] he was simply using a technical expression for the experience that would come to men when they began to gain knowledge of the world through their own self-consciousness and no longer through inspirations. The Baptist's call means that knowledge of the world in terms of concepts and ideas is near at hand. Men are no longer dependent on the old clairvoyance, but can now investigate the world for themselves. And the most powerful impulse for this new way of knowledge was given by Christ Jesus.

Hence there is a deep meaning in the very first words of the Sermon on the Mount. They might be interpreted: Men are now at the stage where they are beggars for the spirit. In the past they had clairvoyant vision and could look into the spiritual world. That time is over. But a time will come when man, through the inner force of his Ego, will be able to find a substitute for the old clairvoyance through the Word which will reveal itself within him. Blessed, accordingly, are not only those who in ancient times gained the spirit through twilight inspirations, but also those who no longer have clairvoyance because evolution has brought them to that stage. They are indeed not unblest, those who are beggars for the spirit because they have lost the spirit. Blessed are they, for theirs is that which reveals itself through the Ego and can be achieved through their own self-consciousness.

Further we read: "Blessed are they who suffer", for although the outer sense-world is a cause of suffering because of our relationship to it, the time has now come when man, if he will grasp his self-consciousness and unfold the forces which dwell in his Ego, will come to know the remedy for his suffering. Within himself he will find the possibility of consolation, for the time has come when any external consolation loses significance, because the Ego is to have the strength to find within itself the remedy for suffering. Blessed are they who can no longer find in the outer world all that was once found there. That is also the highest meaning of the beatitude, "Blessed are they who thirst after justice, for they shall be filled." Within the Ego itself will be found a source of justice that will compensate for the injustice in the world.

So it is that Christ Jesus points the way to the human Ego, to the divine element in man. Take into your inner being that which lives in the Christ as a prefiguration; then you will find the strength to carry over from one incarnation to another the fruits of your lives on earth. It is important for life in the spiritual world that you should master what can be experienced in earthly existence.

Bearing on this is an event which in the first instance is one of suffering for Christianity — the death of Christ Jesus, the Mystery of Golgotha. This death is of greater significance than ordinary death; Christ here establishes death as the starting-point of an immortal,

invincible life. This death is not merely as though Christ wished to free himself from life; he suffers it because from it works an ascending power, and because out of this death there is to flow eternal life.

This was felt by those who lived in the early centuries of Christianity, and it will be recognised more and more widely when the Christ Impulse is better understood. Then people will understand how it was that six centuries before Christ one of the greatest of men left his palace, saw a dead body and formed the judgment — death is suffering, release from death is salvation — and resolved that he would have no more to do with anything that lay under the dominion of death. Six centuries go by until the Christ comes, and after six more centuries have passed a symbol is raised which will be understood only in the future. What is this symbol?

It was not a Buddha, not a chosen person, but simple folk who went and saw the symbol; saw the cross raised and a dead body upon it. For them, death was not suffering, nor did they turn away from it; they saw in the body a pledge of eternal life, a sign of that which conquers death and points away from everything in the sense-world.

The noble Buddha saw a corpse; he turned away from the sense-world and decided that death is suffering. The simple folk who looked upon the cross and the body did not turn away from the sight: for them it was testimony that from this earthly death there springs eternal life. So it was that six hundred years before the founding of Christianity the Buddha stood before the corpse, and six hundred years after the coming of Christ simple folk saw the symbol which expressed for them what had come about through the founding of Christianity. At no other time has there been such a turning-point in the evolution of mankind. If we look at these things objectively, we come to see even more clearly wherein lie the greatness and significance of Buddhism.

As we have said, man was originally endowed with a primal wisdom, and in the course of successive incarnations this wisdom was gradually lost. The appearance of the great Buddha marks the end of an old epoch of evolution; it provides the strongest historical evidence that men had lost the old wisdom, the old knowledge, and this explains the turning away from life. The Christ is the starting-point of a new evolution, which sees the sources of life eternal in this earthly life.

In our time this important fact concerning human evolution is still not clearly understood. That is why it can happen today that men of fine and noble nature, unable to gain from modern viewpoints what they need for their inner life, turn to something different and find release in Buddhism. And Buddhism does show in a certain sense how a man can be lifted up out of sense-existence and through a certain unfolding of his inner forces can rise above himself. But this can occur only because the greatest impulse and innermost source of Christianity is still so little understood.

Spiritual Science should be the instrument for penetrating ever more deeply into the concepts and outlook of Christianity. And precisely the idea of evolution, to which Spiritual Science does full justice, will be able to lead men to an intimate grasp of Christianity. Spiritual Science can therefore cherish the hope that a rightly understood Christianity will stand out ever more clearly from all misinterpretations of it, without transplanting Buddhism into our time. Any attempt to do this would indeed be shortsighted, for anyone who understands the circumstances of spiritual life in Europe will know that even those movements which are apparently opposed to Christianity have drawn their whole armoury of weapons from Christianity itself. There could have been no Darwin or Haeckel [61] — grotesque as this sounds — if a Christian education had not made it possible for them to think as they thought; if the forms of thought had not been ready for those who, after a Christian education, use them to attack, so to speak, their own mother. What these people say, and the tone of voice in which they say it, are often apparently directed against Christianity, but it is Christian education that enables them to think in this way. It would be unpromising, to say the least, for anyone to try to graft something Oriental into our culture, for it would contradict all the conditions of spiritual life in the West. All we need to do is to get a clear grasp of the fundamental teachings of the two religions.

A more exact study of contemporary spiritual life will indeed bring out such a lack of clarity within it, that men of the highest philosophical eminence are impelled to reject life and are thus moved to sympathy with the thoughts of Buddhism. We have an example of this in Schopenhauer: [62] the whole temper of his life had something Buddhistic about it. For example, he says that the highest type of man is he whom we may call a "saint"; a man who in his life has overcome everything that the outer world can offer. He merely exists in his

body, deriving no ideals from the world around him; he has no aim or purpose, but simply waits for the time when his body will be destroyed, so that every trace of his connection with the sense-world will have vanished. By turning away from the sense-world he nullifies his own sense-life, so that nothing may remain of all that leads in life from fear to suffering, from suffering to terror, from passion to pain.

This is a projection of Buddhist feeling into the West, and we must recognise that it comes about because the deepest impulse in Christianity is not clearly understood. What have we gained through Christianity? From the purest form of the Christian impulse we have gained precisely what separates Schopenhauer decisively from one of the most significant personalities of recent times. While Schopenhauer's ideal is a man who has overcome everything that external life can give him by way of pleasure and pain, and waits only for the last traces holding his body together to be dissolved, Goethe sets before us in his Faust a striving character who passes from desire to satisfaction and from satisfaction, to desire, until finally he has purified himself and transformed his desires to such a degree that the holiest element that can illuminate our life becomes his passion. He does not stand and wait until the last traces of his earthly existence are extinguished, but speaks the great words: "Not in aeons will the trace of my days on earth pass away." [63]

The sense and spirit of all this is presented by Goethe in his Faust just as in old age he described it to his secretary, Eckermann: [64] "For the rest you will admit, that the closing passage, when the redeemed soul is borne aloft, was very difficult to manage. With such super-sensible, hardly imaginable things I could easily have lost myself in vagueness if I had not made use of clearly outlined figures and images from the Christian Church to give the requisite form and substance to my poetic intentions."

So it is that Faust climbs the ladder of existence, represented in Christian symbols, from mortal to immortal, from death to life.

We see in Schopenhauer the unmistakable projection of Buddhist elements into our western way of thinking, so that his ideal man waits to reach the state of perfection until the last traces of his earth existence have been erased, together with his body. And this vision, Schopenhauer believes, can interpret the figures created by Raphael

and Correggio in their paintings. Goethe wished to set before us a man who strives towards a goal, well aware that whatever is achieved in earthly life must be enduring, interwoven with eternity. "Not in aeons will the trace of my days on earth pass away."

That is the true, realistic Christian impulse, which leads to the reawakening of our earthly deeds in a spiritualised form. That is the religion of resurrection. It is also a realistic philosophy in the true sense, for it knows how to draw down from spiritual heights the loftiest elements for our life in the world of the senses. Thus we can see in Goethe, like a dawning glow, the Christianity of the future, which has learnt to understand itself. This Christianity will recognise all the greatness and significance of Buddhism, but, by contrast with the Buddhist turning away from incarnations, it will recognise the value of each existence from one incarnation to the next. Thus Goethe, in a truly modern Christian sense, looks at a past which brought us to birth out of a world, and at present in which whatever we achieve — if only its fruits are rightly grasped — can never pass away. When, therefore, he links man to the universal in the true spiritual-scientific sense, he cannot but join him on the other side to the true content of Christianity. Thus in his *Urworte-Orphisch* he says:

*As on the day that lent thee earthly being,
The Sun took salutation from the planets,
So didst thou start thy course and so hast sped it,
According to the law of thy first sending.
So must thou be: thyself thou canst not flee from.
Thus have the Sibyls, thus the prophets, spoken.*

Goethe could not write in this way, describing the connection of man with the whole world, without indicating that the human being, born out of the constellations of existence, is in the world as something that can never pass away but must celebrate its resurrection in spiritualised form. Hence to these lines he added two more:

No time, no power, can bring to dissolution

The form once cast in living evolution.

And we can say: **No time and no power can destroy what is achieved in time and ripens as fruit for eternity.**

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9. Something about the Moon in the Light of Spiritual Science

Berlin, 9th December 1909

The lecture I am to give today puts me in a difficult position. I want to make some remarks which fall outside the way of thinking now called "scientific". Since the views of most people are largely formed by the ideas generally current in scientific and popular-scientific circles, and since the subject-matter of this lecture will be far removed from any such ideas, the public at large may be inclined to regard my statements as mere fancies, derived from quite arbitrary cogitations, rather than for what they really are: the outcome of spiritual-scientific research.

I would ask you, therefore, to take this lecture as a sort of episode in our winter series, intended to point in a direction to which I am not likely to return this year, though it may occupy us further next year. The reason for touching on it now, is to show that what we are dealing with this winter as a science of the soul, branches out in many ways that lead from the immediate realm of human soul-life to the great connections we find in the wide universe, the whole cosmos.

Finally, I must ask you to remember that this lecture will deal only with one short chapter from a very large volume. It must be seen in strict relation to its title, *"Something about the Moon in the Light of Spiritual Science"*. It will not attempt to be in any way exhaustive.

In all sorts of popular books you will find this or that said about the moon from the standpoint of science today. But all you can learn from these sources or from the scientific literature will leave you quite unsatisfied as regards the real questions concerning this strange companion of the earth. As the 19th century advanced, the statements of science with regard to the moon became more and more cautious, but also less frequent; but today they will occupy us hardly at all. The picture of the moon's surface given by telescopes and astronomical photography, the descriptions of its surface-markings as crater-like formations, grooves, plains and valleys and

suchlike, and the consequent impressions one can gain of the purely spatial countenance of the moon — all this will not concern us. The question for us today is a truly spiritual-scientific one — whether the moon has any special influence on or significance for human life on earth.

A significance of this kind has been spoken of from various points of view in the course of past centuries. And since everything that happens on earth, year in and year out, is related to the changing position of the earth relative to the sun, and is subject to the vast influence of the sun's light and heat, it was natural to wonder whether that other heavenly luminary, the moon, might not have some importance for life on earth, and especially for human life. In the comparatively recent past, people were inclined to speak of the moon as having a fairly powerful influence on earthly life. Quite apart from the fact that it has long been customary to attribute to the moon's attraction the so-called ebb and flow of the sea, the moon has always been regarded as affecting weather conditions on earth. Moreover, as late as the first half of the 19th century, serious scientists and doctors collated observations of how the moon in its various phases had a definite effect on certain illnesses, and even on the course of human life as a whole. It was then by no means a mere popular superstition to consider the influence of the moon in relation to the ups and downs of fever, of asthma, of goitre and the like; there were still doctors who recorded such cases because they felt compelled to believe that the phases of the moon had some influence on the course of human life and on health and disease in particular.

With the rise of that scientific way of thinking which had its dawn and sunrise in the middle of the 19th century, the inclination to allow the moon any influence on human life diminished continuously. Only the belief that the moon causes the tides of the sea survived. And there was one very important scientist, Schleiden, ^[65] who poured out the vials of his wrath on those who still believed in the influence of the moon, even if it were only on the weather or on some other terrestrial phenomena. Schleiden, who had done outstanding work in his own sphere by his discovery of the significance of the plant-cell, launched a vehement attack on another German natural scientist, Gustav Theodor Fechner, ^[66] notable especially for directing attention to certain subtle or frontier aspects of research. Thus in his *Zend Avesta* Fechner tried to show that the life of plants is endowed with

soul, while in his *Introduction to Aesthetics* and his *Elements of Psychophysics* he achieved a great deal for the more intimate aspects of natural science. It may be better not to discuss this celebrated controversy about the moon without saying a little more about Fechner himself.

Fechner was an investigator who tried, with immense assiduity and great care and precision, to bring together the external facts in various fields of research; but he also used a method of analogies in order to show, for example, that all the phenomena of plant-life, and not only of human life, are ensouled. Starting with the phenomena of human life as it runs its course, he took similar facts and phenomena as they appear to observation in, let us say, the life of the earth, or of a whole solar system, or of the plant-world. When he compared these phenomena with those of human life, he found one analogy after another. Hence he concluded — to put it roughly — that in studying human life, with its ensoulment, we observe the occurrence of certain phenomena; and if in observing other phenomena we can establish certain similarities with human life, why should we not recognise the other phenomena as being also "ensouled"?

Anyone who stands on the ground of Spiritual Science, and is used to examining everything related to the spiritual in as strictly scientific a sense as the natural scientist applies to his studies of external phenomena, will feel that a good deal of what Fechner works out so cleverly is merely an ingenious game; and however stimulating a game of this kind may be, the greatest care must be taken in dealing with mere analogies. When a stimulating thinker such as Fechner employs this method, his work may be very interesting. But there are people of whom it can justly be said that they would like to solve the riddles of the world with as little knowledge and as much comfort as possible. And if they lean on Fechner and make his methods their own, we must remember that an imitator or a copyist does not by any means call forth in us the same feelings of satisfaction as does the man who was first in his own field — a man who we recognise as gifted and stimulating, even though we cannot credit him with anything more.

We have no need to characterise Schleiden any further than by saying that he discovered the significance of the plant-cell. Clearly such a man, who directed all his perceptive and cognitive faculties

towards the immediately real — that is, towards what can be perceived with external instruments — will have little sympathy for analogies or with anything else that Fechner spoke of in his endeavours to show that plants are ensouled; for in Schleiden's view they are made up of single cells, and this fact naturally seemed to him, as its discoverer, a wonderful thing. So for Schleiden it was something of an outrage that speculations, with this brilliant model available as a starting-point, should prefer to deal with some even subtler relationships in nature. It was particularly Fechner's method of analogies that aroused Schleiden's wrath, and in this connection he touched on the question of the moon. With reference not only to Fechner but to all those who clung to the centuries-old tradition of attributing to the moon all sorts of influences on the weather, etc., he said that for these people the moon was like a cat in the house, held responsible for everything that cannot be otherwise explained.

Fechner naturally felt challenged as he was the main target of these attacks. He at once embarked on a work which — whether or not we agree with it — is highly stimulating. Although many details in it have since been corrected, Fechner's pamphlet, "Schleiden and the Moon", published in 1856, is remarkably interesting. He had no need to go into the influence of the moon on the ebb and flow of the tides, for this was admitted even by Schleiden. It was the supposed connection of the moon with weather conditions that made the moon, for him, the cat of scientific research. Fechner therefore set out to investigate the very facts that his opponent brought against him, and from this material he drew some notable conclusions. Anyone who cares to check his procedure will find that in this investigation Fechner was an exceptionally cautious worker with a thoroughly scientific approach. His first conclusion from a mass of facts — which I need not repeat, for anyone can read them for himself — was that the quantity and frequency of rainfall were in many cases shown to be greater with a waxing than with a waning moon: greater when the moon approached the earth, smaller when it receded; and the proportion of rainfall during a waxing moon to that during the wane was 107:100. The recorded observations he used did not cover a few years only; some of them extended over many decades and concerned not a single locality but many parts of Europe.

In order to exclude chance effects, Fechner now assumed that some other condition, excluding the moon, might have produced this proportion of 107:100. He then studied weather conditions on the odd and even dates of the moon's phases, for he said that if the waning and waxing were not the cause, the odd and even days of the month would produce similar results. But that was not the case. Quite different figures emerged: the relationship was not constant but variable, so that here it could be attributed to chance.

Fechner himself realised that he had not achieved any world-shattering result; he had to recognise that the moon had no very great influence on the weather, but the facts did point to some influence. And he had, as you will have seen, proceeded quite scientifically, taking account only of observations carefully recorded for definite places. He made similar researches in relation to fevers and other bodily phenomena, and here too he obtained small positive results. It could hardly be denied that phenomena of this kind may take a different course under the waxing and under the waning moon. Thus the old view of the moon fought its last fight in the middle of the 19th century through the work of this highly gifted man, Fechner.

This example shows very well how wrong it is to accept the increasingly common assertion that science compels us to talk no more about the spiritual background of things, for science — we are assured — is on the verge of learning how to combine simple materials in such a way as to produce living substance. It is agreed that we have far to go before we can make protein from its constituents — carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and so on — but the whole tendency of science is to make us admit that one day it will be done. When it has been done, the only tenable outlook — so we are told by those who make these assertions — will be a monistic one which holds that a living, thinking being is made up of nothing but an assembly of material elements.

Anyone who talks in this vein will have drawn on the latest aims and achievements of science to convince himself that we are not justified in postulating something spiritual behind what we perceive with our senses or are told by external science; for happily — he will feel — we are long past the days when it could be claimed that some kind of vague life-wisdom lies behind the sense-perceptible world.

At this point we may well ask. Is it really science that compels us to reject spiritual research? Is that a scientific conclusion? I want to remain entirely on the ground of those who believe that in the not too distant future it will be possible to produce living protein out of simple substances. Is there anything in that which compels us to say that life is materially constituted and that we must not look anywhere for the spirit?

An ordinary historical observation will show how unnecessary this conclusion is. There was a time when it was believed not only that carbon, hydrogen, etc., could be used to produce living protein, but that a whole man could be built up from the necessary ingredients in a retort. The worth of this belief need not concern us — you can read a poetical treatment of it in the second part of *Faust*. The point is that there were times when people really believed — however crazy it may seem to us — that Homunculus could be put together out of separate components. Yet in those times no-one doubted that behind the sense-perceptible was the spirit. Hence you can prove historically that no "science" can compel us to reject the spirit, for this depends on something quite different — on whether or not a capacity to discern the spirit is there. Neither the science of today nor the science of tomorrow can ever compel us to reject the spirit. We can take a perfectly scientific standpoint, but whether or not we reject the spirit does not depend on science. It depends on whether or not we are able to discern the spirit, and science cannot determine that.

So, without agreeing from the spiritual-scientific point of view either with Schleiden or with Fechner, we can understand that Schleiden, with his eyes fixed on the sense-world, rejected everything that might be sought as soul or spirit behind the phenomena. But it was not on scientific grounds that he took this attitude; he was simply so inured to looking at visible things that he had no sympathy for anything else. Fechner was a quite different sort of man; his outlook embraced the spiritual, and though he made one error after another he was a man of different quality, one who sought the spirit. Hence his tendency was not to reject but to clarify the significance of the subtler influences of the heavenly bodies on one another. He said to himself: When I look at the moon, it is not for me merely the slag-heap it looks like through a telescope; it is ensouled, as are all other bodies. Hence the moon-

soul must have effects on the earth-soul, and these come to expression below the surface of ordinary life or in weather phenomena.

Now it is noteworthy, and has often been pointed out here, that the method of spiritual-scientific research is directed towards the practical, and that the best proofs of what it has to say can be found in everyday life. And that is just how Fechner set about defending his views. He suggested that the dispute between Schleiden and himself over the moon could perhaps be best settled by their wives. He said: "We both need rainwater for washing, and it could be collected in relation to weather conditions. Since Schleiden and I live under the same roof and can collect water at definite times, I suggest that my wife collects it during the waxing moon and Schleiden's wife during the wane. I am sure she will agree in order not to put her husband's theory to shame, the more so as she sets no great store by it. The result will be that my wife will have an extra can for every fourteen cans collected by Frau Schleiden, but for the sake of overcoming a preconceived opinion she will surely make this sacrifice." [67]

Here, then, we have drawn on the history of thought to show how the moon and its influence on the earth were regarded not very long ago. Nowadays one might say that people are more advanced in their scientific outlook — as they would call it — and so have gone a step beyond Schleiden in the sense that they would treat as a superstitious dreamer anyone who clung to the belief that the moon could have anything to do with weather conditions and the like. Even among quite sensible people today you will find no other opinion than that the moon has influence only on the tides; all other opinions having been superseded.

If we take the standpoint of Spiritual Science, we are of course not obliged to swear to everything that was once part of popular belief. That would be to confuse Spiritual Science with superstition. Quite often today we encounter a piece of superstition — which is really a misunderstood popular belief and are told it is part of Spiritual Science. A superstition about the moon can indeed be seen at every street-corner, for it is well known that an emblem of the moon is attached to our barbers' shops — why? Because it was once generally believed that the sharpness of a razor was connected with a waxing moon. In fact there were times when no-one would have cared to

shear a sheep during the wane, for he would have believed that the wool would then not grow again. This is a superstition very easy to disprove, for anyone who shaves knows that the beard grows again during the wane. In this realm it is just as easy to mock as it is hard, on the other side, to see clearly. For we are coming now to a particular question where at last we touch on Spiritual Science. It concerns the ebb and flow of the tides, universally regarded as coming under the influence of the moon.

The flood-tide is thought to be obviously connected with the attractive force of the moon, and is looked for when the moon reaches its meridian. When the moon leaves the meridian, the flood is expected to change to ebb. But we need only remark that in many places ebb and flow occur twice, while the moon stands at the meridian only once during the same period. And there are other facts. You can learn from travel-books that in many parts of the earth the flood by no means coincides with the moon's meridian; in some places it occurs up to two and a half hours later. Certainly, science has thought up excuses to account for this: we are told that the flood is retarded. But there are also certain springs which show an indubitable ebb and flow; in some cases the well ebbs when the ocean tide is at flood, and *vice versa*. We are told that these cases, too, are examples of retarded ebb or flow in some cases so retarded as to run into the other phase. Of course this kind of explanation can explain almost anything.

One question has been rightly asked: whence does the moon get this power to attract the sea? The moon is much smaller than the earth and has only about a seventieth of the earth's attractive power, while to set the great masses of the sea into motion would require millions of horse-power. Julius Robert Mayer [68] made some interesting calculations on this question and it leads on to numerous other problems. Hence we can say: Here is something which is regarded as scientifically irrefutable, and yet, although no objections to it are heard, it is in fact highly vulnerable.

One very significant fact, however, remains. Although the position and influence of the moon are such that it is hard to speak of an immediate relation of cause and effect, it holds true that a definite flood occurs every day — in relation to the moon's meridian — about fifty minutes later than on the previous day. The regular sequence of

ebb and flow does therefore correspond to the course of the moon, and that is the most significant fact of all. Thus we cannot speak of the moon at its meridian as having an actual influence on flow and ebb, but we can say that the course of the moon's orbit does stand in a certain correspondence with the course of the tides.

Now, to go a little way into the spiritual-scientific way of thinking, I would like to refer to a similar fact which gave Goethe a great deal of trouble. Most people know very little about the preoccupations of this great genius of modern times, but anyone who, like myself, has spent many years in the study of Goethe's scientific writings and has seen his manuscripts in the Goethe-Schiller Archives at Weimar, makes some surprising discoveries. He will, for example, come upon the preliminary notes which Goethe later condensed into a few pages as his meteorology. [69] He pursued these inquiries with enormous diligence and assiduity. Again and again he got his friends to collect facts and figures for him to tabulate. The purpose of these extensive studies was to show that the level of barometric pressure at various places is not due to chance but varies in some quite regular way. And Goethe did in fact assemble a great deal of evidence which indicated that in all sorts of places the rise and fall of the barometer were subject to a law which extended all round the globe. He hoped to disprove the assumption that air pressure depends entirely on external influences. He knew, of course, that densification and rarefaction of the air, resulting in pressure changes, were generally attributed to the moon, sun and other cosmic factors. He wanted to prove that whatever the positions of the constellations, whatever the effects of sun and moon on the atmosphere, a constant regularity in the rise and fall of air pressure prevails all round the globe. Hence he wished to show that in the earth itself lay the causes of the rise and fall of the barometer, for he believed that the earth is not the dead body it is usually taken to be, but is permeated by invisible elements from which all life flows, just as man has, in addition to his physical body, invisible elements which permeate him. And just as man has his in-breathing and out-breathing, where he draws in or releases air, so does the earth, as a living being, breathe in and out. And this in-breathing and out-breathing of the earth, as manifestations of its inner life, are registered externally in the rise and fall of the mercury in the barometer. Thus we have in Goethe a man who was convinced that the earth is a being imbued with soul and which behaves in ways that are comparable to the breathing process in human beings. Moreover,

Goethe once said to Eckermann that he regarded the ebb and flow of the tides as a further expression of the inner vitality, the life-process, of the earth. [70]

Goethe was by no means the only great thinker who looked with a spiritual eye on such things from this point of view. Materialistically minded people will of course find all this laughable; but among men who have a feeling for life, be it on such a particular level or more in general, there will always be those with ideas similar to Goethe's — for example, Leonardo da Vinci. In his outstanding book, where he sets out his comprehensive scientific views, the height of achievement for those times, we find him saying — and not meaning it merely as an analogy — that he really regarded the solid rocks as the skeleton of the earth, and that the rivers, streams and watercourses can truly be compared to the blood circulation in man. [71] There you will find it stated also that ebb and flow are connected with a regular rhythm in the inner life of the earth. Kepler, too, spoke in a similar vein when he said that the earth could be regarded in certain respects as a gigantic whale and that ebb and flow were the in-breathing and out-breathing of this huge creature. [72]

Let us now compare the facts mentioned earlier with such views as Goethe's on ebb and flow. Let us use the findings of Spiritual Science and our previous conclusions about the phases of the moon and the tides in relation, for example, to Goethe's views on the earth's inner life and breathing. For this we must build on the conclusions of Spiritual Science, which can be established only if researches are pursued by spiritual-scientific methods. Here we enter the highly dangerous realm where those who believe they have a firm foothold in modern science, will talk about the fantasies of Spiritual Science. Well, let them talk. It would be better if they were to take what is given as a stimulus; then they would be able to find proofs through a more intimate consideration of life.

In order to approach in the right way what the spiritual scientist has to say, let us consider man himself in relation to the world around him. As far as Spiritual Science is concerned, man has his origins not in the sense-world, but also in the spiritual foundations which lie behind the external physical world. Thus it is only as a being of the senses that man is born, from out of the sense-world. In so far as he is permeated with soul and spirit, he is born from out of the soul and

spirit of the cosmos. And it is only when we find the way from man's soul and spirit to the soul and spirit of the cosmos that we are enabled to see something of the connection between the two.

In previous lectures we have discussed various phenomena of the inner soul-life of man. We found the soul to be not merely the nebulous something that it is for modern psychology. Among its members we distinguished, first, what we called the Sentient Soul. In this soul the ego, though dimly and scarcely aware of itself, experiences the impulses of pleasure and pain and everything that comes to it from the outer world through the sentient body. The ego is present within the life of the Sentient Soul, but as yet knows nothing of itself. Then the ego develops further and the soul advances to the stage of the Intellectual Soul or Mind Soul. And when the ego has carried still further its work on the soul, the Intellectual Soul gives rise to the Consciousness Soul. Thus in the structure of the human soul we distinguish three members: Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul.

The ego continues to work on these three members and brings man nearer and nearer to the peak of his developments. But these three members, since they carry out their work through man, have to live in his corporeal structure; in that way only can they accomplish their tasks. The Sentient Soul uses as its instrument the sentient body; the Intellectual Soul uses the etheric body. The Consciousness Soul is the first to use the physical body as bearer and instrument. Thus in man's corporeal structure we have first the physical body, which he has in common with the minerals. Next we have in man a higher part which he has in common with the plant world and everything that lives. The functions of growth, nutrition and reproduction in the plant are active also in man, but in man they are connected with the Intellectual Soul. The plant's etheric body is not permeated by the Intellectual Soul, as is the etheric body in man, just as the physical body is permeated by the Consciousness Soul. That which forms crystals in the mineral realm is permeated in man by the Consciousness Soul. In animals the astral body is the bearer of impulses and emotions; in man the astral body is inwardly deepened and is the bearer of the Sentient Soul. Thus the human soul, made up of Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul, dwells in his threefold corporeality, in the sentient body, etheric body and physical body respectively.

That is man's condition while he is awake. During sleep it is different. Then, leaving his physical and etheric bodies behind in bed, he goes out from them with his ego and astral body, together with those parts of his soul which permeate his etheric and physical bodies as Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul. Thus during sleep he lives in a spiritual world which he cannot perceive, simply because here on earth he is obliged to use his physical and etheric bodies as instruments for perceiving the surrounding world. When in sleep he lays these instruments aside, he is unable to perceive the spiritual world, since in ordinary life today he lacks the organs for it.

Now there is something else to say about these states of waking and sleeping. Our waking life is directly connected with the course of the sun — though indeed this is no longer quite true of people today, especially in towns. But if we look at simple country life, where this relation between outer nature and human living still largely prevails, we find that for most of the time people are awake while the sun is up and asleep while the sun is down. This regular alternation of waking and sleeping corresponds to the regular action of sunlight on the earth and all that springs from it. And it is not merely a picturesque way of speaking but deeply true to say that in the morning the sun recalls into the physical body the astral body and ego, together with the Sentient Soul, the Intellectual Soul and the Consciousness Soul; and while he is awake man sees everything around him by means of the sun and its radiance. And when man has once more united all the members of his being in daylight consciousness, it is the sun which summons him to ordinary life. We shall now easily recognise, if we are not taking a superficial view of these things, *how* the sun regulates the relationship of man to itself and to the earth. Let us now look more closely at three aspects of this relationship.

With regard to his threefold soul-nature, comprising Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul, man is inwardly independent; but he is not with regard to their bearers, the astral, etheric and physical bodies. These three sheaths are built up from the outer universe, and in order that they may serve man in his waking life, they are built up through the relationship between sun and earth.

As we have seen, the Sentient Soul lives in its instrument, the sentient body. The sentient body owes its characteristics to the region which a man calls his home. Everyone has a home somewhere, and it

matters whether he is born in Europe or America or Australia. For the physical and etheric bodies it makes no direct difference, but it does matter directly for the sentient body. Although man is gradually becoming more free from these effects on his sentient body, we still have to say: human beings whose roots are in their native soil, human beings in whom a feeling for their homeland is particularly strong, who have not yet overcome by strength of soul the power of the physical and are drawn to their place of birth — if such human beings have to move to another region, they are not only apt to become bad-tempered and morose, but may actually fall ill. Sometimes, then, the mere prospect of returning home is enough to restore them to health, for the source of their illness is not in the physical body or in the etheric body but in their sentient body, whose moods, emotions and desires spring directly from the environment of their native land.

Through higher development, which enhances his freedom, man will overcome the influences which bind him to his native soil; but a comprehensive view shows that a man's situation on earth varies in accordance with the relation of the place where he lives to the sun; for the angle at which the sun's rays strike the earth varies from place to place. We can indeed trace in certain instinctive activities, which then become culturally assimilated, that they derive partially from the homeland of the people concerned.

Let us take two examples: the use of iron and the milking of animals for food. We shall find that it is only in certain areas of Europe, Asia and Africa that these two practices developed. In other areas they were unknown in early times. And where they came into use later on, they were introduced by emigrants from Europe. We can trace exactly how throughout Siberia the milking of animals dates from remote antiquity, and extends only as far as the Behring Sea; there is no record of it among the original inhabitants of America. It is similar with iron.

Thus we can see how certain instincts which exist in the sentient body are connected with a particular region where people live, and how they are therefore dependent in the first place on the relation of sun to earth.

A second dependence concerns the etheric body. As the bearer of the Intellectual Soul, the etheric body shows itself to be dependent in its activity on the seasons of the year; hence on the relation of sun to earth expressed in the course of the seasons. A direct proof of this can of course come only through Spiritual Science, but you can convince yourselves by external facts that this statement is correct. For example, it is only in regions where a balanced alternation of seasons occurs that the inner activity of the soul as Intellectual Soul can develop; this means that only in such regions can a necessary bearer or instrument of the Intellectual Soul evolve in the etheric body of man. In the far north we find that when elements of culture are brought in from elsewhere, the soul has great difficulty in struggling with the etheric body, which is having to live under conditions characterised by excessively long winters and short summers. The Intellectual Soul will then find it impossible to forge out of the etheric body an instrument it can easily handle.

If we go to the tropics, we find that the lack of regular seasons produces a kind of apathy. Just as the forces of plant life vary in the course of the year, so do the forces in man's etheric body: they find expression in the joy of spring, the longing for summer, the melancholy of autumn, the desolation of winter. These regular changes are necessary if a proper instrument for the Intellectual Soul is to be created in the human etheric body. Thus we see again how the sun affects human beings through its changing relation to the earth.

Now let us take the physical body. If the Consciousness Soul is to work right into the physical body, we must follow in ordinary life a rhythm similar to the alternation of day and night. Anyone who never slept would soon notice that he was unable to control effectively his thoughts about the world around him. A regular alternation of waking and sleeping builds up our physical body in a way that can provide an instrument for the Consciousness Soul. Thus we have now seen how man's three bodies, astral, etheric and physical, are built up by the sun.

But what external influences play into the human being while he is asleep, while he is living in the spiritual world and has left his physical and etheric bodies behind?

While we are asleep we get something from the spiritual world to replace the forces that have been used up by our activities during the preceding day. Is it possible in this case also to point to an external influence as we did with regard to the daytime waking hours? Yes, it is, and what we find is in remarkable accord with the length of the phases of the moon. I am not maintaining that this external influence coincides exactly with the moon's phases, or that the phases themselves produce corresponding effects, but only that the course of these effects is comparable with the course of the phases of the moon. I will give two examples to show what I mean.

You will be well aware that people who are given to creative thoughts and the free play of imagination are not equally productive at all times. Poets, for example, if they are honest with themselves, have to admit now and then that they are out of tune, unable to write anything. People who observe this in themselves know that the productive periods, for which a certain imaginative frame of mind and a warmth of feeling are necessary, alternate in a remarkable way with periods when nothing can be accomplished. They know, too, that the soul has a fourteen day period of productivity, after which anyone who has to do with creative thinking goes through an empty period, when the soul is like a squeezed out lemon. During this empty period, however, he can apply himself to working over what he has done. If artists and authors would take note of this, they would soon see how true it is.

This alternation of periods is influenced not by daytime conditions, but by the times when the soul and the ego are outside the physical and etheric bodies. And so, for a fourteen-day period, productive forces are, as it were, poured into the human being while he is independent of his physical and etheric bodies, and then, during the next fourteen days, no such forces are poured in. That is the rhythm. It applies to all human beings, but is more clearly evident in the sort of people we have just mentioned.

Much clearer still is the evidence from genuine spiritual research. This is not the kind of research that can be undertaken whenever one chooses, but it is dependent on a rhythmical pattern. This point has hardly ever been mentioned anywhere, but it is so. During spiritual research one is not sleeping — the world-spirit does not bestow its gifts in sleep! The physical body is inactive with regard to the outer

world, yet one is not asleep, although the physical and etheric bodies have been left behind; Meditation, concentration and so on have strengthened the researcher's faculties to such a degree that consciousness is not blotted out when it goes forth from the physical body. Sleep does not supervene and the spiritual world can be perceived. For the modern spiritual researcher there are two periods: one of fourteen days when he can make observations: he feels particularly strong and communications from the spiritual world press in on him from all sides. Then comes a period during which he is particularly well able, thanks to the forces just received, to penetrate with his thinking the illuminations, the imaginations and inspirations that have come to him from the spiritual world, to work over them so that they may acquire a strictly scientific form. Inspiration and the technique of thinking follow a rhythmical course. The spiritual researcher does not need to bring about a co-ordination with external facts; he simply sees how these periods occur in alternation, as do full moon and new moon, with their intervening quarters. But it is only their rhythmical course that has a parallel in the alternation of full and new moon. The period of inspiration does not coincide with full moon or the working over period with new moon. All we can say is that a comparison is possible between the two periods and full and new moon. Why should this be so?

When we study our earth, we find that it has evolved out of an earlier state. Just as each one of us has come in soul and spirit from a former incarnation, so has the earth emerged from a former planetary incarnation. But our earth retains relics of events which occurred under earlier conditions during its previous incarnation. And these relics are to be found in the course of the moon round the earth, as we see it today. From a spiritual-scientific point of view the moon is reckoned as part of the earth. For what is it that keeps the moon circling round the earth? It is the earth itself, and here spiritual science and external science are in complete agreement. External science, too, regards the moon as having been split off from the earth, and having gained the force which keeps it in orbit through having once formed part of the earth. Thus the orbiting moon represents simply an earlier condition of the earth. The earth itself has retained in its satellite these earlier conditions because it needs to have them shining into the present. Can we find any reason for this need?

Let us take man himself and observe how he lives as a soul in his body and how he is exposed to the course of the sun. We then must say: For normal consciousness today, everything associated with the sun is restricted to the life between birth and death. This is something you can test — ask yourselves whether what normal consciousness experiences during waking hours, in its threefold dependence on native place, the changing seasons and the alternation of day and night, is not restricted to the life between birth and death. Man would have nothing else in his consciousness, nothing more would illuminate it, if there were only this action of the sun on the earth and only this relation between earth and sun. That which plays over from one incarnation to the next and appears again in a new life, must be sought in the soul-spiritual element which permeates man's outer body and during sleep passes as astral body and ego out of the physical and etheric bodies. At death also it leaves the body, and reappears in a new form at the next incarnation. Here there is a rhythm which directs our attention to a similar rhythm associated with the moon.

If now we consider human evolution, we see that the work of the ego on the Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul has developed only on earth under the conditions that prevail between earth and sun. But the earth's relation to the moon reflects a former condition in its own evolution. Man's present phase of evolution, through Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul, points to a period during which the bearers of the above soul-members, the astral, etheric and physical bodies, were being prepared. Then, just as the action of the sun is now still necessary for the proper development of these three bearers, the moon forces were at work in preparing them. Today the moon forces were once in harmony with man and prepared him to be what he is today; likewise the earth during its moon condition prepared our present earth. Thus we can say that the lower nature of man, on which are built the Sentient Soul, Intellectual Soul and Consciousness Soul, points back to earlier conditions which the earth has preserved in the orbit of the moon as we see it today.

We can see, too, how man's inner being, as he passes from one incarnation to the next, must have a rhythm corresponding to the moon's. During earlier stages of the earth's evolution, it was not the transitory physical that was associated with the moon, but the inner

activity which was working on this physical, just as the external physical is today being worked on by the sun. The earth has preserved in the moon something of its earlier conditions, and so has man in his inner, eternal being. In this inner being he is now evolving those higher qualities which were formerly an external influence and which are now to be developed by his own inner capacities.

An essential point we must emphasise is that man grows out of these external influences. He becomes more independent all the time — e.g. he can sleep by day and stay awake at night. But he still has to order his waking and sleeping in accordance with the rhythm of the sun; he has to maintain the rhythm within himself. In earlier times, inner day and night corresponded closely to the sun's day and night; man was then more closely bound to his native soil. He becomes free and independent precisely by inwardly liberating the rhythm under which he lives; by retaining it as a rhythm, but no longer dependent on the outer world. It is as if we had a clock marked for 24 hours but set in such a way that it does not correspond with external time; e.g., when the clock says it is 12 o'clock, it is not 12 o'clock by the sun. Thus although the clock follows a 24-hour rhythm, the time it shows is its own, not that of the sun.

Thus man frees himself inwardly by making the external rhythm into an inner one. He has long since freed himself from the rhythm which connected his inner being with the moon. Hence we have emphasised that man lives through the phases of the moon inwardly, but these experiences are not caused by the moon in the sky. The course of the moon shows a similar rhythm because man has retained the rhythm inwardly, though outwardly he has made himself free and independent of it.

We are led in this way to regard the earth as a living being, but since it shows us only its physical body, with no evident signs of life or feeling or knowledge, its condition is nearer to that of the moon. Now we can understand why it is wrong, even taking only the external facts, to speak of a direct influence of the moon on the tides, and why we can say only that the ebb and flow of the tides corresponds to the phases of the moon. The tides, as well as the course of the moon are caused by deeper spiritual forces in the living earth.

Thus we see how Spiritual Science helps us to clarify external facts in a wonderful way. The tides correspond to an inner process in the living earth, which produces them and also the orbit of the moon. [73] If you take the findings of Spiritual Science and then go through all the books where the phases of moon and earth and tides are recorded, you will understand the true relations between moon and earth and moon and man.

You can easily see that if a man loses his independence and sinks from a fully conscious into a less conscious or unconscious condition, he will regress to earlier stages of evolution. Man advanced from unconsciousness to his present state of consciousness, from his earlier dependence on the moon and its influence to his present independence from the moon and his dependence on the sun.

Because man was once directly dependent on the moon, it follows that if his consciousness is damped down, its functioning will be ordered by the course of the moon. This is an atavistic effect which brings out man's old connection with the moon's phases. A characteristic of mediums is that their consciousness is so far lowered that they revert to an earlier stage of evolution, and the old influence of the moon makes itself felt in them. It is similar in certain cases of illness where the consciousness is lowered. If you bear in mind the principles of Spiritual Science, you will be well able to understand these phenomena. The evidence for what Spiritual Science has to say can be found in all aspects of life.

One thing more. When someone is to be born again on earth after his sojourn in the spiritual world between death and a new birth, then, during the embryonic period, he passes through conditions which recall an earlier state of the earth. The embryonic period is still reckoned by science as covering ten lunar months; thus we have here a rhythm which runs its course through ten successive moon periods. We find also that each week in the ten-month period — that is, each phase of the moon — corresponds to a particular condition in the development of the embryo. Here, too, man has retained in himself the moon rhythm, as we may call it.

We could indeed mention a whole series of other phenomena connected with man's embryonic existence, before he emerges from the depths of nature into the light of day; they are of course not

caused by the moon and do not coincide with the moon's phases but reflect the same rhythm, because they go back to primary causes which were present while the earth was passing through earlier conditions of existence.

Now I have thrown light on a subject which cannot be further illuminated in public. Thoughtful people will see that here a perspective is opened up into realms of life where Spiritual Science can indeed point the way to a great clarification of much in man that is hidden from external sunlight, that lies behind it. They are realms which have to be explored by a light different from the light of knowledge we have acquired through the light of the sun; namely by faculties which are not dependent on the service rendered by the sentient, etheric and physical bodies under the influence of the sun. A clairvoyant faculty makes itself independent of these three bodies; it can sink itself in inwardness and see into the spiritual world, and thus can open up a capacity for knowledge of what lies behind external sunlight and yet is full of light and clarity. But I must again emphasise that on the question of the moon an even more intimate light is needed if we are to get to the heart of it.

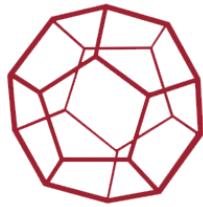
In conclusion, I am reminded of some verses by the German lyrical poet Wilhelm Muller: we are here concerned only with the last stanza. The moon is addressed and all sorts of intimate words pass between man and moon; and then, because the soul has spoken to the moon in a wonderful way:

*This little song, an evening round,
A wanderer sings in full moonshine;
Those who read it by candlelight
Will always fail to get it right,
Childishly simple though it is. [74]*

That is rather how we should take what Spiritual Science has to say, as shown in our treatment of the moon and its significance for human life. The song of Spiritual Science about the moon can indeed be sung only if we have some understanding of the more intimate ideas of Spiritual Science. People who try to read the song by candlelight, by which I mean the telescope, and employ photographs of the moon, for so-called research — these people will hardly understand our song. But those who are ready to go even a little way into what life can tell us in all its aspects will say to themselves: It is really not so difficult! Anyone who seeks to understand the song that Spiritual Science sings about the moon — not by the candlelight of the telescope, but by the living light of the spirit, which shines even when all sense-impressions are absent — he will find that this song about the moon, and therefore about an important aspect of life, is truly quite easy, even if not childishly easy!



Volume Two



1. Spiritual Science and Language

Berlin, 20th January 1910

It is of some interest to observe from the point of view of spiritual science in the sense that the word is used here, the various ways by which the human being expresses himself. [1] For in approaching human life from different sides, as it were, and observing its different aspects as we have done in these lectures, a comprehensive view of it can be gained. Today let us deal with that universal expression of the human spirit which is manifest in language; and next time, under the heading "Laughing and Weeping", we will then look at a variation, as it were, of human expression which is connected with language but is fundamentally different from it all the same.

When we speak of human language, we feel sufficiently how all the significance, dignity and the whole of the human being are connected with that which we call language. Our innermost existence, all our thoughts, feelings and impulses of the will flow outward to our fellow human beings and unite us with them through language. Thus we feel the possibility of expanding our being infinitely, the ability to make our being extend into our environment through language. On the other hand, anyone who can enter into the inner life of significant personalities will be able to feel particularly how language can also become a tyrant, a force which exercises power over our inner life. We can feel how our feelings and thoughts, those things of a special and intimate nature which pass through our soul, can be expressed only poorly and inadequately in the word, in language. And we can also feel how even the language within which we are placed forces us into specific modes of thinking. Everyone must be aware how the human being is dependent on language as far as his thinking is concerned. It is words to which our concepts are generally attached; and in an imperfect stage of development the human being will readily confuse the word or that which the word inculcates in him with the concept. Here lies the cause for the inability of some people to construct for themselves a conceptual framework which reaches beyond what is contained in the words commonly used in their environment. And we are aware how the character of a whole people who speak a common language is in a certain way dependent on that language. The person

who observes national character more closely, the character of languages in their context, must realise that the way in which the human being is able to transform the content of his soul into sounds in turn acts back on the strengths and weaknesses of his character, on the way his temperament is expressed, even on his conception of existence as a whole. The configuration of a language can tell much about the character of a people. And since a language is common to a people, the individual is dependent on a common element, an average quantity, as it were, which prevails among that people. He is thus subject to a certain tyranny, to the rule of commonality. But if one realises that language contains on the one hand our individual spiritual life and on the other the spiritual life of the community, then one comes to see what might be called the "secret of language" as something of special significance. A considerable amount can be learnt about the soul-life of the human being if one observes how this being expresses itself in language.

The secret of language, its origin and development at different periods, has always been the subject of investigation by certain specialist scientific disciplines. But it cannot be said that these disciplines have been particularly successful in our century in uncovering the secret of language. That is why today we will try to illuminate aphoristically so to speak, in broad outline, language, its development and its connection with the human being from a spiritual-scientific point of view as we have been applying it to man and his development.

It is this connection which in the first instance seems so mysterious when we use a word to describe an object, an event, a process. What is the link between a particular combination of sounds which form a word or sentence and that which is within us which the object, expressed as word, means? In this respect outward science has tried to unite a wide range of observations in all kinds of ways. But the unsatisfactory nature of such a method has also been felt. The question is quite simple, and yet it is so difficult to answer: why did the human being, when faced with some object or event in the outside world, produce this or that particular sound from within himself as an echo of that object or event?

From a certain point of view the matter was thought to be quite simple. It was thought, for example, that language was originally formed by an inner ability of our speech organs. This imitated those things which were heard outwardly as sound — the sounds of certain animals for example, or something knocking against something else; rather like when the child hears the dog bark "bow-wow" it calls the dog a "bow-wow". Such word formation is called onomatopoeic, an imitation of the sound. This was held by certain directions of thought to be the original foundation of sound and word formation. Of course the question how the human being came to name beings which did not emit a sound remains unanswered. The great linguistic researcher Max Müller, [2] realising the unsatisfactory nature of such a theory, ridiculed it by calling it the "bow-wow" theory. He set up another theory which his opponents in turn called "mystical" (giving the word a sense in which it should not be used). For Max Müller holds the view that each object contains within itself, as it were, something which is like a sound; everything in a certain sense has a sound, not only the glass which is dropped, not only the bell which is struck, but everything. And the ability of the human being to establish a relationship between his soul and this expressive element, which is like the essential nature of the object, calls forth the ability in the soul to express this inner sound-being of the object. Thus the essence of a bell can be experienced in the sounding of the "bim-bam". And Max Müller's opponents returned his ridicule and called his theory the "bim-bam" theory. A more detailed examination would show that something unsatisfactory always remains in trying to characterise outwardly in this way the things which the human being experiences of the nature of things like an echo in his soul. A deeper penetration of the inner being of man is required.

From the point of view of spiritual science the human being is fundamentally a very complex being. He has his physical body, which is governed by the same laws and has the same constitution as the mineral world. Then, from a spiritual-scientific aspect, the human being has a second, higher member of his being, the ether body or life body. Then there is the astral body, the bearer of pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, of instincts, desires and passions; this is just as real a member of the human being for spiritual science, if not more real, than the one which one can see with the eyes and touch with the hands. And the fourth member of the human being we called the bearer of the ego. We further saw that at his present stage the

development of the human being consists of the ego working on the transformation of the other three members of his being. We also pointed out that at a future time the ego will have transformed these three members in such a way that nothing will remain of what nature, or the spiritual forces which are active in nature, has made of these three human members.

For the astral body, the bearer of pain and pleasure, of joy and sorrow, of all the surging power of the imagination, feelings and perceptions, was created initially without our participation, that is, without any contribution by our ego. But now the ego has become active and it works in such a manner that it purifies and cleanses and subordinates all the qualities and activities of the astral body. If the ego has worked only a small amount on the astral body, the human being is dominated by his instincts and desires; but if it purifies the instincts and desires into virtues, if it orders muddled thinking by the thread of logic, then a part of the astral body has become transformed. It has become transformed from a product in which the ego takes no part into a product of the ego. If the ego fulfils this work consciously, of which today only a start has been made in human evolution, we call this part of the astral body which has been consciously transformed by the ego the "spirit-self", or, using a term from Oriental philosophy, "Manas". When the ego works not only on the astral body, but in a different and more intensive way on the ether body, we call this part of the ether body transformed by the ego the "life-spirit", or, with a term from Oriental philosophy, "Budhi". And when finally the ego has become so strong — and this will happen only in the far distant future — that it transforms the physical body and regulates its laws and permeates it so that it rules over everything which lives in the physical body, we call this part of the physical body "spirit-man", or also, because this work begins with controlling the breathing processes, with a term from Oriental philosophy, "Atman". (Cf. German "atmen" — to breathe.)

Thus we see the human being initially as a four membered being, consisting of a physical body, an ether body, an astral body and an ego. And similarly to the three members of our being which derive from the past, we are able to speak of three members of the human being developing into the future, created by the work of our ego. We can therefore speak of the seven-membered human being by adding to the physical body, ether body, astral body and ego the spirit-self,

life-body and spirit-man. But when we consider these last three members as something distant, belonging to the future evolution of mankind, it must be added that the human being is prepared for such a development in a certain way already in the present. Consciously the human being will work with his ego on the physical, ether and astral bodies only in the far distant future; but in the subconscious, that is, without full consciousness, the ego is already transforming these three members of its being on the basis of a still dulled activity. The results are already in existence. What we described in previous lectures as inner members of the human being were only able to come about because of this work by the ego. From the astral body it fashioned the sentient soul as inner mirror-image, as it were, of the sentient body. Whilst the sentient body transmits gratification (sentient body and astral body are synonymous as regards man; without the sentient body we would have no gratification), this is mirrored internally in the soul as desire — and it is desire which we then ascribe to the soul. Thus the two things belong together: the astral body and the transformed astral body or sentient soul, as gratification and desire belong together. In a similar way the ego was working in the past already on the ether body. This created internally in the soul of the human being the intellectual or mind soul. Thus the intellectual soul, which is also the bearer of memory, is linked with the subconscious transformation of the ether body by the ego. And finally, the ego has been working in the past also on the transformation of the physical body in order to enable the existence of the human being in his present form. The result of that transformation is the consciousness soul, which permits the human being to gain knowledge about the things of the outside world. The seven-membered human being can therefore be characterised as follows: through the preparative, subconscious activity of the ego the three soul members have been created; the sentient soul, the intellectual soul and the consciousness soul.

The question may now be asked: are not the physical body, ether body and astral body complex entities? What a miracle of construction is the physical human body! And if we examined it more closely, we would find that this physical body is much more complex than that part alone which the ego has transformed into the consciousness soul and which can be called the physical form of the consciousness soul. Similarly the ether body is much more complex than that which might be called the form of the intellectual or mind soul. And the astral body

too is much more complex than the form of the sentient soul. These parts are poor in comparison to what was in existence before the human being had an ego. That is why in spiritual science we speak of the human being as having developed in the distant past from spiritual beings the first predisposition for a physical body. To this was added the ether body, then still later the astral body, and finally the ego. The physical body of the human being has thus passed through four stages of development. First there was a direct correspondence with the spiritual world; then it developed and was interwoven and transfused with the ether body. It therefore became more complex. Then it became interwoven with the astral body which made it more complex again. Then the ego was added. And only the work of the latter on the physical body transformed part of the physical body and made it into the bearer of human consciousness: the ability to gain knowledge of the outer world. But this physical body has more functions than providing us with a knowledge of the outside world by means of our senses and our brain. It has to fulfil a number of activities which form the basis of our consciousness but which take place completely outside the sphere of the brain. The same applies to the ether body and the astral body.

If the fact is now quite clear that everything which surrounds us in the outside world is spirit, that there is a spiritual foundation to everything material, etheric and astral, as we have emphasised so often, then we have to say: the ego works as a spiritual being from the inside outwards, as the human being develops the three members of his being; in a similar manner — whether we call them *spiritual beings* or *spiritual actions* is not important — must have been working on our physical, ether and astral bodies before the ego emerged, which then took over this development. We are looking back at a time in which the same action on our astral body, ether body and physical body occurred as today is done by the ego outwards into these three members. That is to say, before the ego was ready to establish itself within them, spiritual creation, spiritual actions, worked on our sheaths and gave them form, movement, shape. There are spiritual actions in the human being which occur before the activities of the ego, if we exclude for a moment all that which our ego has transformed in the three members of our being as sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness soul, and regard the construction, the inner movement and action of these three sheaths of the human being.

That is why in spiritual science we talk of the human being as he is today as being an individual soul, a soul transfused with an ego, which makes every human being into a self-contained individuality. Before the human being became such a self-contained ego-being, he was part of a "group-soul", part of a quality of soul which we still refer to today in the animal world as group-soul. [3] What occurs in the human being as individual soul in each person, that occurs in the animal world as the basis of the whole species or family. A whole species of animal has a common group-soul. The individual human soul is equivalent to the soul of the species in the animal. Thus before man became an individual soul another soul was working in the three members of his being of which we have knowledge today only through spiritual science, a soul which was the precursor of our individual ego. And this precursor of our ego, which then passed on to the ego the physical body, ether body and astral body in order that the ego might continue to transform them, this group-soul also transformed from within itself the physical body, ether body and astral body and ordered them according to itself. And the final activity of the human being before he was endowed with an ego, the final influence which lies before the birth of the ego, is present today in what we call human *language*. When we therefore consider what preceded the life of our consciousness soul, our intellectual or mind soul and our sentient soul, we come across an activity of the soul which is not yet transfused by the ego and its result is present today in the expression of language.

What is the outward appearance of the four members of the human being? How are they expressed purely outwardly in the physical body? The physical body of a plant looks different from the physical body of a human being. Why? Because in the plant only the physical body and the ether body are present, whereas in the human physical body the astral body and the ego are present as well. This inward activity forms and refashions the physical body correspondingly. How is the physical body affected when it is permeated by an ether or life body?

The glandular system is the outward physical expression in man and animal of the ether or life body; that is to say, the ether body is the architect of the glandular system. The astral body formed the nervous system. That is why it is correct to talk of a nervous system only in those beings where an astral body is present. What, now, is the expression in the human being of his ego? It is the circulatory system and specifically what might be called the blood under the special

influence of the inner life warmth. All the work which the ego does on the human being when it transforms the physical body is channelled via the blood. That is why the blood is of such special nature. When the ego transforms the sentient soul, the intellectual soul and the consciousness soul, then all the work that the ego achieves only penetrates into the physical body because the ego has the ability to affect the physical body via the blood. Our blood is the mediator for the astral body and the ego and all their activity.

There can be no doubt if we look at human life, even on a superficial level only, that the human being transforms the physical body with the ego in the same way as he transforms the consciousness soul, the intellectual soul and the sentient soul. Who would deny that the physiognomy expresses what lives and works inwardly. And who would deny that inward thinking, if it takes hold completely of the soul, transforms the brain even in the course of one life. Our brain is a tool which adapts to the requirements of our thinking. But if we consider the amount which the human being can transform, artistically fashion as it were, his outer being through the ego, it is very small. It is very little which we can do with our blood by setting the blood in motion with what we call our inner *warmth*. Those spiritual beings which preceded our ego managed to achieve more, for they were able to make use of a more effective means; thus the human form took shape under their influence in such a way that it is an overall expression of what those forces made of the human being. These beings used the substance of *air*. In the same way that we use the inner warmth to make our blood pulse — thus making the blood active in our own form — the beings working on us previous to our ego made the air serve their purpose. And the work of these beings on us through air created what gives us our form as human beings.

It might seem strange that we speak of spiritual forces working on the human being in the far distant past through air. But it is not the first time I have said that it is a misjudgement to think of the soul and spirit life of our inner being only as product of the imagination, and not to realise that it has been taken from the outside world as a whole. Whoever states that concepts and ideas could arise in us without ideas existing in the outside world might just as well say that he can take water from a glass in which there is none. Our concepts would be nothing more than froth if they were anything other than what lives in outside things and what is present in those things as

their laws. We fetch that which we allow to develop in our souls from our environment. That is why we can say: everything material which surrounds us is interwoven with spiritual beings.

Strange as it may sound, what surrounds us as air is not merely the substance as shown by chemistry, but spiritual beings and spiritual forces are active in it. And in the same way that we can transform our physical body a small amount by the warmth which streams forth from our ego — that is the essential element — in the blood, the beings which preceded the ego formed in a powerful way the outer form of our physical being by means of the air. *We are human beings because of our larynx and everything connected with that.* The larynx, sculpted from outside into us as this wonderful artistic organ and connected with the other vocal and speech organs, was created from the spiritual element in the air. Goethe said very aptly with reference to the eye: "The eye is fashioned by the light for the light!" [4] If, in the sense of Schopenhauer, [5] it is now stressed that without an eye sensitive to light there would be no impression of light for us, then this is only half the truth. The other half is that we would have no eye if the *light* had not sculpted, as it were, our eyes from undefined organs in the far distant past. Light must therefore be seen not only as the abstract entity which is described today as physical light; but in light we have to search for that hidden being which is capable of creating the eye for itself.

Similarly we can say in another respect that the air is full of beings which were able at certain times to create in the human being the intricate organ of the larynx and all that is connected with it. And the rest of the human form to the smallest detail has been formed and sculpted in such a manner that man in his present stage is *a further development of his speech organs*, as it were. The speech organs are something decisive for the *human form* in the first instance. That is why it is speech that transcends man above the animals. For the spiritual being which we call the *spirit of the air* also fashioned the animals, but not to such a level where they could develop the facility of speech such as the human being has it. We see that the human being had internally already developed his speech organs by the time that he developed his present thinking, his feelings and his will, that is to say, everything connected with his ego. Now it can be understood why these spiritual forces could only work on the physical body in such a manner that the human being finally became like an appendix

to his speech organs, because they developed the astral body, ether body and physical body through the influence, the configuration of the air. After the human being had become capable of having within him an organ which corresponded to what we have called the spiritual beings of the air, in the same way that the eye corresponds to the spiritual beings of the light, he could fashion into this what the ego developed in itself as reason, as consciousness, feeling, emotion. Thus there is a threefold activity in the subconscious; activity on the physical body, the ether body and the astral body which existed previous to the ego. We can recognise this if we know that it was the *group-soul* and that the group-soul worked in an imperfect manner in the animal.

This has to be taken into consideration if we regard the work of the spiritual forces occurring before the ego in the astral body. We have to exclude everything concerning the self and observe the work done by the group-self from dark foundations. *Desire and gratification* face each other in the astral body on a level of imperfection. Desire was able to become a soul quality, an inner faculty, because it already had a precursor in the astral body of the human being.

Similar to desire and gratification in the astral body, *imagery*, symbolism, and *outer stimulus* face each other in the ether body. It is most important to distinguish the activity of our ether body preceding the ego from the activity of the ego in the ether body. When the ego is active as intellectual or mind soul, then, at the present stage of development of the human being, it seeks a truth which is as nearly as possible a true picture of the outer world. Those things which do not exactly correspond to outward things are not called "true". The spiritual activities which lie before the advent of our ego do not work in this manner; they work more symbolically, in the image, rather like a dream works. A dream works in the following manner, for example, that someone dreams of a shot being fired; and when he wakes up he sees that the chair next to the bed has fallen over. What is outer happening and outer impression — the falling over of the chair — is transformed into an image in the dream, into the shot. In this way the spiritual beings preceding the ego work symbolically in the same way that we will work again when we achieve a higher spiritual activity by initiation; here we try — but this time with full consciousness — to work towards a symbolic view, an imaginative conception, away from the purely abstract outside world.

Then the spiritual beings working in the human physical body transformed it into what might be called a *correspondence of outer events*, outer facts, and *imitation*. Imitation is something which we find in the child, for example, when the other soul members are still hardly developed. Imitation is something that belongs to the subconscious human nature. That is why education should start with imitation, because before the ego begins to create order in the human being, the drive to imitate is present as a natural drive.

The drive to imitate in the physical body in contrast to outer activities, *symbolising* in the ether body in contrast to outer stimulus, and the correspondence of *desire and gratification* in the astral body all have to be considered as having been created with the aid of the tool of *air* — and having been created in such a manner that a sculpted, an *artistic impression* as it were, has been created in our larynx and in the whole of the *speech apparatus*. It can then be said: these beings preceding the ego worked on the human being in such a manner that they formed and ordered him such that the air could come to expression in him in this threefold direction.

For when we look at language capability in the true sense of the word, we have to ask: does it consist of the sound which we utter? No, it is not the sound. Our ego sets in motion what has been created into us by the air. In the same way that we move the eye to take in the outward light, whilst the eye itself exists to take light in, our ego within us sets in motion those organs which have been formed by the spiritual beings in the air. *We set the organs in motion by the ego; we activate the organs which correspond to the spirit of the air and we have to wait until the spirit of the air who formed the organs sounds back at us the tone as an echo of our action on the air.* We do not produce the tone, just as the individual parts of a pipe do not produce the tone. Our ego develops activity by the use of those organs which have been created from the spirit of the air. Then we have to wait for the latter to set the air in motion again such that the word sounds by the original activity which produced the organs.

Thus we can indeed see that human language must rest on the threefold correspondence which was mentioned. How does this correspondence work?

Imitation in the physical body rests on the speech organs imitating those things which are outward activities, outward objects which make an impression on us, and producing them as sound in the same way that a painter imitates a scene which consists of quite different constituents than paint, canvas, light and dark. Similar to the painter who imitates with light and dark we imitate the environment with our organs which were formed from elements of the air. That is why what we produce in sound is a true imitation of the essence of an object; and our vowels and consonants are nothing but images and imitations of those things which make an impression on us from the outside.

The next thing is the image in the ether body, what we might call symbolism. The first elements of our language were created by imitation, but then this developed further by tearing itself away, as it were, from outward impressions. The ether body assimilates — such as in the dream — those things which no longer correspond to outer experiences; that is the *developing element in sound*. Initially the ether body assimilates the pure imitation; then the imitation is transformed in the ether body so that it becomes something independent and, because it has been through an internal process, corresponds to outward impressions only symbolically as image: we are no longer merely imitators.

And thirdly, desire, emotion, everything which lives internally is expressed in the astral body. This works in such a manner that it continues to transform the sound. The internal experiences flow from the inside into the sound: pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow, desires, wishes; all these things stream into the sound and bring the *subjective element* into it. What started as pure imitation was then transformed into the language symbol in the independent sound or word image and is now transformed further by the infusion of the human being's internal experiences. It always has to be an outward correspondence which provokes the sound in the soul; when the soul expresses its inward experiences, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow and all the others, in sound it has to *search* for a corresponding outer form. At the first stage the outer impression is imitated. The inner sound image or the creation of the symbol is the next step. But the inner experiences, such as joy and sorrow, by their nature have no outer equivalent. This correspondence between outer being and inner experience can be observed with children as they learn to speak. One can see how the child begins to transform a feeling into a sound.

When the child initially calls "ma" or "pa" then this is only the inner transformation of an emotion into sound. It is only the expression of something inward. But when the child expresses itself in this way and the mother, for example, comes, the child notices how its inward feeling of pleasure, which is transformed into the sound "ma", corresponds to an outer event. Of course the child does not enquire *how* it happens that in this case there is a correspondence with the coming of the mother. The inner experience of pleasure or pain is allied with an outward impression and thus what streams out from the inside is *united* with the outer impression. That is the third way in which language acts. It is therefore true to say that language originated equally by internal imitation of the outside and by outward reality being linked to our inner experience. The process which happens in innumerable cases, and which is completed when the inner expression "ma" or "pa" is formed into the words "mama" or "papa", and is satisfied when the father or mother responds. Every time that the human being realises that something happens as a result of an inner expression, the expression of that inner event unites for him with something outward.

All this takes place without any participation by the ego. It is only at a later stage that the ego takes over this activity. Thus the forces in existence previous to the ego were at work in the configuration which lies at the base of the human language ability. And because the ego took over when the basis for human language had already been created, language then ordered itself according to the ego. Therefore the expression connected with the sentient body is transfused by the *sentient soul*; the images and symbols connected with the ether body are transfused by the *intellectual soul*; the human being fills the sound with the experiences of the intellectual soul, and similarly he fills it with the experiences of the *consciousness soul*, which were initially only imitation. By this process gradually those areas of our language came into existence which represents *inner experiences* of the soul.

That is why, regarding the nature of language, it must be quite clearly understood that there is something in us which was there before the ego, which was then developed by the ego. But then, also, it cannot be claimed that language directly represents the ego, that it represents the spiritual aspect in us, everything which is intimate to our personality; but it must be understood that we can never see in language an immediate expression of the ego. The spirit of language

works symbolically in the ether body, imitatively in the physical body; and this is linked with its creative activity in the sentient soul, forcing the inward experiences from it in such a manner that the sound is an expression of the inner life. In sum, language did not develop according to the conscious ego as it is today, but, if the development of language is to be compared to anything at all, its development can only be compared to *artistic* creation. Just as we cannot demand that the imitation of the artist corresponds to reality, we cannot demand that language copies those things which it is meant to represent. Language only imitates the outside world in a way similar to the picture, to the way that the artist as such imitates outside reality. Before the human being was a self-conscious being in the way that he is today, an *artist* was at work in him, active as the *spirit of language*, and our ego is embedded in a place where previously an artist was at work. This in itself is put rather in the form of an image, but it expresses the truth in this field. We observe an unconscious activity and feel that here there is something which created the human being as a work of art. In this respect we must not forget that we can only examine each work of art as permitted by the methods of that art. If this were born in mind, it would preclude from the beginning such pedantic works as Fritz Mauthner's "Kritik der Sprache". [6] Here the critique of language is based on quite wrong premises; namely, that if we regard human languages they do not in any way represent objective reality. But is that their function in the first place? There is just as little possibility for language to represent reality as there is of the picture representing outward reality in the colours on the canvas and the use of light and shadow. The spirit of language which lies at the foundation of human activity has to be grasped with artistic feeling.

Only a brief outline of these things has been given. But if one knows that an artist who formed language was active in mankind then one can understand — as different as the various languages may be — that even in the individual human languages the artistic element was at work in all sorts of differing ways. Then it can be understood how the spirit of language — let us call this being working in the air the spirit of language — when it reveals itself on a relatively low level in the human being works in an atomistic way by wanting to construct everything from the single parts. That is how it comes about that the individual sounds combine to form a whole sentence.

If, for example, we take the sounds "shi" and "pian" in Chinese, we have two atoms of language formation; the one syllable "shi" means song, poem, and "pian" means book. If we combine the two sounds, "shi-pian", then this would be the same as creating the combination "poem-book" in English; something results from the particles which, seen as a whole, produces poetry book. This is only one example of how the Chinese language forms its concepts and ideas.

If we reflect on the things which we have considered today, we can also now understand how a wonderfully formed language such as a Semitic one must be considered in its essence. In Semitic languages we have certain sounds as a foundation which are really only constituted of consonants. And then the human being inserts vowels in between these consonants. If we thus take the consonants q, t, l, just as an example, and insert an a and then another a, then, whilst the word formed purely from the consonants is only an imitation of an outward sound, the word "qatal", to kill, is created by the addition of the vowels.

We thus have a noteworthy development in that "to kill" as a complex of sounds comes about initially by the speech organs simply imitating the outward process. Then the soul continues the process and the inward experience is added with the vowels: the complex of sounds is further developed so that "to kill" is referred back to a subject. This is basically the constitution of the Semitic languages and in it is expressed the combination of the various elements in language formation within the framework of language. Symbolism (i.e. that which is found at work in the ether body as the spirit of language), which is the primary agent in Semitic languages, demonstrates the particular aspect of the Semitic languages which takes the individual imitative sounds one step further and transforms them into symbols by the insertion of vowels.

That is why fundamentally all words in Semitic languages are formed in such a way that they relate to the surroundings of the outside world as symbols. In contrast, everything which appears in the Indo-Germanic languages is prompted more by what we have called the inner expression of the astral body, the inner being. For the astral body is something which is already connected with the consciousness. When one faces the outside world one contrasts oneself with it. If one faces the outside world from the point of view of the ether body one

fuses with it, is one with it. Only when things are reflected in the consciousness does a difference exist between oneself and things. This working of the astral body with all its inner experiences can be seen in the Indo-Germanic languages in contrast to the Semitic languages in that they have the verb "to be": a reflection of independent existence. That is possible because we are able to separate ourselves from outward impressions with our consciousness. If, therefore, we want to say for example "God is good" in Semitic, then this is not immediately possible because there is no way of producing the word "is" as an expression of being, for this originates in the contrast of astral body and outside world. The ether body simply states. That is why in the Semitic languages one would have to say "God the good". The contrast of subject and object is not a characteristic element. The languages which are in contrast with the outside world, which contain as an essential element the perception of an outside world, are particularly the Indo-Germanic languages. They in turn affect the human being in such a way that they support inwardness, i.e. all those things which provide the foundations for developing a strong personality, a strong ego. This is already evident in the language.

All the things which I have spoken about might be considered by some to be only unsatisfactory indications for the simple reason that one would have to speak for two weeks if one wanted to describe everything in this field in detail. Nevertheless, those who have attended these lectures more regularly and who have penetrated into the essential nature of the matter will see that such indications are not unjustified. They are only intended to show how a spiritual-scientific view of language can be provoked which fundamentally shows that language cannot be understood in any other way than in an artistic sense, which must be developed. That is why all scholarship must fail if it is not willing to participate in the creative act which was undertaken by the forces creating language in the human being before the ego became active in us. Only a creative faculty can grasp the secret of language, because only a creative faculty as such can recreate. No learned abstraction can ever bring about comprehension of a work of art. Only those ideas illuminate a work of art which are able to recreate in a fruitful way as ideas the things which the artist expresses by other means paint, sound, etc. Creative feeling alone can comprehend the artist, and a creative feeling for language alone can

understand the spiritual creativity in the origin of language. That is one of the tasks which spiritual science is called upon to do in respect of language.

The other task is something which is of significance on a practical level. If we understand how language originated from an inner pre-human artist, then we can also elevate ourselves to make this creative feeling become active where we want to express something of validity in language. But there is little feeling for that in our present time, where not much progress has been achieved in fostering a living feeling for language. [7] Today everyone who opens his mouth feels that he is able to express all things. But it must be understood quite clearly that we have to create again in our soul an immediate connection between *what* we want to express and *how* we want to express it. We have to re-awaken the linguistic artist in us in all areas. Today human beings are satisfied if what they want to say comes out in any way, no matter what form it takes. How many people realise — which is absolutely necessary in the field of spiritual science — that an artistic feeling for language is necessary to express anything? If true presentations of spiritual-scientific material, for example, are examined, [8] it will be found that the true spiritual scientists who have written these things also seriously worked on them to form each sentence creatively, that the position of the verb is not an arbitrary decision. Each sentence will be seen as a birth, because it must be experienced inwardly in the soul as immediate form, not simply as a thought. And the sentences are connected not only consecutively, but the third one has to be formed in essence at the same time as the first one because they are interconnected in their effect. In spiritual science it is impossible to work without a creatively active sense of language. Everything else is inadequate. It is important to free oneself of being slavishly tied to words. But we cannot do that if we think that any word is suitable to express a given thought; that already is an error in our linguistic creativity. The expression of super-sensible facts cannot be gained from words which are coined only with a view to the sense world. If the question is asked "How is one to express the ether body or the astral body in a concrete manner in reality by means of a word?" nothing of this has been understood. Only the person has understood something of this who says: I will understand what the ether body is if in the first instance I investigate from one particular aspect and it is quite clear that I am dealing with artistically formed reflected images; and then I investigate three more aspects. The

matter has then been presented from four different sides. When it is thereafter expressed in language, in walking round the topic as it were, we are presenting an artistic image of the matter. If one is not aware of this, nothing will be achieved but abstractions and a sclerotic reproduction of what is previously known. That is why development in spiritual science will always be connected with what might be called "development of the inward sense and the inward creative power of language". In this sense spiritual science will have a fruitful effect on style in language, will transform the terrible linguistic style of today which is ignorant of the creativity of language, and fewer people, who can hardly speak and write, will embark on literary careers. The awareness has been lost today, for example, that to write prose is something much more elevated than writing in verse; only the prose which is written today is on a much lower level. But it is the purpose of spiritual science to act as a stimulus in those fields which are connected with the deepest secrets of mankind. For spiritual science will be active in those areas in such a way that it fulfils the visions of the greatest personalities. Spiritual science will conquer the super-sensible worlds through the thinking, will become capable of decanting the thought in such a way into the sound structure that our language too can again become a means of communication of the experiences of the soul in the super-sensible. [9] Then spiritual science will have become the agent which makes real what is expressed about an important realm of the inner human being in the words:

Unmeasurably deep is the thought;
And its winged agent is the word. [10]



2. Laughing and Weeping

Berlin, 3rd February 1910

In a series of lectures on spiritual science, our subject today might well appear insignificant. But considerations which lead into the higher realms of being are often at fault in leaving aside the details of life and its immediate, everyday realities. When lectures set out to deal with eternal life, with the highest qualities of the soul or with great questions concerning the evolution of world and man, people generally are pleased, and well content to leave alone such apparently commonplace matters as those we are to examine today. But everyone who follows the path indicated here for penetrating into the spiritual worlds, will be convinced that to advance quietly, step by step, from the well known to the less known, is a very healthy way.

Moreover, we can draw on many examples to show that eminent men have by no means regarded laughter and tears as merely commonplace. After all, the consciousness which is achieved in the legends and the great traditions of mankind — so often much wiser than the individual human consciousness — has endowed the great Zarathustra, who became so immensely important for Eastern culture, with the famous "Zarathustra smile", for this consciousness it was particularly significant that this great spirit came *smiling* into the world. And with a deep understanding of world history, tradition adds that on account of this smile all creatures in the world exulted, while evil spirits and adversaries in all parts of the earth fled away from it.

If we pass from these legends and traditions to the works of a single great genius, we might well call to mind the figure of **Faust**, into whom **Goethe** poured so many of his own feelings and ideas. When Faust, despairing of all existence, comes near to killing himself, he hears the Easter bells ring out and cries: "Tears spring forth, the earth holds me again." [11] Tears are used here by Goethe to symbolise the state of soul which enables Faust, after experiencing the most bitter despair, to find his way back into the world.

Thus we can see, if we will only think about it, that laughing and weeping are related to things of great significance. But to speculate on the nature of spirit is easier than to seek the spirit where it is revealed in the world immediately around us. And we can find the spirit — and the human spirit in the first instance — precisely in those gestures of the soul that we call laughing and weeping. They cannot be understood unless we regard them as expressions of a person's inner spiritual life. But in order to do this we must not only accept man as a *spiritual* being, we have also to understand him. All the lectures in our present winter series have been devoted to this task. Hence we need give only a passing glance now at the being of man as seen by spiritual science. But that is the foundation on which we must build if we are to understand laughing and weeping.

We have seen that man, when we observe him in his totality, possesses a physical body, which he has in common with the mineral realm; an etheric or life-body, which he has in common with the plants; and an astral body which he has in common with the animal kingdom. The astral body is the bearer of pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, terror and amazement, and also of all the ideas which flow into and out of his soul from waking until he falls asleep. These are man's three external sheaths and within them lives the ego which makes him the crown of creation. The ego works in the soul-life on its three components, the sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness soul, and we have seen how it works to bring man ever nearer to fulfilment.

What, then, is the basis of the ego's activities within the human soul? Let us look at some examples of its behaviour.

Suppose that the ego, this deepest centre of man's spiritual life, encounters some object or being in the outer world. The ego does not remain indifferent towards the object or the being; it expresses itself in some way and experiences something inwardly, according to whether the encounter pleases or displeases it. The ego may exult at some occurrence or it may fall into deepest sadness; it may recoil in terror, or it may lovingly contemplate or embrace the source of the event. And the ego can also have the experience of understanding or not understanding whatever is involved.

From our observation of the ego's activities between waking and falling asleep we can see how it tries to bring itself into harmony with the external world. If some entity pleases us and makes us feel that here we have something that warms us, we weave a bond with it; something from ourselves connects with it. That is what we do with our whole environment. During our entire waking life we are concerned, as regards our inner soul-processes, with creating harmony between our ego and the rest of the world. The experiences that come to us through objects or beings in the outer world and are reflected in our soul-life, work on the three constituents of the soul where the ego dwells but also on the astral, etheric and physical bodies. We have already given several examples of how the relation established by the ego between itself and any object or being not only stirs the emotions of the astral body and corrects the currents and movements of the etheric body but affects the physical body also. Who has not noticed how someone will turn pale when something frightening approaches? This means that the bond formed by the ego between itself and the frightening entity works into the physical body and affects the flow of the blood, so that the person concerned turns pale.

We have mentioned also an opposite effect, the blush of shame. When we feel that our relationship with someone in our environment is such that we would like to disappear for a moment, the blood mounts to the face. Here we have two examples of a definite influence on the blood caused by the ego's relation to the outer world. Many other examples could be given of how the ego expresses itself in the astral, etheric and physical bodies.

This search by the ego for harmony, or for a definite relationship between itself and its environment, results in certain consequences. In some cases we may feel that we have established a right relationship between the ego and the object or being. Even if we have good reason for feeling fear of a being, our ego may still feel that it has been in harmony with its environment, including fear itself — though we may not be able to see it in that light until afterwards.

The ego feels especially in tune with its environment if it has been trying to understand certain things in the outer world and finally succeeds. Then it feels united with these things, as though it had gone out of itself and immersed itself in them, and can feel itself rightly

related to them. Or it may be that the ego lives with other people in an affectionate relationship: then it feels happy and satisfied and in harmony with its surroundings. These feelings of contentment then pass over into its astral and etheric bodies.

It may happen, however, that the ego fails to establish this harmony and so falls short of what we may call, in a certain sense, the normal. Then it may find itself in a difficult situation. Suppose the ego encounters some object or being it cannot understand; suppose it tries in vain to find a right relationship to this entity; yet it has to take up a definite attitude towards it. A concrete example: suppose we meet in the outer world a being we do not want to understand, because it seems not worthwhile for our ego to penetrate into its nature; we feel that to do so would mean surrendering too much of our own force of knowledge and understanding. In such a case we have to set up a sort of barrier against it so as to keep ourselves free from it. By turning our forces away from it we become conscious of them, while we enhance our own self-consciousness. The feeling that comes over us then is one of liberation.

When this occurs, clairvoyant observation can see how the ego withdraws the astral body from the impressions which the environment or the being might make on it. The impressions will, of course, be made on our physical body unless we close our eyes or stop up our ears. The physical body is less under our control than the astral, so we draw back the astral from the physical and thus save it from being touched by impressions from the outer world. This withdrawal of the astral body, which would otherwise expend its energy on the physical body, appears to clairvoyant observation as an expansion of the astral: at the moment of its liberation it spreads out. When we raise ourselves above a being, we cause our astral body to expand like an elastic substance: we relax its normal tension. By so doing we liberate ourselves from any bond with the being we wish to turn away from. We withdraw into ourselves, as it were, and raise ourselves above the whole situation. Everything that occurs in the astral body comes to expression in the physical, and the physical expression of this expansion of the astral body is laughing or smiling.

These facial gestures, accordingly, indicate that we are raising ourselves above what is happening around us because we do not want to apply our understanding to it and from our standpoint are right not

to do so. It would be true to say, therefore, that anything we are not intending to understand will cause an expansion of our astral body and thus give rise to laughter. Satirical papers often depict public men with huge heads and tiny bodies, which is a way of expressing grotesquely the significance of these men for their time. To try to make sense of this would be futile, for there is no law which could unite a huge head with a tiny body. Any attempt to apply our reason to it would be a waste of energy and mental power. The only satisfying thing is to raise ourselves above the impression it makes on our physical body, to become free in the ego and to expand the astral body. For what the ego experiences is passed on in the first place to the astral body, and the corresponding facial gesture is laughter.

It may happen, however, that we cannot find the relationship to our environment that our soul needs. Suppose that for a long time we have loved someone who is not only closely related to our daily life but is associated with particular soul-experiences that arise from this close attachment. Suppose, then, that this person is torn from us for a while. With that loss, a part of our soul-experiences is torn away; a bond between ourselves and a being in the outer world is broken. Because of the soul-condition created by our relationship with this other person, our soul has good reason to suffer from this breaking of a bond it has long cherished. Something is torn from the ego, and the effect on the ego passes over into the astral body. Since in this case something is taken from the astral, it contracts: or, more exactly, the ego presses the astral body together.

This can always be clairvoyantly observed when a person suffers pain or grief from some loss. Just as the expanded astral body loses tension and creates in the physical body the gesture of laughing or smiling, so a contracted astral body penetrates more deeply into all the forces of the physical body and contracts it along with itself. The bodily expression of this contraction is a flow of tears. The astral body, having been left with gaps as it were, wants to fill them by contracting, while making use of substances from its environment. In so doing, it also contracts the physical body and squeezes out the latter's substances in the form of tears. What, then, are these tears?

The ego has lost something in its grief and deprivation. It draws itself together, because it is impoverished and feels its selfhood less strongly than usual, for the strength of this feeling is related to the

richness of its experiences in the surrounding world. We not only give something to those we love; we enrich our own souls by so doing. And when the experiences that love gives us are taken away and the astral body contracts, it seeks to regain by this pressure on itself the forces it has lost. Because it feels impoverished, it tries to make itself richer again. The tears are not merely an outflow; they are a sort of compensation for the stricken ego. The ego had formerly felt itself enriched by the outer world; now it feels strengthened by itself producing the tears. If someone suffers a weakening of self-consciousness, he tries to compensate for this by spurring himself on to an inward act of creation, manifest in the flow of tears. The tears give the ego a subconscious feeling of well-being; a certain balance is restored. You all know how people, when they are in the depths of grief and misery, find consolation, a kind of compensation, in tears. You will know, too, how people who cannot weep find sorrow and pain much harder to endure.

The ego, then if it cannot achieve a satisfying relationship with the outer world, will either raise itself to inner freedom through laughter, or it will sink into itself in order to gain strength after a deprivation. We have seen how it is the ego, the central point in man, which expresses itself in laughing and weeping. Hence you will find it easy to understand that in a certain sense the ego is a necessary precondition of laughter and tears.

If we observe a new-born child, we find that during its first days it can neither laugh nor weep. True laughing or weeping begins only around the 36th or 40th day. The reason is that although an ego from a former incarnation is living in the child, it does not immediately seek to relate itself to the outer world. A human being is placed into the world in such a way that he is built up from two sides. From one side he derives all the attributes and facilities acquired by heredity from father, mother, grandfather and so on. All this is worked on by the individuality, the ego that goes on from life to life, bearing with it its own soul-qualities. When a child enters existence at birth, we see at first only an undefined physiognomy, and quite undefined also are the talents, capacities and special characteristics which will emerge later on. But presently we are able to observe how the ego, with the powers of development it has brought from previous lives, works

unceasingly on the infant organism and modifies the inherited elements. Thus the inherited qualities are blended with those which pass from one incarnation to another.

That is how the ego is active in the child, but it is some time before the ego can begin to transform body and soul. During its early days, the child shows only its inherited characteristics. The ego, meanwhile, remains deeply hidden, waiting until it can impress on the undefined physiognomy the qualities it has brought from previous lives and will develop from day to day and year to year.

Before the child has taken on the individual character that belongs to it, it cannot express a relationship to the outer world through laughing or crying. For this requires the ego, the individuality, which tries to place itself in harmony with the outer world. Only the ego can express itself in laughter or tears. So it is that when we consider laughing and weeping, we are dealing with the deepest and most inward spirituality of man.

Those who refuse to admit any real distinction between men and animals will of course try to find analogies to laughing and weeping in the animal kingdom. But anyone who understands these things rightly will agree with the German poet who says that animals can rise at most only to howling, never to weeping; they can show their teeth in a grin but they never smile. Herein lies a deep truth which we can express in words by saying that the animal does not raise itself to the individual egohood which dwells in every human being. The animal is ruled by laws which appear to resemble those appertaining to human selfhood but remain external to the animal throughout its life. This essential difference between human beings and animals has already been mentioned here, and it was said that what interests us in the animal is comprised in the species to which it belongs. For example, there are no such great difference between lions and their progeny as we may find between human parents and their offspring. The main characteristics of an animal are those of its type or species. In the human realm every person has his own individual characteristics and his own biography, and this is what concerns us, whereas in animals it is the history of the species. Certainly there are many dog-owners and cat-owners who aver that they could write a biography of their pet, and I even knew a schoolmaster who regularly set his pupils the exercise of writing the biography of a pen. The fact that a thought can

be applied to anything is not important; what matters is that we should penetrate with our understanding the essential nature of a being or a thing. Individual biography is significant for man, but not for animals, for the essential part of man is the individuality which goes on and develops from life to life, whereas in animals it is the species that lives on and evolves.

In spiritual science, the enduring element that informs the species is called the animal's group-soul or group-ego, and we regard it as a reality. Thus we say that the animal has its ego outside itself. We do not deny the animal an ego, but we speak of the group-ego which directs the animal from outside. With man, by contrast, we speak of an individual penetrating right into his inmost part and directing each human being from within in such a way that he can enter into a personal relationship with the beings in his environment. The relationships that animals establish through the guidance of the external group-ego have a general character. What this or that animal likes or hates or fears is typical for its species, modified only in minor details among domestic animals and those which live with men. In human beings, what a person feels by way of love and hate, fear, sympathy or antipathy in relation to his environment springs from his individual ego. Thus the special relationship whereby man liberates himself from something in his environment and expresses his relief in laughter, or, in the opposite case, when he seeks for a relationship he cannot find and expresses his frustration in tears — all this can occur in man only. The more the individuality of the child makes itself evident above the animal level, the more does it show its humanity through laughter and tears.

If we are to take a true view of life, we must not attach primary importance to such crude facts as the similarities of bone and muscle in men and animals or the resemblances between some other organs. We must look for man's essential characteristics as evidence of his status as the highest of earthly beings in subtler aspects of his nature. If anyone cannot see the significance of such facts as laughter and tears for bringing out the difference between men and animals, one has to say: Nothing can be done to help a person who cannot rise to the facts which matter most in coming to understand man in his spirituality.

The facts we are now considering in the light of spiritual science can illuminate certain scientific findings, but only if the facts are placed in the context of a great spiritual-scientific whole. If we observe a person laughing or weeping, we can see that a change in the breathing process occurs. When sorrow goes as deep as tears, leading to a contraction of the astral body, and hence to a contraction also of the physical body, the in-breathing becomes shorter and shorter and the out-breathing longer and longer. In laughter the opposite occurs: the in-breathing is long and the out-breathing short. When a person's astral body is relaxed, and with it the finer parts of the physical body, the situation resembles that of a hollow space from which all the air is pumped out and immediately the outside air rushes in. A kind of liberation of the outer corporeality occurs in laughter, and then a long breath of air is drawn in. In weeping the opposite occurs. We press the astral together and with it the physical body, and the contraction causes an out-breathing in one long stretch.

Here, again, we have an instance where a soul-experience is brought by the ego into connection with the physical, right down into the physical body of man.

If we take these physiological facts, they will wonderfully illuminate an event which is recorded symbolically in the ancient religious records of mankind. You will remember the passage in the Old Testament which tells how man was raised to fully human status when Jahve or Jehovah breathed into him the breath of life and thereby endowed him with a living soul. [12] That is the moment when the birth of selfhood is impressed on our attention. Thus in the Old Testament the breathing process is shown as an expression of true ego-hood and brought into relation with the soul-quality of man. If we then recall how laughing and weeping are a unique expression of the human ego, we see at once the intimate connection between the breathing process and the soul-nature in man; and then, in the light of this knowledge, we come to look on the ancient religious records with the humility that such a deep and true understanding must instil in us.

For spiritual science these records are not necessary. Even if they were all destroyed in a great catastrophe, spiritual-scientific research has the means to discover for itself what lies at the root of them. But when the facts have been ascertained by this means, and when later the same facts are found to be unmistakably rendered in the symbolic-

pictorial language of the old records, our understanding of the records is greatly enhanced. We feel that they must originate from seers who knew what the spiritual-scientific researcher discovers — spiritual vision meets spiritual vision across thousands of years, and from this knowledge we gain the right attitude towards these records. When we are told how God breathed his own living breath into man, whereby man would find his own in-dwelling ego, we can see from our study of laughter and tears how true to human nature is this symbolically recorded event.

There is one other point I will mention, but only briefly, or it would lead us too far afield. Someone might say to me: you have started at the wrong end, you ought to have started with the external facts. The spiritual element should be sought where it appears purely as a natural occurrence — for example when a person is tickled. That is the most elementary fact about laughter. How do you reconcile that with all your fantasies about the expansion of the astral body and so forth?

Well, it is just in such a case that an expansion of the astral body occurs, and everything I have described comes to pass, though on a lower level. If someone tickles himself on the soles of his feet, he knows very well what is happening and is not impelled to laugh. But if he is tickled on the sole by someone else, he will reject it as an alien incursion, not to be rationally understood. Then his ego will try to rise above it, to liberate itself and set the astral body free. This freeing of the astral from an inappropriate contact expresses itself in laughter without motive. That signifies precisely a liberation, a rescue of the ego on a fundamental level, from the attack made on us by the tickling of our feet.

Laughing at a joke or at something comic is on the same level. We laugh at a joke because laughter brings us into a right relationship with it. A joke associates things which in serious life are kept apart; if the connection between them could be logically grasped, it would not be comic. A joke sets up relationships which — unless we are topsyturvy minded — do not call for understanding but only for playing a sort of game. Directly we feel masters of the game, we free ourselves and rise above the content of the joke. This liberation, this raising ourselves above something, we shall always find when laughter breaks out.

But this kind of relationship to the outer world may or may not be justified. We may rightly wish to liberate ourselves through laughter; or alternatively our own cast of mind may make us unwilling or unable to understand what is going on. Laughter will then derive from our own limitations, not from the nature of things. This is what happens when an undeveloped human being laughs at someone because he cannot understand him. If an undeveloped human being fails to find in another the commonplace or philistine qualities that he regards as right and proper, he may think he need not try to understand the other person and so he tries to free himself — perhaps because he does not want to understand. So it can easily become a habit to liberate oneself through laughter on all occasions. There are indeed certain people for whom it is quite natural to laugh and bleat at everything, without ever trying to understand anything; they fluff out their astral and so are continually laughing. Or it may be that attitudes currently in fashion make it seem that some everyday behaviour is not worth any attempt to understand it. Then people will allow themselves a smile, feeling that they are superior to this or that. Hence you will see that laughter does not always express a feeling of justified withdrawal; the withdrawal can also be unjustified. But the fundamental facts concerning laughter are not affected either way.

It may happen also that someone makes calculated use of this form of human expression. Consider a speaker who calculates the effect his words will have on his hearers, whether they agree with him or not. Now it may be justified for him to refer to things so trivial or so far below the level of his audience that they can be described without weaving any intimate link between them and the souls of his hearers. In fact, by so doing he may help them to free themselves from the trivialities that surround the subject which he really wants to get them to understand. But there are also speakers who always want to get the laugh on their side. I have heard them saying: If I am to win I must stimulate laughter, so that I will have the laughers on my side — for if anyone has the laughers on his side, his case is as good as won! That may spring from inward dishonesty. For anyone who appeals to laughter is evoking a response which is intended to raise his hearers above something. But if he presents the matter in such a way that his hearers need not try to understand it but can laugh at it only because it has been brought down to a level where it appears trivial — then he

is counting on human vanity, even though his hearers may not be aware of it. So you can see that this counting on laughter may involve a certain dishonesty.

In the same way it is sometimes possible to win people over by stirring in them the feelings of comfort and well-being which I have described as being associated with tears. In such cases, when some loss is brought before a person in imagination only, he may indulge himself in craving for something he knows he cannot find. By contracting his ego he feels his selfhood strengthened; and often this kind of appeal to the emotions is really an appeal to human selfishness. All these forms of appeal can thus be grossly misused, because pain and grief, mockery and scorn, which may be accompanied by tears or laughter, are all connected with strengthening or liberating the ego and so with human egohood. When therefore such appeals are made, it may be our selfishness that is addressed, and it is selfishness that destroys the bonds between man and man.

In other lectures we have seen that the ego not only works on the sentient soul, the intellectual soul and the consciousness soul, but through this work is itself made stronger and brought nearer fulfilment. Hence we can readily understand that laughing and weeping can be a means whereby the ego can educate itself and further strengthen its powers. No wonder, then, that among the great sources of education for human development we rank those dramatic creations which stimulate the soul-forces that find expression in laughter and tears.

Our experience of tragic drama does in fact have the effect of pressing the astral body together and so imparting firmness and inner cohesion to the ego. Comedy expands the astral body, inasmuch as a person raises himself above follies and coincidences and thereby liberates the ego. Hence we can see how closely connected with human development are tragedy and comedy, when through artistic creations they come before our souls.

Anyone who can observe human nature in its smallest details will find that everyday experiences can lead to an understanding of the greatest facts. Artistic productions, for example, can make us see that in human life there is a kind of pendulum which swings to and fro

between laughter and tears. The ego can progress only by being in motion. If the pendulum were at rest, the ego would not be able to expand or develop; it would succumb to inward death. It is right for human development that the ego should be able to free itself through laughter and on the other hand to search for itself through tears. Certainly a balance between the two poles must be found: the ego will find completion only in the balance, never in swinging to and fro between exultation and despair. It will find itself only at the point of rest, which can swing over as easily to one extreme as to the other.

The human being must gradually become the guide and leader of his own development. If we understand laughter and tears, we can see them as revelations of the spirit, for a human being becomes transparent, as it were, if we know how in laughter he seeks an outward expression of inner liberation, while in tears he experiences an inner strengthening after the ego has suffered a loss in the external world.

To the question as to what laughter fundamentally is, we can reply: It is a spiritual expression of man's striving for liberation, in order that he may not be entangled in things unworthy of him but with a smile may rise above things to which he should never be enslaved. Similarly, tears are an expression of the fact that when the thread linking him to someone in the outer world has been broken, he still seeks for such a link in the midst of his tears. When he strengthens his ego through weeping, he is in effect saying to himself, I belong to the world and the world to me, for I cannot endure being torn away from it.

Now at last we can understand how this liberation, rising above everything base and evil, could be expressed in the "Zarathustra smile", at which all creatures on earth exulted, while the spirits of evil fled away. That smile is the symbol in world-history of the spiritual elevation of the ego above everything that might strangle it. And if the ego comes to an occasion when it feels that existence is worthless and that it wants to have no more to do with the world, and if then a power rises up in the soul which impels the ego to affirm, "The world belongs with me and I with the world", then this feeling is rendered in Goethe's "The tears flow forth — the earth holds me again!"

These words give voice to a conviction that we cannot be shut off from the earth and that even in our tears we assert our intimate connection with the world at the very moment when it seems to be taken from us. And for this assertion there is justification in the deep secrets of the world.

Man's connection with the world is made known to us by the tears on his face, and his liberation from everything base by the smile upon his countenance.



3. What is Mysticism?

Berlin, 10th February 1910

The subject of today's lecture [13] is one on which widespread confusion prevails. Not long ago I heard a cultured scholar declare that **Goethe** should be numbered among the mystics, for he had admitted the existence of a dark, inscrutable element, beyond the range of knowledge. And many people would probably agree with that opinion. What indeed is not called mysticism or mystical nowadays? When a person is not clear about something, if his response to it hovers between not-knowing and a dim inkling, he will call it mystical or mysterious. When people are tempted by a certain lack of thought and psychological knowledge to assert that nothing reliable is known about something, and then go on to deny that anyone else may have knowledge of it, as is the wont today, they dismiss it as mystical.

If, however, we study the historical origin of the word, we shall gain a quite different idea of what great men have understood by mysticism and of what they believed it offered them. We shall see that there have been men who, far from regarding that which is obscure and inscrutable as the content of mysticism, have spoken of its goal as attainable only through a higher clarity, a brighter light in the soul; so much so that for them the clarity of science leaves off where the clarity of mysticism begins. That is the conviction of those who believe they have experienced real mysticism.

We find some mysticism in the earliest periods of human evolution, but what was called mysticism in the Mysteries of the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Asiatic peoples is so far removed from our conceptual thinking that it is hard to give any idea of mysticism if we go by those old forms of mystical experience.

We can come nearest to present-day concepts if we start with the still fairly recent forms of mysticism found among the German mystics from Meister Eckhart [14] onwards, during the 13th and 14th centuries, up to their culmination in that incomparable mystic, **Angelus Silesius**. [15] If we examine their mysticism, we find that it sought to reach a true knowledge of the deepest foundations of the world by a

purely inward soul-experience; above all, by the liberation of the soul from all external impressions and perceptions, so that the soul would draw back from the outer world and try to plunge into the depths of its own inward life. In other words, a mystic of this type believes that by this means he can find the divine ground of the world, which he would not be able to do if he attempted to analyse natural phenomena, however intensively, and to grasp them with his intellect. His view is that outward sense-impressions form a kind of veil through which human cognition cannot penetrate in its search for the divine foundations of the world. The inward experiences of the soul, however, form a much thinner veil, and it is possible to penetrate through this to the divine ground, which also lies at the foundation of external appearances. This is the mystical way of Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler [16] and Suso [17] and other mystics of that century, leading to Angelus Silesius.

We must be clear that these mystics were expecting to find more than only that which could be regarded as the immediate result of their inward search. In the course of this winter's lectures we have dealt with this inward search in all its manifold aspects. We saw that if we look into what is rightly called man's inner being, we come first to the darkest depths of the soul, where the soul is still subject to emotions of fear, terror, anxiety and hope, and to the whole gamut of pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow. We called this part of the soul the sentient soul. We went on to distinguish in these dark foundations of soul experience what we call the intellectual soul, which is achieved when the ego assimilates external impressions and quietly allows that which emerges in the sentient soul to live itself out and find equilibrium. We said also that inner truth, as we may call it, arises in the intellectual soul. When the ego then works further on what it has gained on its way to the intellectual soul, it raises itself to the consciousness soul, where for the first time a clear knowledge of the ego is possible, and where man is led out from inner life to a real knowledge of the world. If we keep before us these three members of the soul's life, we have the outline of what we find when we sink ourselves directly into our inner being; and we find out how the ego works on the three soul members.

Those mystics who sought for knowledge in the way described, believed that they could find something else through this immersion in the depths of the soul. For the inward experiences of the soul's life

were for them only a veil they had to pass through in order to reach the source of being. Above all, they believed that if they attained to that source, they would themselves undergo, as a further inward experience, what is presented in external history as the life and death of Christ.

Now when this mystical descent into the soul occurs, even if only in the mediaeval sense, the process is as follows. The mystic has in front of him the external world, with its realms of light and colour and all the other impressions it makes on his senses, and he works on all this with his intellect. But he remains in thrall to the external world and cannot penetrate through its appearances to their source. His soul retains conceptual images of the outer world, and above all it retains all its experiences, whether as pleasure or pain, sympathy or antipathy, from the impressions it receives. A human being's ego, with his interests and his entire inner life, always directs him towards the outer world and the impressions the latter makes upon him. When, therefore, a mystic first attempts to turn away from the outer world, he has to reckon with everything that the outer world has engendered in his soul from morning till evening. So at first his inner life appears to him as a repetition, a reflected image, of outer life.

Is the soul left empty, then, when it exerts itself to forget everything reflected within it from the outer world, to obliterate all impressions and conceptual images drawn from that world? The true mystical experience depends on the fact that the soul has other possibilities, so that when it banishes not only its memories but its feelings of sympathy and antipathy, it still has some content. The mystic feels that impressions of the outer world, with their brightly coloured pictures and their effects on the soul, have the result of suppressing something which exists in the soul's hidden depths. The mystic feels that when he is open to the external world, its life is like a powerful light which outshines and blots out the finer experiences of the soul. But when all impressions from the outer world are erased, the inner spark, as Eckhart calls it, shines forth. He then experiences in the soul something which had previously seemed not to be there, for it was imperceptible in face of the dazzle of the outer world.

For the sake of clarity, the mystic then asks if what he experiences in the soul is comparable with what he encounters in the outer world. No: there is a radical difference. Our relation to things in the outer

world is such that we cannot penetrate into their inwardness, for they show us only their outer sides. When we perceive colours and sounds, it is possible for us to realise that behind them lies something which for the moment we must regard as their hidden side; but with the experiences that arise in the soul it is different once we have obliterated the impressions and conceptual images of the outer world: we cannot say that they show us only their outer side, for we are within them and are part of them. And if we have the gift for opening ourselves to the inner light, they show themselves to us in their true being, and we see them to be entirely different from anything we encounter in the outer world. For the outer world is subject everywhere to growth and decline, to flowering and withering, to birth and death. And when we observe what reveals itself in the soul when the little spark begins to shine, we see that all ideas of growth and decline, of birth and death, are not applicable to it, for here we encounter something independent; and we see that concepts which belong to the outer world, including that of outside and inside, are not relevant to it. Hence it is no longer the surface or outer side of things that we grasp, but the thing itself in its true being.

It is precisely through this inward knowledge that we gain assurance of the imperishable element in ourselves and of its kinship with what we must think of as the spirit, the primal basis of everything material. This experience leads the mystic to feel that he must overcome and kill all his former experiences; that his ordinary soul-life must die, and then his real soul, the victor over birth and death, will arise within him. This awakening of the inner kernel of the soul, after the death of ordinary soul-life, is experienced by the mystic as an inner resurrection, an analogue of the historical life, death and resurrection of Christ. Thus he sees the Christ-event taking place in his soul and spirit as an inner mystical experience.

If we trace out this mystical path, we find that it must lead to what may be called a unity of all experience. For it belongs to the nature of our soul-life that we pass from the multiplicity of sense-perceptions, the flow and ebb of perceptions and feelings and the rich variety of thoughts, to a simplification; for the ego, the centre-point of our life, is always working to create unity in our entire life of soul. It is clear, then, that when the mystic treads the path of soul-experiences, they come before him in such a way that everything manifold and multiple strives towards the unity prescribed by the ego. In all mystics,

accordingly, we find an outlook which could be called spiritual monism. When the mystic raises himself to the knowledge that the inner being of the soul has qualities radically different from those found in the external world, he experiences in his inner being the consonance of the soul's kernel with the divine-spiritual ground of the world, which he therefore represents as a unity.

What I have now been saying should be regarded simply as descriptive. It is impossible to reproduce in a modern sense what the mystic reveals except in the form of individual mystical experience passed through by the soul as its most intimate concern. Then the strange things told us by the mystic can be compared with one's own experience. But external criticism is not possible if one has no personal experience, because another person's description of individual experience has to be relied on. But from the basic standpoint of these lectures we can form a clear picture of the mystic's path. It is essentially a path into the inner life, and the history of human development shows it to be *one* of the paths taken by the human spirit in its search for enlightenment. Various opinions as to which is the right path may be held, but if we are to give a clear answer to the question "What is mysticism?", we must throw some light on the other path that can be pursued.

The mystic's path leads him to unity, to one divine-spiritual Being. This he does by following the path which leads into his inner being where the ego gives him the unity of soul experience. The other path is the one that the human spirit has always taken when it seeks to pierce through the veil of the external world to the foundations of existence. Here, in conjunction with many other things, it has been above all the human thinking which has tried to reach a deeper understanding of what lies behind the surface of things through that which can be perceived by the senses and grasped by ordinary intelligence. Whither does such a path necessarily lead, in contrast to the goal of mysticism? If all relevant relationships are taken into account, it must lead from the manifold variety of external phenomena to the conclusion that a similar multiplicity of spiritual grounds must exist. In modern times such men as Leibniz [18] and Herbart, [19] who followed this way of thought, have seen that one cannot explain the wealth of external phenomena in terms of any kind of underlying

unity. In brief, they found the true antithesis — monadology — to all mysticism. They reached the view that the world is founded on the activities of a multiplicity of monads, or spiritual beings.

Thus Leibnitz, the great thinker of the 17th and 18th century, said to himself: When we look at what comes to meet us in space and time, we go astray if we believe that it all springs from a unity; it must come from many unities working together. And this reciprocal activity of monads, a world of monads or spiritual beings, brings about the phenomena perceived by human senses.

I cannot go further into this today, but a deeper study of spiritual development would show that all those who have sought for unity on the outward path were subject to an illusion, for they projected outwards, like a sort of shadow, the unity which is experienced inwardly in mysticism, and they believed that this unity was the basis of the external world and could be apprehended by thinking. Healthy thinking, however, finds no unity in the outer world, but recognises that its manifold variety arises from the inter-working of a variety of beings, or monads. Mysticism leads to unity because the ego works in our inner being as a single centre of the soul. The path through the external world leads by necessity to multiplicity, plurality, monadology, and thus to the view that many spiritual beings must work together in order to engender our world, while human knowledge of the world is achieved through a multiplicity of organs and observations.

Now we come to a point of far-reaching importance which receives all too little attention in the history of thought. Mysticism leads to unity; but its recognition of the divine ground of the world as a unity derives from the nature of the ego, the inner constitution of the soul.

The ego sets its seal of unity when the mystic looks up to the Divine Spirit. Contemplation of the external world leads to a multiplicity of monads. But it is only our way of observing the outer world and the way in which it comes to meet us that lead to multiplicity and which therefore prompted Leibniz and Herbart to postulate multiplicity as the foundation of the world. Deeper research leads to a realisation that unity and multiplicity are concepts inapplicable to the divine-spiritual ground of the world, for we cannot characterise it as either a unity or a multiplicity. We must say that the divine-spiritual transcends these concepts and cannot be fathomed by them.

This is a principle which throws light on the supposed conflict between monism and pluralism, so often portrayed as opposites in philosophical debates. If the disputants would only realise that their concepts are inadequate for any approach to the divine ground of the world, they might come to see the subject of their debate in the right light.

Now we have learnt what the essence of real mysticism is. It is an inner experience of such a kind that it leads the mystic to real knowledge. He will not be justified in regarding the unity he experiences as objective truth, for its appearance of unity derives from his own ego, but he may truly say that he experiences the substantiality of spirit as one living within it.

If we pass on from this general account of mysticism to individual mystics, we often encounter facts which are called in evidence against mysticism by its opponents. The inner experience of individuals takes various forms, so that the experiences of one mystic may not agree entirely with those of another. But if two persons have different experiences of something, it by no means follows that their reports are untrue. If one person sees a tree from the right and another sees it from the left, and each describes it from his own point of view, it will be the same tree and both descriptions may be correct. This simple example will show why the soul-experiences of mystics differ: after all, a mystic's inner life does not come before him as a complete blank. However much it may be his ideal to obliterate external experiences and to withdraw his attention from them completely, they will yet leave a trace in his soul, and this makes a difference. The mystic will be subject also to some influence from the character of the nation from which he descends. Even if he casts out from his soul every external experience he has had, his inner experience will still have to be described in words and concepts drawn from his own life. Two mystics may experience exactly the same thing, but they will describe it differently as a result of their earlier lives. It is only if we are able through our own personal experience to allow for these individual variations in description and representation that we can come to recognise that fundamentally the reality of mystical experience is always the same. It is just as though we were to photograph a tree from various angles: the photographs would differ but they would all be of the same tree.

There is another point, which might in a sense be considered an objection against mystical experience, and since I must speak quite objectively, with no bias one way or the other, I have to say that this objection is valid and applies to all forms of mysticism. Just because mystical experience is so intimate and inward, and has an individual character derived from the mystic's earlier years, it is extraordinarily difficult for anything he says about his mystical life, closely bound up as it must be with his own soul, to be rightly understood or assimilated by another soul. The most intimate aspects of mysticism must always remain intimate and very hard to communicate, however earnestly one may try to understand and enter into what is said. The point is that two mystics, if both are far enough advanced, may have the same experience — and anyone well-disposed will then recognise that they are speaking of the same thing — but they will have passed through different experiences during their earlier years, and this will give their mysticism an individual colouring. Hence the expressions used by a mystic and his style of utterance, in so far as they derive from his pre-mystical life, will always remain somewhat incomprehensible unless we make an effort to understand his personal background and so come to see why he speaks as he does. This, however, will divert our attention from what is universally valid to the personality of the mystic himself, and this tendency can be observed in the history of mysticism.

With the deepest mystics, especially, we must set aside any idea that the knowledge they have gained can be imparted and assimilated by other people. Mystical knowledge cannot at all easily be made part of general human knowledge. But this only goes to strengthen our interest in the personality of the mystic, and it is endlessly attractive to study him in so far as the universal human image is reflected in him. What the mystic describes and values only because it leads him to the foundations and sources of existence will in itself have little interest for us as regards the objective nature of the world; what interests us will be the subjective side of it and its bearing on the mystic as an individual. In studying mysticism, accordingly, we shall find value in precisely what the mystic tries to overcome — in the personal, the immediate, his attitude to the world. Certainly we can learn a great deal about the depths of human nature if we observe the history of mankind from the aspect of the mystic as it were, but it will

be very hard for us — this can never be too strongly emphasised — to find in a mystic's words as he expresses them anything that can have direct validity for us.

Mysticism is the opposite of monadology, or pluralism, which derives from observing and reflecting on the external world which all men have in common. The resulting systems of the latter may contain error upon error, but they can be discussed and something made of them from whatever point of development the individual has reached.

The mysticism I have been describing here can thus be extremely attractive, but we shall recognise its limits quite objectively if we allow our souls to assimilate what has just been said about it.

Further light is thrown on mysticism if we assess it in relation to the method of spiritual science, a method drawn from the deeper levels of present-day spiritual life with the aim of penetrating to the primal foundations of existence. If a subject gives difficulty because of the subtlety of its ideas, the best way of understanding it is often to compare it with some related subject.

You have often heard it said in these lectures that there is a path of ascent to the higher worlds. In a certain sense it is a threefold path. We have described the outward path, and then the inward path taken by the mediaeval mystics, and we have defined the limits of the latter. Now we will turn to what can be called the proper path of spiritual science, or spiritual research.

We have already seen that this way of knowledge does not simply require the student to take either the outward path, leading to the spiritual basis of the sense-world and therefore to plurality, or the inward path leading to the deeper foundations of one's own soul and finally to the mystical unity of the world. Spiritual science says that a man is not bound to follow only those paths which his own immediate knowledge opens for him, but that he possesses hidden, slumbering faculties of cognition, and that starting from them he can find other paths than the two just mentioned.

A person who follows either of these two paths remains as he already is and has become; he may seek to pierce the veil of the sense world and penetrate to the foundations of existence; or he may

obliterate external impressions and allow the inner spark to shine out. But in spiritual science it is fundamental that man need not remain as he is today, with his existing faculties of knowledge. Just as man has evolved to his present stage, so, by using the appropriate method, he can develop faculties of knowledge higher than those he has now.

If we are to compare this method with the mystical mode of knowledge, we must say: If we eliminate outer impressions we can discover the inner spark, and see how it shines when all else is extinguished, but we are still only drawing on what is already there. Spiritual science is not content with that; it comes to the spark, but does not stop there. It seeks to develop methods which will turn the little spark into a much stronger light. We can take the outward path or the inward path, but since we are to develop new powers of cognition, we take neither path immediately. The modern form of spiritual scientific research is distinguished both from mediaeval mysticism and from pluralism and also from the old teachings of the Mysteries, by developing inner faculties of cognition in such a way that the outward path and the inward path are brought together. Thus we follow a path that leads equally to both goals.

This is possible because the development of higher faculties by the methods of spiritual science leads man through three stages of knowledge. The first stage, which proceeds from ordinary knowledge and goes beyond it is called Imagination; the second stage is called Inspiration, and the third is called Intuition, in the true sense of the word. How is the first stage attained and what is accomplished in the soul for higher faculties to arise? The way in which they are developed will show you how pluralism and mysticism are transcended along this path. The example most helpful for an understanding of Imagination, or imaginative cognition, has already been mentioned more than once: it is drawn from the methods applied by the spiritual scientist to himself. It is one of many such examples and is best given in the form of a dialogue between master and pupil.

The teacher who wants to educate a pupil in the higher faculties leading to Imagination would say: "Look at the plant; it grows up out of the soil and unfolds leaf by leaf until it is a flower. Compare it with man as he stands before you. Man has something more than the plant, for the world is reflected in his ideas, feelings and sensations; he excels the plant in possessing human consciousness. But he has

had to pay for this consciousness by absorbing into himself on his way towards becoming man, passions, impulses and desires which may lead him into error, wrong and evil. The plant grows according to its natural laws; it unfolds its being according to these laws, and it stands before us, pure, with its green sap. Unless we indulge in fancies we cannot attribute to it any desires, passions or impulses which could divert it from the right path. If now we observe the blood as it circulates through man, the blood which is the external expression of human consciousness, of the human ego, and contrast it with the green chlorophyll sap permeating the plant, we shall realize that this streaming, pulsating blood is the expression as much of man's rise to a higher stage of consciousness as it is of the passions and impulses which drag him down.

"Then" — the teacher might continue — "imagine that man develops further; that through his ego he overcomes error, evil and ugliness, everything which tries to drag him down to evil; that he purifies and refines his passions and affections. Picture an ideal which man strives to realise, when his blood will no longer be the expression of any passions, but only of his inner mastery of all that might drag him down. His red blood may then be compared with what the green sap has become in the red rose. Just as the red rose shows us the plant sap in all its purity, and yet at a higher stage than it had reached in the plant, so the red blood of man, when purified and refined, can show what man becomes when he has mastered everything that might drag him down."

These are the feelings and images that the teacher can evoke in the pupil's mind and soul. If the pupil is not a dry stick, if he is able to enter with his feelings into the whole secret symbolised by this comparison, his soul will be stirred and he will experience something which will come before his spiritual vision as a symbolic picture, The picture can be of the Rose Cross: the black cross symbolising what has been slain in man's lower nature and the roses representing the red blood, so purified and refined that it has become a pure expression of his higher soul-nature. Thus the black cross wreathed with red roses becomes a symbolical summing-up of what the soul experiences in this dialogue between teacher and pupil.

If the pupil has opened his soul to all the feelings and images which can make the Rose Cross a true symbol for him; if he does not merely claim to have placed the Rose Cross before his inner vision, but if with pain and struggle he has won through to a heightened experience of its essence, he will know that this picture, or similar ones, call forth something in his soul — not merely the little spark but a new power of cognition which enables him to look at the world in a new way. Thus he has not remained as he formerly was, but has raised his soul to a further stage of development. And if he does this again and again, he will finally attain to Imagination, which shows him that in the outer world there is more than meets the eye.

Now let us see how this way of knowledge came into being. Did we say to ourselves: We will take the outward path and seek for the foundations of things? To a certain extent, yes. We go out to the external world, but we are not searching for the basis of things, or for molecules and atoms; we are not concerned with what the outer world sets directly before us, but we retain something from it. The black cross could not arise in the soul if there were no wood in the world; the soul could not imagine a red rose unless it had received an impression of one from the world around it. Hence we cannot say, as the mystic does, that we have obliterated everything external and turned our attention away entirely from the outer world. We submit to the outer world and take from it something that it alone can give, but we do not take it just as it comes, for the Rose Cross is not found in nature. How was it, then, that rose and wood, drawn from the outer world, were combined into a symbolic picture? It was the work of our own souls. The experience that comes to us when we devote ourselves to the outer world, not merely staring at it but becoming absorbed in it, and what we can learn from comparing plant with man as he develops — all this we have made into an inner mystical experience. But we have not taken immediate possession of our experience, as the mystic does; we sacrifice it to the outer world, and, with the help of what the world can give outwardly and the soul inwardly, we build up a symbolic picture in which outer and inner mystical life are fused. The picture stands before us in such a way that it does not lead directly either to the outer world or to the inner world, but it works as a force. If we place it before our souls in meditation, it creates a new spiritual eye, and then we can see into a spiritual world which previously we could not find, either in the inner world or in the

outer. And then we can discern that what lies at the basis of the external world, and can now be experienced through imaginative cognition, is identical with what can be found in our own inner being.

If now we ascend to the stage of Inspiration, we have to strip away the content of our symbolic picture. We have to do something very similar to the procedure of the mystic who takes the inward path. We have to forget the rose and the cross, to banish the whole picture from our mind's eye. However difficult this may be, it has to be done. In order to bring before us inwardly the symbolical comparison between plant and man, our soul had to exert itself. Now we have to concentrate our attention on this activity, on what the soul had to do in order to call up the image of the black cross as a symbol of what has to be overcome in man. When we thus deepen ourselves mystically in the experience of the soul during this activity, we come to Inspiration, or inspirational cognition.

The awakening of this new faculty not only brings the appearance of the little spark in our inner being: we see it lighting up as a powerful force of cognition, and through it we experience something which reveals itself as closely related to our inner being and yet wholly independent of it. For we have seen how our soul-activity is not only an inner process but has exercised itself on something external. So we have here a knowledge of our inner being, as a residue of mysticism, which is also knowledge of the outer world.

Now we come to a task which is opposed to that of the mystic. We have to do something similar to what ordinary natural science does: we have to go forth into the external world. This is difficult, but essential for rising to the stage of Intuition, or intuitive cognition.

Our task now is to divert our attention from our own activity, forget what we have done to bring the Rose Cross before our inner sight. If we are patient and carry out the exercises long enough and in the right way, we shall see that we are left with something which we know for certain is entirely independent of our own inner experience and has no subjective colouring, and yet shows by its objective being that it is akin to the centre of the human being, the ego. Thus in order to reach intuitive knowledge we go out from ourselves and yet come to something which is closely akin to our inner being. So we rise from our own inward experience to the spiritual, which we no longer

experience within ourselves but in the external world. Thus on the path of spiritual science, through Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, we overcome the shadow-sides both of pluralism and ordinary mysticism.

Now we can give an answer to the question — What is mysticism? It is an endeavour by the human soul to find the divine-spiritual source of existence through immersing itself in its own inner being. Fundamentally, spiritual-scientific cognition also must take this mystical path, but it is well aware that it must first prepare itself and not set out prematurely. Mysticism is thus an enterprise which springs from a justified urge in the human soul, thoroughly justified in principle, but undertaken too early if the soul has not first sought to make progress in imaginative cognition. If we try to deepen our ordinary life through mysticism, there is a danger that we may not have made ourselves sufficiently free and independent of ourselves, so that we are unable to form a picture of the world not coloured by our personality. If we rise to the stage of Inspiration, we have poured out our inner being into something drawn from the outer world; and then we have gained the right to be a mystic. All mysticism should therefore be undertaken at the proper stage of human development. Harm is done if we try to achieve mystical knowledge before we are ready for it.

In justified mysticism, accordingly, spiritual science can recognise a stage which enables us to understand the real aim and intention of spiritual-scientific research. There is hardly anything from which we can learn as much in this respect as we can from a devoted study of the mystics. It must not be thought that the spiritual scientist, when he recognises something justified in mysticism, is denying the need for further progress. Mysticism is justified only if it is raised to a certain level of development, so that its methods yield results which are not merely subjective but give valid expression to truths concerning the spiritual world.

We need not say much about the dangers which a premature devotion to mystical methods can incur. They involve a descent into the depths of the human soul before the mystic has prepared himself in such a way that his inner being can grow out into the external world. He will often then be inclined to shut himself off from the outer world, and fundamentally this is only a subtle, refined form of

egotism. This often applies to mystics who turn away from the outer world and indulge in those feelings of rapture, exaltation and liberation which flood into their souls when this golden mood pervades their inner life. This egotism can be overcome if the ego is constrained to pass outside itself and make its activity flow into the external world by the creation of symbols. In this way an imaginative symbolism leads to an experience of truth which strips away egotism. The danger incurred by a mystic who strives after knowledge too early in his development is that he may become an eccentric or a refined egoist.

Mysticism is justified, and what Angelus Silesius says is true:

*If you transcend yourself in God's prevailing,
Then in your spirit will ascension reign! [20]*

It is true that by developing his soul man attains not only to his own inner being but to the spiritual kingdoms which underlie the outer world. But he must take in full earnest the work of transcending himself, and this must not be confused with a mere brooding within himself just as he is. He must take seriously the words of Angelus Silesius, both the first line and the second. We fail to do this if we withdraw from any aspect of the divine revelation; we let God hold sway only if we are able to sacrifice our inner being to all that can flow into us as revelation from the outer world. If we bring this way of thinking into relation with our spiritual-scientific cognition, we shall be taking the second line in the right sense. We let the divine-spiritual ground of the outer and inner worlds hold sway in us, and only then can we hope that we shall be "on Heaven's way." This means that we shall come to a spiritual realm which is coloured neither by our own inner world nor by the outer world — a realm which has the same ground as the infinite world of stars shining in on us, as the atmosphere which envelops the earth, as the green plant-cover, as the rivers flowing into the sea; while the same divine-spiritual element lives in our thinking, feeling and willing and permeates our inner and outer worlds.

These examples will show that to read a saying such as this one by Angelus Silesius is not enough; we must take it up at the right stage, when we are first able to understand it truly. Then we shall see that mysticism, because it has the right kernel, can indeed lead us to the point where we shall be ripe for learning gradually to see into spiritual realms, and that mysticism in the highest and truest sense can make real for us what can be found in the beautiful words of Angelus Silesius:

When you raise yourself above yourself and truly let the divine spiritual ground of worlds hold sway in you, you will tread the heavenly way to the divine-spiritual sources of existence.



4. The Nature of Prayer

Berlin, 17th February 1910

In the lecture on mysticism, we spoke of the particular form of inward deepening which appears in the mysticism of the Middle Ages from the time of Meister Eckhart down to Angelus Silesius. Its characteristic is that the mystic seeks to make himself free and independent of all the experiences that come to him from the external world. He tries to press on to an experience which will prove to him that when everything to do with ordinary life has been extinguished and the soul withdraws into itself, it still has within it a world of its own, so to speak. This world is always there but is outshone by the external experiences that work so powerfully on human beings, and thus it appears as a light so weak that most people never notice it. Hence the mystic often calls it the little spark. But he is sure it can be fanned into a powerful flame which will illuminate the sources and foundations of existence. In other words, it leads a man along the path of his own soul to a knowledge of his origin, which can indeed be called "knowledge of God."

In the same lecture we observed how the mediaeval mystics supposed that the little spark had to grow by itself, its own nature remaining unchanged. In opposition to this, we emphasised that modern spiritual research calls for a development of these inner soul-forces under conscious control, so that they can rise to higher forms of cognition, which we called Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. So this inwardly devoted mediaeval mysticism comes before us as a sort of first step towards true spiritual investigation. If we are able to immerse ourselves in the inward fervour of a Meister Eckhart; if we recognise the immeasurable force of spiritual knowledge that this mystical devotion gave to Johannes Tauler; if we appreciate how deeply Valentin Weigel [21] or Jacob Boehme [22] were led into the secrets of existence by all that they achieved through this physical devotion (though they certainly advanced beyond it); if we understand how Angelus Silesius was enabled through this same devotion not only to gain illuminating insights into the general laws of spiritual world-order but to give heart-warmingly beautiful expression in his writings to the secrets of the world — if we bear all this in mind, we shall

realise the power and depth that resides in this medieval mysticism, and the endless help it can give to anyone who wishes to follow the spiritual-scientific path for himself.

Mediaeval mysticism can thus be regarded — particularly in the light of the last lecture — as a great and wonderful preparatory school for spiritual-scientific research. And how could it be otherwise? After all, the aim of the spiritual scientist is to develop the little spark through his own inner forces. The only difference is that the mystics believed that they could surrender themselves in peace of soul to the little spark and that it would come to shine ever more brightly of its own accord, whereas the spiritual scientist is convinced that we must use our capacities and forces, placed by the wisdom of the world in the service of our will, to kindle the spark to a brighter flame. If, then, the mystical frame of mind is a good preparation for spiritual science, we have, in turn, as a preparation for mystical devotion, the activity of soul which can be called, in the true sense, prayer. Just as the mystic is able to attain to his inward devotion because he has — even though unconsciously — trained his soul for it, so, if we wish to work our way along the same path to physical meditation, we can look for a preparatory stage in true prayer.

During recent centuries, the nature of prayer has been misunderstood in all sorts of ways by this or that spiritual movement, and to gain a true understanding of it will not be easy. If, however, we remember that these centuries have been marked especially by the emergence of egotistic spiritual trends which have laid hold of wide circles of people, we shall not find it surprising that prayer has been dragged down to the level of egotistic wishes and desires. And it must be said that prayer can hardly be more utterly misunderstood than when it is permeated by some form of egotism. In this lecture we shall try to study prayer entirely in the light of spiritual science, free from any sectarian or other influence.

As a first approach, we might say that while the mystic assumes that he will find in his soul some kind of little spark which his mystical devotion will cause to shine ever more brightly, prayer is intended to engender the spark. And prayer, from whatever presuppositions it proceeds, proves its effectiveness precisely by stirring the soul either to discover gradually the little spark, if it is there, gleaming but hidden, or to kindle it.

If we are to study the need for prayer and its nature, we shall have to enter on a description of the soul in depth, bearing in mind the always relevant saying of the old Greek sage, Heraclitus, quoted in an earlier lecture: "Never will you find the boundaries of the soul, by whatever paths you search, so all-embracing is the soul's being." [23] And although in prayer we are at first seeking only for the soul's inner secrets, the intimate feelings stirred by prayer can give even the simplest person some inkling of the endless expanses of soul-life. We have to realise that the soul is engaged in a process of living evolution. It not only comes from the past and is always travelling towards the future; the effects of the past extend into every present moment, and so in a certain sense, do those of the future.

Anyone who looks deeply into the life of the soul will see that these two streams, one from the past and one from the future, are continually meeting there. The fact that we are influenced by the past is obvious: who could deny that our energy or idleness of yesterday has some effect on us today? But we ought not to deny the reality of the future, either, for we can observe in the soul the intrusion of future events, although they have not yet happened. After all, there is such a thing as fear of something likely to happen tomorrow, or anxiety about it. Is that not a sort of feeling or perception concerned with the future? Whenever the soul experiences fear or anxiety, it shows by the reality of its feelings that it is reckoning not only with the past but in a very lively manner with something hastening towards it from the future. These, of course, are single examples, but they will suffice to suggest that anyone who surveys the soul will find numerous others to contradict the abstract logic which says that since the future does not yet exist, it can have no present influence.

Thus there are these two streams, one from the past and one from the future, which come together in the soul — will anyone who observes himself deny that? — and produce a kind of whirlpool, comparable to the confluence of two rivers. Closer observation shows that the impressions left on us by past experiences, and in which we have dealt with them, have made the soul what it is. We bear within ourselves the legacy of our doing, feeling and thinking in the past. If we look back over these past experiences, especially those in which we played an active part, we shall very often be impelled to an assessment of ourselves. We have become capable from our present

standpoint of disagreeing with some deeds that happened in our past; we have reached the stage of even being able to look back with shame, perhaps, at some of our past actions.

If we compare our present with our past in this way, we shall come to feel that within us there is something far richer and more significant than whatever we have made of ourselves through our individual powers. If there were not something extending beyond our conscious selves, we should be unable to reproach ourselves or even to know ourselves. We must, then, have within us something that is greater than anything we have employed to form ourselves in the past. If we transform this realisation into a feeling, we shall be able to look back at everything in our past actions, at experiences that memory can bring clearly before us, and we shall be able to compare these memories with something greater, with something in our soul that guides us to stand face to face with ourselves and to judge ourselves from the standpoint of the present. In short, when we observe the stream flowing into us from the past, we feel that we have within us something that extends beyond ourselves. This intimation is the first awakening of a feeling of God within us; a feeling that something greater than all our will-power dwells within us. And thus we are led to look beyond our limited ego towards a divine-spiritual ego. That is the outcome of a contemplation of the past, transformed into perceptive feeling.

What, then, does the stream from the future say to us, again in terms of perceptive feeling? It speaks to us in even clearer and more emphatic language, since we are here concerned directly with emotions of fear and anxiety, hope and joy. For the relevant events have not yet occurred; only the feelings connected with them strike into the soul. And we know that this stream from the future may bring different effects and responsibilities from those we expect. If we can relate ourselves rightly to whatever experiences are surely coming towards us from the dark womb of the future, we shall see how this continually stimulates the soul. We feel how in the future the soul can become far richer, wider in scope, than it now is; we feel that we are already related to the approaching future and that our soul must be a match for anything it may bring.

If in this way we observe how past and future flow into the present, we can see how the life of the soul grows beyond itself. When the soul, on looking back over the past, becomes aware — whether as a judgment or with regret or shame — of a power from the past which is playing into the present but which is greater than itself, this realisation will evoke in the soul a reverence towards the divine. And this reverence, which we can feel working upon us but which is more than we can consciously grasp, evokes one mode of prayer — for there are two which bring the soul into an intimate relationship with God. For if the soul surrenders itself in innermost calm to the feelings engendered by the past, it will begin to wish that the power it had left unused, which it had not penetrated with its ego, might now become a present reality. Then the soul can say to itself. If this power were within me, I should be different now. The divine element I aspire to did not belong to my inner life; that is why I failed to make myself into something of which I could approve today. Having come to this realisation, the soul might continue: How can I draw into myself the unknown which indeed lived in all my actions and experiences, but without my being aware of it, for I was not able to grasp it with my ego? When the soul is brought to this frame of mind, whether through a feeling, a word or an idea, we have the prayer directed to the past. This means that the soul is seeking to draw near to the divine along one devotional path.

Now we will turn to the gleam of the divine that comes with the stream from the unknown future. Here a different frame of mind is evoked. As we have just seen, when we look back over the past we realise that we have not developed our innate capabilities; we see how our shortcomings have prevented us from responding to the divine light that shines in on us, and this feeling leads us to the prayer of devotion, prompted by the past. What, then, is the influence coming from the future that in a similar way makes us aware of our defects which restrict our ascent to the spiritual?

We need only to remember the feelings of fear and anxiety that gnaw at our soul-life in face of the unknown future. Is there anything that can give the soul a sense of security in this situation? Yes, there is. It is what we may call a feeling of humbleness towards anything that may come towards the soul out of the darkness of the future. But this feeling will be effective only if it has the character of prayer. Let us avoid misunderstanding. We are not extolling something that might

be called humbleness in one sense or another; we are describing a definite form of it — humbleness to whatever the future may bring. Anyone who looks anxiously and fearfully towards the future hinders his development, hampers the free unfolding of his soul-forces. Nothing, indeed, obstructs this development more than fear and anxiety in face of the unknown future. But the results of submitting to the future can be judged only by experience. What does this humbleness mean?

Ideally, it would mean saying to oneself: Whatever the next hour or day may bring, I cannot change it by fear or anxiety, for it is not yet known. I will therefore wait for it with complete inward restfulness, perfect tranquillity of mind. Anyone who can meet the future in this calm, relaxed way, without impairing his active strength and energy, will be able to develop the powers of his soul freely and intensively. It is as if hindrance after hindrance falls away, as the soul comes to be more and more pervaded by this feeling of humbleness toward approaching events.

This feeling, however, cannot be called forth in the soul by some edict, or by an arbitrary decision with no firm basis. It springs from the second mode of prayer, directed towards the future and the wisdom-filled course of events therein. To give ourselves over to this divine wisdom means that we call up again and again the thoughts, feelings and impulses that go with a recognition that what will come must come and that in one direction or another it must have good effects. To call forth this frame of mind and to give it expression in words, perceptions and ideas — that is the second mode of prayer the prayer of devotional submission.

It is from these feelings that impulses to prayer must come. For they are present in the soul itself, and fundamentally they lead towards prayer in every soul that raises itself even a little above the immediate present. The pre-condition of prayer, one might say, occurs when the soul turns its gaze away from the transitory present towards the eternal, which embraces past, present and future. It is because this raising of oneself above the present is so necessary that **Goethe** gives to **Faust** the great lines, addressed to Mephistopheles:

*If to the moment fleeting past
'Linger', I cry, 'thou art so fair!'*

This means: if I were to be satisfied with living merely for the moment —

*Then in fetters you may bind me,
Let me perish, for all I care! [24]*

Hence one could also say: It is for the power to pray that Faust begs in order to escape from the fetters of his companion, Mephistopheles.

The experience of prayer, accordingly, leads us on the one hand to observe our narrowly restricted ego, which has worked its way from the past into the present, and shows us clearly how very much more there is in us than we have put to use; on the other hand it leads us to look towards the future and shows us how much more can flow from the future into our ego than our ego has grasped so far. If we understand this, we shall find in every prayer a force that leads us beyond ourselves. For what else is prayer than the lighting-up within us of a power that seeks to transcend what our ego is at the moment? And if the ego is seized by this striving, it already has the power to develop itself. When the past has taught us that we have more within us than we have ever put to use, then prayer is a cry to the divine that it may fill us with its presence. When we have come to this knowledge through our own feelings and perceptions, we can number prayer among the forces that will aid the development of our ego.

We can do the same with prayer directed towards the future. If we live in fear and anxiety about the approaching future, we lack the attitude of humbleness that prayer can bring. We fail to realise that our destiny is ordered by the wisdom of the world. But if we meet the future with humbleness and devotion, we draw near to it in fruitful hope. So it is that humbleness, which may seem to diminish us, becomes a powerful force, enriching the soul and carrying our development to higher levels.

We need not expect any external results from prayer, for we know that through prayer we have implanted in our souls a source of light and warmth: of light, because we set the soul free in its relation to the future and dispose it to accept whatever may emerge from that dark womb; of warmth, because prayer helps us to recognise that, although in the past we failed to bring the divine element to fruition in our ego, we have now pervaded our feelings with it, so that it can be an effective power within us, The prayer that springs from looking back over the past gives rise to that inner warmth which is spoken of by all who understand prayer in its true nature. And the inward light comes to those who understand the prayer of humbleness towards the future.

From this point of view it will not seem surprising that the greatest mystics found in their devotion to prayer the best preparation for what they hoped to achieve through inward contemplation. They led their soul to the point where they were able to kindle to brightness the little spark within them. It is precisely through entering into the past that we can gain access to that wonderful feeling of intimacy which true prayer can bestow. Preoccupation with the external world estranges us from ourselves, just as in the past it prevented the more powerful element in us, the ego conscious of itself, from emerging. We were given over to external impressions and the manifold demands of outer life; they tear us apart and keep us from recollecting ourselves in tranquillity. This is what prevented the stronger divine power within us from unfolding. But now, if we allow it to unfold in the intimacy of prayer, we shall not be subject to the disintegrating effects of the outer world. We shall feel that wonderful inner warmth which fills us with inner blessedness and can truly be called divine. Through their experience a soul that is losing itself in externals can be enabled to collect itself. During prayer we are warmed in the feeling of God; we not only feel the warmth, but we live intimately within ourselves.

On the other side, when we approach the things of the outer world, we always find them involved with what has been called the dark womb of the future. Close observation shows that in everything we encounter in the outer world there is always a hint of the future. If we feel fear and anxiety as to what may befall us, something always thrusts us away. The outer world stands before us like an impenetrable veil. If we develop the feeling of devoted humbleness towards whatever may come to us from the future, we find that we

are able to meet everything in the outer world with the confidence and hope that this feeling engenders. And then we know that in all things the light of wisdom shines towards us. Failing this, in everything we come up against we meet a darkness which spreads into our feelings. So it is hope for illumination from the whole world that comes to us in the prayer of devoted submission.

If in the physical world we are standing somewhere surrounded by the blackness of night, we may feel abandoned and pressed in on ourselves. When morning brings the light, we feel that we are set free, but not as though we were wanting to escape from ourselves, but as though we could now carry forth into the outer world our best desires and aspirations. Similarly, we can feel how surrender to the world, which estranges us from ourselves, is overcome by the warmth of prayer, which unites us with ourselves. And when we carry this warmth of prayer into the feeling of humbleness, it becomes a light. And now, when we go out from ourselves and unite ourselves with the outer world and behold it, we no longer feel torn apart and estranged by it, but we feel that what is best in our soul flows out and unites us with the light that shines in on us from the outer world.

These two modes of prayer are expressed better in images than in ideas. We can think, for instance, of the Old Testament story of Jacob and his soul-convulsing contest in the night. [25] He appears to us as if we ourselves were given over to the manifold pressures of the world, where at first the soul is lost and cannot recover itself. When the striving to find ourselves begins, it sets off a conflict between our higher and our lower ego. Then our feelings surge up and down; but prayer will help us to work our way through, until at last comes the moment prefigured in the story of Jacob, where we are told that his night-long struggle is resolved and is harmonised when the rising sun shines upon him. That is in fact what prayer can do for the soul.

Seen in this light, prayer is free from all superstition. For it brings out the best in us and works directly as a force in the soul. Prayer is thus preparatory to mystical contemplation, just as mystical contemplation is itself a preparation for what we know as spiritual research. Our discussion of prayer will have illustrated something often mentioned here — that we pile error upon error if we believe that we can find the divine, or God, within ourselves by mystical means. This mistake was repeatedly made by mystics and even by ordinary Christians during

the Middle Ages. It occurred because the practice of prayer came to be permeated by egotism, an egotism which impels the soul to say to itself: I will become more and more perfect and will think of nothing else but my own perfection. We can hear an echo of this egotistic desire when a misguided form of theosophy asserts that if only we turn aside from everything external, we can find God within ourselves.

We have seen that there are two modes of prayer. One leads to inner warmth; the other, imbued with the feeling of humbleness towards the future, leads out into the world and so to illumination and true knowledge. Anyone who looks at prayer in this way will soon see that the knowledge acquired by ordinary intellectual methods is unfruitful compared with another kind. Anyone who knows what prayer is, will be familiar with that withdrawal of the soul into itself, where it frees itself from the disruptive multiplicity of the world and collects itself inwardly, raising its thoughts above the present moment and devoting them to the past and the future. If we are acquainted with this state, when our whole environment becomes calm and silent, when only the finest thoughts and feelings of which we are capable are present in the soul, when perhaps even these vanish and only a fundamental feeling remains, pointing in two directions, towards the God who announces himself from the past and towards the God who announces himself from the future — then, if we have come to live in this feeling, we know that great moments come for the soul, so that it says to itself: I have turned away from everything that my clever thinking creates in my consciousness, from everything brought about by my feelings and perceptions, from all the ideals set up by my will-power and my education — I have swept all this away. I was devoted to my highest thoughts and feelings — even these I have now banished and have kept only the fundamental feeling already mentioned. If we have reached this stage, we know that in the same way as the wonders of nature meet us when we look at them with pure eyes, so do new feelings, hitherto unknown to us, shine into the soul. Impulses of will and ideals strange to us spring up in the soul, so that from this ground the most fruitful moments arise.

So it is that prayer in the best sense can imbue us with a wisdom beyond our immediate capacities; it can give us the possibility of feelings and perceptions to which we have not yet attained. And if prayer carries our self-education further, it can endow us with a strength of will to which we have not yet been able to rise. Certainly,

if we are to accomplish all this, we shall need first to cultivate and cherish the finest feelings and impulses in our souls. And here we must again call attention to the prayers that have been given to mankind on the most solemn occasions from the earliest times.

In my booklet, *The Lord's Prayer*, [26] you will find an account of its contents showing that its seven petitions embrace all the wisdom of the world. Now you might be inclined to say: We are told in this booklet that the seven petitions can be understood only by someone who has come to know the deeper sources of the universe, but obviously the simple man, when he repeats the prayer, will not be able to fathom these depths. But it is not necessary that he should. For the Lord's Prayer to come into being, the all-embracing wisdom of the world had to set down in words what can be called the deepest secrets of man and the world. Since this is the content of the Lord's Prayer, it works through its wording, even for people who are far from understanding its depths. That is indeed the secret of a true prayer. It has to be drawn from the wisdom of the world, and so it can be effective even if it is not understood. We can come to understand it if we rise to the higher stages for which prayer and mysticism are a preparation. Prayer prepares us for mysticism, mysticism for meditation and concentration, and from that point we are directed to the real work of spiritual research.

To say that we must understand a prayer if it is to have its true effect is simply not true. Who understands the wisdom of a flower, yet we can all take pleasure in it? Similarly, if the wisdom of the world has gone into the creation of a prayer, the prayer can pour its warmth and light into the soul without its secrets being grasped. However, unless it has been created out of wisdom, it will not have this power. The depth of wisdom in a prayer is shown by its effectiveness.

Although a soul can truly develop itself under the influence of this power, it must also be said that a true prayer has something to give to all of us, whatever stage of development we may have reached. The simplest person, who perhaps knows nothing more than the words of the prayer, may still be open to the influence of the prayer on his soul, and it is the prayer which can call forth the power to raise him higher. But, however high a stage we may have reached, we have never finished with a prayer; it can always raise us to a still higher level. And

the Lord's Prayer is not for speaking only. It can call forth the mystical frame of mind, and it can be the subject of higher forms of meditation and concentration. This could be said of many other prayers.

Since the Middle Ages, however, something has come to the fore, a kind of egotism, which can impair the purity of prayer and its accompanying state of mind. If we make use of prayer with the aim only of withdrawing into ourselves and making ourselves more perfect — as many Christians did during the Middle Ages and perhaps still do today — and if we fail to look out at the world around us with whatever illumination we may have received, then prayer will succeed only in separating us from the world, and making us feel like strangers in it. That often happened to those who used prayer in connection with false asceticism and seclusion. These people wished to be perfect not in the sense of the rose, which adorns itself [27] in order to add beauty to the garden, but on their own account, so as to find blessedness within their own souls.

Anyone who seeks for God in his soul and refuses to take what he has gained out into the world will find that his refusal turns back on him in revenge. And in many writings by saints and mystics who have known only the prayer that gives inner warmth — even in the writings of the Spanish mystic, Miguel de Molinos [28] — you will come upon remarkable descriptions of all sorts of passions and urges, fights, temptations and wild desires which the soul experiences when, it seeks perfection through inward prayer and complete devotion to what it takes to be its God. If someone tries to find God and to approach the spiritual world in a one-sided way, if he brings to his prayers only the kind of devotion that leads to inner warmth, and not the other kind that leads to illumination, then the other side will take its revenge. If I look back over the past with feelings of regret and shame and say to myself — there is something great in me to which I have never allowed full scope, but now I will let it permeate me and perfect me — then in a certain sense a feeling of perfection does arise. But the imperfection which remains in the soul turns into a counter-force and storms out all the more strongly in the form of temptations and passions. But as soon as the soul, after having recollected itself in inner warmth and intimate devotion, looks for God in all the works where he is revealed and strives for illumination, it comes out of itself, turns away from the narrow, selfish ego, and the storms of passion are stilled. That is why it is so bad to allow egotism

to find its way into mystical devotion and meditation. If we wish to find God, but only in order to keep him in our own souls, we show that an unhealthy egotism has crept into our highest endeavours. Then this egotism will take revenge upon us. We shall be healed only if, after having found God within us, we pour out into the world, through our thoughts and feelings, our willing and doing, what we have inwardly gained.

We are often told today, especially on the ground of **Theosophy** wrongly understood — and warnings against this can never be given too often — that you cannot find the divine in the outer world, for God dwells within you. You have only to take the right path into your inner life and you will find God there. I have even heard it said by someone who liked to flatter his audience: You have no need to learn or experience anything to do with the great secrets of the universe; you need only look within yourselves and there you will find God!

An opposing view to this, must be made clear before we can approach the truth. A mediaeval thinker found the right thing to say about inward devotion, which is indeed justified if kept within its right limits. We must never forget that it is not untruths that do most harm, for the soul will soon detect them. Much worse are statements which are true under certain circumstances, but thoroughly false if they are misapplied. In a certain sense it is true to say that we have to seek for God within ourselves, but just because this is true, it is all the more harmful if it is not kept within its bounds. A mediaeval thinker said: "Who would search everywhere out-of-doors for a tool he needs when he knows for certain that it is in his house? He would be a fool if he did so. Equally foolish is someone who searches in the outer world for an instrument with which to gain knowledge of God when he has it within his own soul." Notice the word he uses — tool or instrument (*Werkzeug*). It is not God himself that one should seek in one's own soul. God is sought by means of an instrument, and this at least will not be found in the outer world. It must be sought within the soul — through true prayer, through mystical devotion, meditation and concentration at various levels. With the aid of this instrument we must approach the kingdoms of the world. Then we shall find God everywhere, for he reveals himself in all the kingdoms of the world and at all stages of existence. Thus we seek in ourselves for the instrument, and with its aid we shall find God everywhere.

Observations such as these on the nature of prayer are not popular today. How on earth — people say — can prayer change anything, whatever we may ask for? The course of the world follows necessary laws and we cannot alter them, but if we want to recognise a force, we must look for it where it is. Today we have sought for the power of prayer in the human soul, and we found that it is something which can help the soul forward. And anyone who knows that it is the spirit which works in the world — not an imaginary, abstract spirit but actual, active spirit — and that the human soul belongs to the realm of the spirit, will know that not only material forces, following unalterable laws, are at work in the world; but spiritual beings are also at work there, although their activities are not normally visible. If we strengthen our spiritual life through prayer, we need only wait for the effects; they will certainly come. But the effects of prayer in the outer world will be sought only by someone who has first recognised the power of prayer as a reality.

Anyone who does recognise this might try the following experiment. Let him look back over a period of ten years during which he scorned prayer, and then over a second period of ten years during which he recognised its power. If he then compares the two periods, he will soon see how the course of his life has changed under the influence of the forces which prayer poured into his soul. Forces are made evident by their effects. It is easy to deny the existence of forces if nothing is done to call them forth. How can anyone have the right to deny the power of prayer if he has never sought to make it effective within him? Can we suppose that we should know the light if we had never kindled it or looked for it? We can learn to recognise a force which works in and through the soul only by making use of it.

I must admit that the time is not yet ripe for going into the wider effects of prayer, however unbiased the discussion might be. The idea that a congregational prayer, in which the forces of all the participants flow together, has a heightened power and therefore an enhanced strength of reality — that is outside the grasp of ordinary thinking today. Hence we must be content with what we have brought before our souls with regard to the inner nature of prayer. And that is enough, for anyone who understands it will certainly see through many of the objections to prayer that are so easily advanced nowadays.

What are these various objections? We are asked, for example, to contrast an active present-day man who uses his powers to help his fellow human beings with a man who quietly withdraws into himself and works on the forces of his soul through prayer — surely we must regard this second man as an idler compared with the first? You will pardon me if I say, out of a certain feeling for the knowledge of spiritual science, that another point of view exists. I will put it in a somewhat exaggerated way, but there are good grounds for it. Anyone familiar today with the underlying causes of life will feel that many writers of leading articles in newspapers would be rendering better service to their fellows if they prayed and worked for the improvement of their souls, far-fetched as this may sound. Would that more people were persuaded that to pray is more sensible than writing articles. The same could be said of many other intellectual occupations.

Moreover, to understand the whole life of man, an understanding is necessary of the force that works through prayer, and this comes out with especial clarity if we look at particular aspects of cultural life. Who can fail to recognise that prayer, not in its one-sided egotistic sense but in the wider view of it that we have taken today, is a constituent of art? Certainly, in art we find also the quite different aspect expressed in comedy, in the humorous approach which raises itself above what it portrays. But there are also odes and hymns, which are not far removed from prayer, and even pictorial art shows examples of what could be called "prayers in paint." And who would deny that in a great majestic cathedral we have something like a prayer expressed in stone and reaching heavenwards?

If we are able to grasp all this in the context of life, we shall recognise that prayer, seen in accordance with its true nature, is one of the things that lead mankind out of the finite and the transient to the eternal. This was felt especially by those who found the way from prayer to mysticism, as did Angelus Silesius, mentioned today and in the previous lecture. He felt that he owed the inner truth and glorious beauty, the warm intimacy and shining clearness of his mystical thoughts — as shown for example in "The Cherubinean Traveller" — to his self-training in prayer, which had worked so powerfully on his soul. And what is it, fundamentally, that permeates and illuminates all mystics such as he? What is it but the feeling of eternity for which prayer has prepared them? Everyone who prays can have some

intimation of this feeling, if through prayer he attains to true inner rest and inwardness, and then to liberation from himself. It is this intimation which allows us to look beyond the passing moment to eternity, and links past, present and future together in our souls. When we turn in prayer to those aspects of life where we seek for God, then — whether we are aware of it or not — the feelings, thoughts and words which enter into our praying will be permeated by the feeling for eternity which is expressed by Angelus Silesius in lines with which we may well conclude today. They can bring to every true prayer, even if unconsciously, something like a divine aroma and sweetness:

*Forsaking time, I am myself eternity,
Then I am one with God, God one with me. [29]*



5. Sickness and Healing

Berlin, 3rd March 1910

It has probably become clear to those people who attended the lectures which I was permitted to hold here this winter more or less regularly that this lecture cycle has dealt with a series of far-reaching questions concerning the soul. It is the intention of today's lecture, also, to deal with such a question, namely the nature of *sickness and healing*.

What might be said on the relevant facts in life from the point of view of spiritual science, in so far as they are only physical expressions of spiritual causes, was explained in earlier lectures held here — for example "Understanding Sickness and Death" [30] or "Illusory Illness" and "The Feverish Pursuit of Health ". [31] Today I want to deal with significantly deeper questions in the understanding of sickness and healing.

Sickness, healing and sometimes the fatal course of some illnesses deeply affect the human life. And since we have inquired repeatedly into the preconditions, the spiritual foundations which lie at the base of our reflections here, we are justified in also inquiring into the spiritual causes of these far-reaching facts and consequences of human existence. In other words, what can spiritual science say about these experiences?

We will have to investigate deeply once again the meaning of human life as it develops in order to clarify how illness, health, death and healing stand in relation to the normal course of development of the human being. For we see the events referred to affecting this normal course of development. Do they perhaps contribute something to our development? Do they advance or retard us in our development? We can only reach a clear conception of these events if here, too, we take the whole of the human being into account.

We have often said here that the latter is constituted of four members: first, the physical body which the human being has in common with all mineral beings of his environment which take their

form from the physical and chemical forces within them. The second member of the human being we have always called the ether or life body. This he has in common with all living things; that is, with the plant and animal beings of his environment. Then we spoke of the astral body as the third member of man's being; this is the bearer of pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, of all the emotions, images, thoughts and so on which flood through us throughout the day. This astral body the human being has in common only with the animal world of his environment. And then there is the highest member of the human being which makes him the crown of creation; the bearer of the ego, his self-consciousness. When we consider these four members, we can say in the first instance that there appear to be certain differences between them, even to the superficial view. The physical human body is there when we look at the human being, at ourselves, from outside. The external physical sense organs can observe the physical body. With the thinking which is tied to these organs, the thinking which is tied to the instrument of the brain, we can understand this physical body of the human being. It is revealed to our external observation.

The relation to the human astral body is quite different. We have already seen from previous descriptions that the astral body is only an outward fact, so to speak, for the truly clairvoyant consciousness; the latter can see the astral body in the same way as the physical one only by schooling the consciousness as has been frequently described. In ordinary life the astral body of the human being is not observable from the outside; the eye can only see the outer expression of the instincts, desires, passions, thoughts and feelings which surge through it. But in contrast, the human being observes within himself these experiences of the astral body. He observes what we call the instincts, desires, passions, joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain. Thus it can be said that the relationship between the astral and the physical body is such that in normal life we observe the former internally, but the physical body externally.

Now in a certain sense the other two members of the human being, the ether body and the bearer of the ego, are situated between these two extremes. The physical body is observable purely from the outside, the astral body purely from the inside. But the intermediary member between the physical body and the astral body is the ether body. It cannot be observed from the outside, but it affects the

outside. The forces, the inner experiences of the astral body initially have to be transferred to the ether body; only then can they act on the physical instrument, the physical body. The ether body acts as an intermediary member between the astral body and the physical body, forming a link between outside and inside. We can no longer see it with the physical eyes, but that which we can see with the physical eyes is an instrument of the astral body only because the ether body is connected towards the outside with the physical body.

Now in a certain sense the ego acts from the inside to the outside, whilst the ether body acts from the outside inwards to the astral body; for by means of the ego and the way it affects the astral body the human being gains knowledge of the outside world, the physical environment, from which the physical body itself originates. Animal existence takes place without individual, personal knowledge because the animal does not have an individual ego. The animal inwardly lives through all the experiences of the astral body, but does not use its pleasure and pain, sympathy or antipathy to gain knowledge of the outside world. What we call pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, sympathy or antipathy are all experiences of the astral body in the animal; but the animal does not commute its pleasure into a celebration of the beauty of the world, but it remains within the element which causes the pleasure. The animal lives immediately within its pain; the human being is guided by his pain beyond himself into discovery of the world because the ego leads him out again and unites him with the outside world. Thus we see on the one hand how the ether body is directed inwards into the human being towards the astral body, whereas the ego leads into the outside world, into the physical world which surrounds us.

The human being leads an alternating life. This alternating life can be observed everyday. From the moment of waking in the morning we observe in the human soul all the in and out flooding experiences of the astral body — joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, feelings, images, etc. We see how at night these experiences sink down to a level of undefined darkness as the astral body and the ego enter an unconscious, or perhaps better said, subconscious state. When we look at the waking human being between morning and evening, the physical body, ether body, astral body and ego are interwoven, are inter-linked in their effects. When the human being goes to sleep at night, the occult consciousness can see that the physical body and the

ether body remain in bed and that the astral body and the ego return to their proper home in the spiritual world, that they withdraw from the physical body and the ether body. It is possible to describe this in still a different way which will enable us to deal with the present subject in the appropriate way.

The physical body, which only presents us with its outward aspect, sleep remains in the physical world as the outward human being and keeps the ether body, the mediator between inner and outer, with it. That is why in the sleeping human being there can be no mediation between outer and inner because the ether body, as mediator, has entered the outside world. Thus one can say in a certain sense that in the sleeping human being the physical body and the ether body are merely the outer human being; one could even describe the physical and ether bodies as the "outer human being" *per se*, even though the ether body is the mediator between outer and inner. In contrast, the astral body in the sleeping human being can be described as the "inner human being". These terms are also true of the waking human being, because all the experiences of the astral body are inner experiences under normal circumstances and what the ego gains in knowledge of the outside world in waking life is taken up inwardly by the human being to be assimilated as learning. The external becomes internalised through the ego. This demonstrates that we can speak of an "outward" and an "inward" human being, the former consisting of a physical and ether body, the latter of ego and astral body.

Now let us observe the so-called normal human life and its development in essence. Let us ask the question: Why does the human being return with his astral body and his ego to the spiritual world every night? Is there any reason for the human being to go to sleep? This subject has been mentioned before, but it is necessary for the topic we are dealing with today. Normal developments have to be understood in order to recognise the apparently abnormal states as they manifest themselves in sickness and healing. Why does the human being go to sleep every night?

An understanding of this can only be reached if one considers fully the relationship between the astral body and the ego and the "outer human being". We described the astral body as the bearer of pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, of instincts, desires, passions, of the surging imagination, perceptions, ideas and feelings. But if the astral body is

the bearer of all these things, why is it that at night the human being does not have these experiences, even though the actual inner human being is connected with the astral body in such a manner that the physical and the ether bodies are not present? Why is it that during this period these experiences sink down into an undefined darkness? The reason is that the astral body and the ego, although they are the bearers of joy and sorrow, judgments, the imagination, etc., cannot experience directly those things of which they are the bearers. In our human life the astral body and the ego under normal circumstances are dependent on the physical body and the ether body for awareness of their own experiences. Our soul-life is not something which is immediately experienced by the astral body. If this were the case, then we would also experience it during the night when we remain united with the astral body. Our daytime soul-life is like an echo or a mirror-image. The physical body and the ether body reflect the experiences of the astral body. Everything which our soul conjures up for us between waking up and going to sleep, it can only do because it sees its own experiences in the mirror of the physical and ether or life bodies. At the moment when we leave the physical and ether bodies at night we still have all the experiences of the astral body in us but we are not conscious of them because in order to be conscious of them the reflecting qualities of the physical body and the ether body are required.

Thus in the whole of our life as it takes its course from waking up in the morning to going to sleep at night we see an interaction between the inner and the outer human being, between the ego and the astral body on the one hand and the physical body and the ether body on the other. The forces which are at work here are the forces of the astral body and the ego. For under no circumstances could the physical body as the sum of physical attributes bring forth our soul-life out of itself and neither could the ether body. The reflecting forces come from the astral body and the ego in the same way as the image which we see in the mirror does not originate in the mirror but in the object which is reflected in the mirror. Thus all the forces which cause our soul-life lie in the astral body and the ego, in the inward nature of the human being. And they become active in the interaction between inner and outer world, they reach out, so to speak, for our physical and ether bodies, but at night we see them enter the state which we call "tiredness". We see them exhausted at night. And we would be unable to continue our life if we were not in a position to enter a

different world each night than the one which we inhabit from morning to evening. In the world which we inhabit when we are awake we can make our soul-life perceptible, we can create it before our soul. That we do with the forces of the astral body. But we also exhaust these forces and cannot replenish them out of our waking life. We can only replenish them out of the spiritual world which we enter each night and that is why we sleep. We would be unable to live without entering the world of night and fetching from the spiritual world the forces which we use during the day. Thus the question what we bring into the physical world when we enter our ether and physical bodies is answered.

But do we not also carry something from the physical world into the spiritual world at night? That is the second question, and it is just as important as the first one.

In order to answer this question, we have to deal with a number of things which are a part of normal human life. In ordinary life we have so-called experiences. These experiences are significant in our life between birth and death. An example which has often been mentioned here will illuminate this, the example of learning to write. When we put pen to paper in order to express our thoughts, we practise the art of writing. We can write, but what are the conditions required that we can do so? It is necessary that in a certain span of existence between birth and death we have a whole series of experiences. Think of all the things which you went through as a child, from the first clumsy attempts to hold the pen, put it to paper, etc., etc. One might well thank God that one does not have to recall all those things. Because it would be a dreadful situation if every time that we wanted to write we had to recall all the unsuccessful attempts at tracing the lines, perhaps also the punishments connected therewith, and so on in order to develop what we call the art of writing. What has taken place? Development in an important sense has taken place in the human life between birth and death. We have had a whole series of experiences. These experiences took place over a long period of time. Then they were refined, as it were, into an essence which we call the "ability" to write. All the other things have sunk into the indeterminate shadow of forgetfulness. But there is no need to remember them, because our soul has developed to a higher stage from these experiences: our memories flow together into essences which appear in life as our capabilities and abilities. That is

our development in the existence between birth and death. Experiences are transformed initially into abilities of the soul which can then come to expression by means of the outer tools of the physical body. All personal experiences between birth and death take place in such a manner that they are transformed into abilities and also into wisdom.

We can gain an insight into how this transformation takes place if we take a look at the period between 1770 and 1815. A significant historical event took place during this period. A large number of people were contemporaries of this event. How did they respond to it? Some of them did not notice the events passing by them. Impassively they neglected to turn the events into knowledge, wisdom of the world. Others transformed them into a deep wisdom, they extracted the essence.

How are experiences transformed in the soul into ability and wisdom? They are transformed by being taken in their immediate form into our sleep each night, into those spheres where the soul or the inner human being reside during the night. There the experiences which occur over a period of time are changed into essences. Any observer of life knows that if one wants to master and co-ordinate a series of experiences in a single sphere of activity it is necessary to transform these experiences in periods of sleep. For example, a thing is best learnt by heart by learning it, sleeping on it, learning it again, sleeping on it again. If one is not able to immerse the experiences in sleep in order for them to emerge as abilities or in the form of wisdom or art, then they will not be developed.

This is the expression on a higher level of what we are faced with as necessity on a lower one. This year's plant cannot become next year's one if it does not return to the dark lap of the earth in order to grow again the following year. Here development remains repetition. Where it is illuminated with the human spirit it is a true "development". The experiences descend into the nocturnal lap of the unconscious and they are brought forth again, initially still as repetition; but eventually they will have been transformed to such an extent that they can emerge as wisdom, as abilities, as life experience.

Thus life was understood in times when it was still possible to observe the spiritual worlds more deeply than is the case today. That is why, where leading personalities of ancient cultures wanted to speak of certain things by means of an image we see indications of these significant foundations of human life. What would someone have to do if he wanted to prevent a series of daytime experiences catching fire in his soul and being transformed into certain abilities? What, for example, happens when someone experiences a certain relationship with another person over a period of time? These experiences with the other person descend into the night-time consciousness and re-emerge from night-time consciousness as love for another person, which, when it is healthy, is an essence, as it were, of the consecutive experiences. The feeling of love for the other person has come about in such a way that the sum of experiences has been drawn together into unity, as if woven into a fabric. Now what would someone have to do to prevent a series of experiences turning into love? He would have to take the special measure of preventing the nightly natural process which turns our experience into essence, the feeling of love, from taking place. He would have to unravel again at night the fabric of daytime experience. If he can manage this his achievement is that his experience of the other person, which turns into love in his soul, has no effect on him.

Homer was alluding to these depths of human soul-life in his image of Penelope and her suitors. [32] She promises marriage to each one after she has completed a certain fabric. She manages to avoid having to keep her promise only by unravelling each night what she has woven during the day. Great depths are revealed where the seer is also artist. Today there is little feeling left for these things and such interpretations of poets who were also seers are declared arbitrary and phantastical. This can harm neither the ancient poets nor the truth, but only our time, which is thus prevented from entering into the depths of human life.

Thus something is taken into the soul at night which returns again. Something is taken into the soul which the soul develops and which raises it to ever higher levels of ability. But now it must be asked: where does this development of the human being reach its limit? This frontier can be recognised if we observe how the human being when he wakes up in the morning always returns to the same physical body and ether body with the same abilities and talents, the same

configuration which they have possessed from birth. This configuration, these inner structures and forms of the physical and ether bodies cannot be altered by human being. If we were able to take the physical or, at least, the ether body into the state of sleep then we would be able to change them. But in the morning we find them again unchanged from the evening. Here there is a clear limitation to what can be achieved by development in the life between birth and death. Development between birth and death is essentially restricted to experiences of the soul; it cannot extend to physical experience.

Thus for all the opportunities someone might have to pass through experiences which could deepen his musical appreciation, to awaken in his soul a profound musical life, it could not be developed if he did not have a musical ear, if the physical and etheric formation of his ear did not permit him to establish the harmony between the outer and the inner human being. In order for the human being to be whole, all the members of his being have to form a unity, to be in harmony. That is why all the opportunities which a person with an unmusical ear might have to go through experiences which would enable him to rise to a higher level of musical appreciation have to remain in the soul, have to resign themselves. They cannot come to fruition because the boundary is drawn each morning by the structure and form of the internal organs. These things are not dependent merely on the more rough structures of the physical and ether bodies but on very subtle relationships therein. Every function of the soul in our current normal life has to find expression in an organ; and if the organ is not formed in a suitable way then this is prevented. Those things which cannot be demonstrated by physiology and anatomy, the subtle sculpting within the organs, are precisely the things which are incapable of transformation between birth and death.

Is the human being completely powerless, then, to transfuse into his physical and ether bodies the events and experiences which he has taken into his astral body and ego? For when we look at people we can see that the human being can even shape his physical body within limits. One only needs to observe a person who has spent ten years of his life in deep inner contemplation: the gestures and physiognomy will have changed. But this occurs within very narrow confines. Is it always the case?

That this is not always confined to the narrowest of limitations can only be understood if we take recourse to a law which we have often mentioned here, but which needs to be recalled frequently because it is so alien to our present time, a law which can be compared with another one which became established for mankind in the 17th century on a lower level.

Up until the 17th century it was believed that the lower animals, insects, etc., could originate from river mud. It was believed that nothing more than pure matter was required to generate earth-worms and insects. This was thought to be true not only by amateurs but also by scholars. If we go back to earlier times we find that everything was systematised in such a way that, for example, instructions were given on how to create life from the environment. Thus a book from the 7th century AD ^[33] describes how the carcass of a horse has to be beaten tender in order to create bees. Similarly bullocks created hornets, donkeys, wasps. It was in the 17th century that the great scientist Francesco Redi ^[34] first pronounced the axiom: life can only originate from life! Because of this truth, which is taken as self-evident today so that no one can understand how anything else could ever have been believed, Redi was considered a dreadful heretic still in the 17th century and he barely escaped the fate of **Giordano Bruno**.

It is always like that with such truths. At first those who proclaim them are branded as heretics and fall prey to the inquisition. In the past people were burned or threatened with burning. Today this type of inquisition has been abandoned. No one is burnt anymore. But those who today sit on the curule chair of science regard all those who proclaim a new, higher level of truth to be fools and dreamers. People who today espouse in a different way the axiom regarding living things which Francesco Redi put forward in the 17th century are considered to be fools and dreamers. Redi pointed out that it is inexact observation to believe that life can originate immediately from dead matter but that it must be traced back to similar living matter, to the embryo which draws its matter and strength from the environment. Similarly spiritual science today must point out that what enters existence as soul and spiritual nature must originate from soul and spirit and is not an assembly of inherited characteristics. As the embryonic form of the earth-worm draws on the matter of its environment to develop, so the soul and spiritual kernel equally has to draw on the substances of its environment in order to develop. If we

pursue the soul and spiritual nature in the human being backwards, we come to an earlier soul and spiritual element which exists before birth and which has nothing to do with heredity. The axiom that soul-spiritual elements can only arise from soul-spiritual elements entails in the last instance the axiom of repeated earth lives, of which a closer study of spiritual science furnishes the proof. Our life between birth and death leads back to other lives which we went through in earlier times. The soul and spiritual element originates in the soul and in the spirit, and the causes of our present experiences between birth and death lie in a previous soul and spiritual existence. When we pass through the gates of death we take with us what we assimilated in this life as transformation from causes into abilities. This we return with when we enter a future existence through birth.

In the time between death and birth we are in different circumstances than when we enter the spiritual world each night through sleep from which we wake up again in the morning. When we wake up in the morning, we find our physical and ether bodies as we left them the previous evening. We cannot transform them with our experiences in life between birth and death. We find our limitation in the finished ether and physical bodies. But when we enter the spiritual world through the gate of death we leave the physical and ether bodies behind and retain only the essence of the ether body. In the spiritual world we have no need to take account of an existing physical and ether body. In the whole period between death and a new birth the human being can work with purely spiritual forces, he is dealing with purely spiritual substance. He takes from the spiritual world what he requires to create the archetype of his new physical body and ether body and forms these archetypes up to the time of his new birth, weaving into them all the experiences which the soul was unable to utilise between birth and death in the previous physical and ether bodies. Then the moment arrives when this purely spiritual archetypal image has been finished and when the human being is able to sculpt into the physical and ether bodies what he has woven into the archetypal image; the archetype is thus active in this particular state of sleep which the human being is passing through.

If the human being were able to bring with him in a similar manner his physical body and ether body each morning on waking up, then he would be able to form them from out of the spiritual world; but he would also have to transform them. But birth means waking up from a

state of sleep which encompasses the physical and ether bodies in the existence before birth. It is at this point that the astral body and ego descend into the physical world, into the physical body and the ether body, into which they can now sculpt everything which they could not form into the complete bodies of the previous life. Now, in a new life, they can express in an ether body and a physical body everything which they were able to raise to a higher stage of development but which they were unable to put into practice in the previous life because the complete ether body and physical body made it impossible.

Were we not able to destroy our physical and ether bodies, were the physical body unable to pass through death, it would be impossible to integrate our experiences into our development. However much we regard death with fear and shock and feel pain and sorrow at the death which will affect us, an objective view of the world teaches us in fact: we have to want death! For death alone gives us the opportunity to destroy this body in order to enable us to construct a new one in the next life so that we can bring into life all the fruits of earthly existence.

Thus two currents are active together in the normal course of human life: an inner and an outer. These two currents reveal themselves to us in parallel in the physical and the ether bodies on the one hand and in the astral body and the ego on the other. What can the human being do between birth and death in relation to the physical and ether bodies? Not only the astral body is exhausted by the life of the soul, but the organs of the physical body and the ether body are also exhausted. We can now observe the following: whilst the astral body is in the spiritual world during the night, it also works on the physical body and the ether body to restore them to their normal state. Only in sleep can what has been destroyed during the day in the physical and ether bodies be restored. Thus the spiritual world does indeed work on the physical and ether bodies, but with limitations. The abilities and structure of the physical body and ether body are given at birth and cannot alter except within very narrow margins. Two streams are active in cosmic development, as it were, which cannot abstractly be made to harmonize. If someone tried to unite these two streams in abstract reflection, tried to develop lightly a philosophy which said: "Well, the human being has to be in harmony, therefore the two streams have to be harmonious in man!" he would be making an

enormous error. Life does not work according to abstractions. Life works in such a way that these abstract visions can only be achieved after long periods of development. Life works in such a manner that it creates states of equilibrium and harmony only by passing through stages of disharmony. This is the living interaction in the human being and indeed it is not meant to be made harmonious by reflection. It is always an indication of abstract, dry thinking if a harmony is imagined into a situation where life has to develop towards a stage of balance through disharmony. It is the fate of human development that we must have harmony as an aim which cannot, however, be reached if it is merely imagined into a given stage of human development.

It will now be easier to understand when spiritual science says that life presents different aspects, depending on whether we regard it from the point of view of the inner or outer human being. The person who wanted to combine these two aspects by some abstraction would leave out of account that there is more than one ideal, one judgment, but that there are as many judgments as there are points of view and that it is only when these different points of view act together that the truth can be found. This allows us to assume that life's view of the inner human being might be different from its view of the outer human being. An example will make clear that truths are relative, depending on whether they are regarded from one aspect or another.

It is certainly quite appropriate for a giant who has a hand the size of a small child to talk of his little finger. Whether a dwarf the size of the small child can also talk of the giant's little finger is another matter. Things by necessity are complementary truths. There is no absolute truth as regards outer things. Things have to be looked at from all different points of view and truth has to be found through the individual truths which illuminate one another. That is also the reason why in life as we can observe it the outer human being, physical body and ether body, and the inner human being, astral body and ego, need not in a given period of life be in complete harmony. If there were complete harmony then the case would be that when the human being enters the spiritual world at night he would take the events of the day with him and would transform them into the essence of ability, of wisdom, and so on, and the forces which he brought with him from the spiritual world in the morning into the physical world would be used only in relation to the soul life. But the frontier which we described and which is drawn for the physical body would never be

crossed. Then, also, there would be no human development. The human being has to learn to take note of these limitations himself; he has to make them part of his judgment. The possibility must be given for him to breach these limits to the greatest possible extent.

And he breaches them continually! In real life these frontiers are crossed continually so that for example the astral body and the ego do not keep within the limits when they affect the physical body. But in doing so they breach the laws of the physical body. We then observe such breaches as irregularities, as disorganisation of the physical body, as the appearance of sickness, caused by action of the spirit — the astral body and the ego. Limits can be breached also in other ways, namely that the human being as inner being does not manage to correlate with the outside world, that he fails to relate fully to the outside world. This can be shown in a very dramatic example.

When the famous eruption of Mount Pelee [35] in Central America took place, very noteworthy and instructive documents were found in the ruins afterwards. In one of them it said: "You need not fear any more because the danger is past; there will be no more eruptions. This is shown by the laws which we have recognised as the laws of nature." These documents, which stated that further volcanic eruptions were impossible according to the current state of knowledge of nature, had been buried — and with them the scholars who had written these documents on the basis of their normal scholarly knowledge. A tragic event took place here. But that precisely demonstrated the disharmony of the human being with the physical world quite clearly. There can be no doubt that the intelligence of the scholars who investigated these natural laws would have been adequate to find the truth if they had been sufficiently trained. For they were not lacking in intelligence. But although intelligence is necessary, it is insufficient on its own, Animals, for example, leave an area if such an event is imminent. That is a well-known fact. Only the domesticated animals perish with the human beings. The so-called animal instinct is therefore sufficient to develop a far greater wisdom as far as those future events are concerned than human wisdom today. "Intelligence" is not the decisive factor; our current intellect is present also in those who commit the greatest follies. Intelligence is therefore not lacking. What is lacking is sufficiently matured experience of events. As soon as the intelligence lays something down which appears plausible to its narrow limited experience it can come

into disharmony with the real outward events and then the outer events break down around it. For there is a relationship between the physical body and the world which the human being will gradually learn to recognise and grasp with the forces which he possesses today already. But he will only be able to do this once he has accrued and assimilated the experiences of the outside world. Then the harmony which will have developed as a result of this experience will have been created by no other intellect than the one we have today; for it is precisely in the present that our intellect has developed to a certain stage. The only thing lacking is the ripening of experience. If the maturing of experience does not correspond to the outside then the human being becomes disharmonious with the outside world and can be broken on events in the outer world.

We have seen in an extreme example how disharmony between the physical bodies of the scholars and the stage which they had reached inwardly in the development of their soul came about. Such disharmony occurs not only when momentous events happen to us; such disharmony is given in principle and in essence always when any outer harm befalls our physical and ether bodies, when outer harm affects the outer human being in such a way that he is not capable of countering this harm with his inner forces, to ban it from his life. This applies whether it is externally visible or an internal sickness, which is, however, in reality only an external one. For if we have an upset stomach, then that is essentially the same as if a brick drops on our head. This is the situation which occurs when conflict arises — or is allowed to arise between the inner human being and the external world, when the inner human being cannot match the outer human being.

Fundamentally all illnesses are such disharmony, such breaching of the division between inner and outer human being. Something is created by the continual breach of these divisions which will become harmony only in the far distant future, which remains an abstraction if our thinking tries to impose it on our life. The human being only develops his inner life by beginning to realise that at his present stage he is not yet able to match outer life. This is true not only of the ego, but also of the astral body. The human being experiences consciously between waking up and going to sleep those things which are penetrated by the ego. The working of the astral body, the way in which it breaches its limits and is impotent to create proper harmony

between the inner and the outer human being, lies outside normal human consciousness. But it is present, nevertheless. All these things reveal the deeper inner nature of sickness.

What are the two possible courses which an illness can take? Either healing or death occurs. In the normal development of life death must be seen as the one side and healing as the other.

What does healing signify for the development of the human being? First of all it must be clarified what sickness means for the overall development of the human being.

In sickness there is disharmony between the inner and the outer human being. In a certain way the inner human being has to withdraw from the outer one. A simple example is when we cut our finger. We can only cut the physical body, not the astral. But the astral body always transfuses the physical one and the result is that the astral body does not find in the cut finger what it should find when it penetrates into its smallest recesses. It feels disconnected from the physical part of the finger. That, in essence, is the nature of a whole number of illnesses that the inner human being feels disconnected from the outer, that it cannot penetrate the outer human being because an injury causes a division. Now health can be restored to the human being by outer means or the inner human being can be strengthened to such an extent that it is able to heal the outer human being. The link between outer and inner human being is re-established to a greater or lesser degree after healing, the inner human being can again live in the healed outer one.

This is a process which can be compared to waking up: after an artificial withdrawal by the inner human being we return to the experiences which are only available in the outside world. Healing makes it possible for the human being to return with those things which he could not otherwise bring back. The healing process is assimilated into the inner human being and becomes an integral part of this inner human being. Return to health, healing, is something which we can look back on with satisfaction because in a similar manner that sleep makes the inner human being progress we are given something by healing which allows the inner human being to progress. Even if it is not immediately visible, we are elevated in our soul experience, are enhanced in our inner human being by a return

to health. In sleep we take with us into the spiritual world the things we have won through healing and the latter is therefore something which strengthens us as far as the forces which we develop in sleep are concerned. All these thoughts on the mysterious relationship between healing and sleep could be developed in full if there were the time, but it can be seen, nevertheless, how healing can be equated with what we take into the spiritual world at night; with that which brings progress into our processes of development in so far as they can be made to progress at all between birth and death. Those things which in normal life we draw in from outer experience come to expression in our soul-life between birth and death as higher development. But not everything which assimilated through healing emerges again. We can also take it through the gate of death and it can be of benefit to us in the next life. But spiritual science shows us the following: we should be thankful each time that we are healed, for each healing signifies an enhancement of our inner human being which can only be achieved with the forces which we have assimilated inwardly.

The other question is: what is the significance for the human being of the illness which ends in death?

In a certain sense it means the opposite, that we cannot restore the disturbed balance between the inner and the outer human being, that we cannot in the correct way cross the frontier between the inner and the outer human being in this life. As we have to accept our unchanged healthy body when we wake up in the morning we have to accept our unchanged damaged body when an illness ends with death and are incapable of making it change. The healthy body remains as it is and receives us in the morning; the damaged body can no longer receive us and we end up in death. We have to leave the body because we are no longer able to re-establish its harmony. But we then take our experiences into the spiritual world without the benefit of an outer body. The fruits which we gain as a result of our damaged body no longer receiving us become an enrichment for the life between death and a new birth. Thus, also, we have to be thankful to an illness which ends in death because it gives us the opportunity of enhancing the life between death and a new birth and to gather together the forces and experiences which can only mature during that time.

Thus we have here the consequences for the soul of illnesses which end in death and illnesses which end in healing. That gives us two aspects: we can be thankful to an illness which ends in healing because we have become strengthened in our inner self; and we can be thankful to an illness which ends in death because we know: in the higher stage which we enter in the life between death and a new birth death is of great significance for us because we will have learnt from it that our body must be different when we construct it for the future. And we will avoid the harmful aspects which caused us to fail before. The healing process makes our inner life progress, death influences the development in the outer world.

The necessity therefore arises that we take two different points of view. Nobody should think that it would be correct to say from the point of view of spiritual science: if death, which results from illness is something for which we must be grateful, if the course of an illness is something which elevates us in our next life, then we should really permit all illness to end in death and not make any attempt at healing! To speak like that would not be in the spirit of spiritual science, for the latter is not concerned with abstractions but with those truths which are arrived at from different points of view. We have the duty to make every attempt at healing with all the means at our disposal. The task to heal to the best of our ability lies embedded in the human consciousness. Thus the view that death, when it occurs, is something to be grateful for is not one which is normally present in ordinary human consciousness, but can only be won if we transcend it. From the "viewpoint of the gods" it is justified to let an illness end in death; from the human viewpoint it is justified only to do everything to bring about healing. An illness which ends in death cannot be judged on the same level. Initially these two views are irreconcilable and they have to progress in parallel. Any abstract harmonising is of no use here. Spiritual science has to advance to a recognition of the truths which stem from one particular side of life and of other truths which are representative of another side.

The sentence "healing is good, healing is a duty" is correct. But so is the other sentence "death is good when it occurs as the result of illness; death is beneficial for overall human development." Although these two sentences contradict one another, both of them contain living truths which can be recognised by living knowledge. Precisely where two streams, which can only be made harmonious in the future,

enter human life it is possible to see the error of thinking in stereotypes and the necessity to regard life in broad outline. It has to be clearly understood that so-called contradictions, when they refer only to experience and a deeper knowledge of the matter, do not limit our knowledge but lead us gradually into a living knowledge because life itself develops towards harmony.

Normal life proceeds in such a manner that we create abilities from experiences and that the things which we cannot assimilate between birth and death are woven into the fabric which we then make use of between death and a new birth. Healing and fatal illness intertwine with this normal course of human life in such a manner that every healing is a contribution to the elevation of the human being to a higher stage, and every fatal illness, too, leads the human being to higher levels. The former as far as the inner human being is concerned and the latter as far as the outer human being is concerned. Thus there is progress in the world in that it moves not in one but in two opposing currents. It is precisely in sickness and healing that the complexities of human life become visible. If sickness and health did not exist, normal life could only proceed in such a manner that the human being would spin the thread of his life hanging on to the apron strings of existence, never going beyond his limits. And the forces to construct his body anew would be given to him from the spiritual world between death and a new birth. In such a situation the human being would never be able to unfold the fruits of his own labour in the development of the world. These fruits can be unfolded by the human being in the close confines of life only in that he can err. For only by a knowledge of error can truth be arrived at. It is only possible to assimilate truth such that it becomes part of the soul, such that it influences development, if it is extracted from the fertile soul of error. The human being could be perfectly healthy if he did not interfere in life with his errors and imperfections by breaching his limits. But health which has the same origins as the inwardly recognised truth, health for which the human being wrestles from one incarnation to the next with his own life, such health only comes about through the reality of mistakes, through illness. The human being learns to overcome his mistakes and errors in healing on the one hand, and on the other he meets the mistakes which he was not able to overcome in life in the existence between death and a new life so that he learns to surmount them in the next life.

We can now return to our dramatic example and say: the intellect of those scholars who made such a wrong judgment at the time will not only become more cautious in jumping to conclusions, but it will let the experience ripen in order gradually to create harmony with life.

Thus it can be observed how healing and sickness affect human life so that the human being could never achieve his aims by his own effort without them. We can see how their seemingly abnormal intervention in our development belongs to human existence, as does error, if our aim is to recognise truth. We could say the same about sickness and healing as a great poet in an important epoch said about human error: "The striving human being errs." [36] This might give the impression as if the poet had wanted to say: "The human being always errs!" But the sentence is reversible and might be said: "Let the human being strive whilst he still errs!" Error gives birth to renewed striving. The sentence "The striving human being errs" need not, therefore, fill us with despair, for every error brings forth new striving and the human being will continue to strive until he has overcome the error. That is as much as to say that error in itself points beyond itself and leads to human truth. And similarly it can be said: sickness may occur in the human being, but he must develop. Through illness he develops to health. Thus illness points beyond itself in healing and even in death, and produces a state of health which is not alien to man but which grows out of the human being and is in accord with this being.

Everything which appears in this context is well suited to showing us how the world in the wisdom of its existence avails the human being at every stage of his development of the opportunity to grow beyond himself in the sense of the saying by **Angelus Silesius** with which we concluded the lecture "What is Mysticism?" At that time we were referring to more intimate spheres of development; now we can expand its meaning to the whole field of sickness and healing and we can truly say:

*If you transcend yourself in God's prevailing,
Then in your spirit will ascension reign!* [37]

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6. Positive and Negative Man

Berlin, 10th March 1910

If we examine the human soul, comparing one individual with another, we find the greatest possible variety. In these lectures we have spoken of some typical differences and the reasons for them, relating them to character, temperament, capacities, forces and so on. One significant difference, the difference between positive and negative man, will occupy us today.

At the start, I want to make it clear that this treatment of the subject — which will be fully in keeping with my other lectures — has nothing in common with the superficial but popular descriptions of people as positive and negative. Our account will stand entirely on its own ground.

We might first look round for a kind of clarifying definition of what is meant by a positive or negative person, and thus we might say: In the sense of a true and penetrating teaching concerning human souls, we could designate a positive person as one who, in face of all the impressions pouring in on him from the outer world, is able to maintain the firmness and security of his inner being, at least up to a certain point. Hence he will have clear-cut ideas and concepts, together with certain inclinations and aversions, which outer impressions cannot disturb. Again, his actions follow certain urges and impulses which will not be affected by whatever transient impressions may come to him from daily life.

A negative man, on the other hand, can be described as one who readily submits to changing impressions and is strongly influenced by ideas which come to him from this or that person or group. Hence he is easily impelled to change what he had been thinking or feeling and to take something different into his soul. In his actions he is drawn away from his own impulses by all kinds of influences from other people.

These could be our definitions, roughly speaking. But if we inquire how these deeply rooted characteristics of human nature work out in practice, we shall soon be convinced that we have gained very little from our definitions and that to search for any such convenient labels is fairly useless. For if we try to apply them to real life we have to say: A man of strong passions and impulses, which have carried a certain enduring stamp since childhood, will have allowed all sorts of good and bad examples to pass him by without affecting his habits. He will have formed certain ideas and concepts about this or that and he will stick to them, whatever other facts may be brought before him. Countless obstacles will mount up before he can be convinced of anything different. Such a man would indeed be positive, but it would lead to nothing for him but a dull life, shut off from new impressions, seeing and hearing nothing that could enrich or enlarge his experience.

The other type of man, ready at any time to welcome new impressions and always prepared to correct his ideas if facts go against them, would become — perhaps in a relatively short time — a quite different being. As he goes through successive periods in his life he will seem to be hastening on from one interest to another, so that the character of his life will be quite transformed as time goes on. Compared with the other, "positive" type of man, he will certainly have made more of life — but according to our definition we should have to call him "negative".

Again, a man of robust character, whose life is governed by custom and routine, might be led by the fashion of the moment to travel in a country richly endowed with art treasures. But he has loaded his soul with so many fixed responses that he passes by one work of art after another, at most consulting his Baedeker to see which are the most important, and finally he goes home with his soul not in the least enriched by all this trailing from gallery to gallery, from landscape to landscape. We would have to call him a very positive man.

By contrast, someone else might follow much the same course of travel, but his character is such that he gives himself up to every picture, loses himself enthusiastically in it, and so it is with the next picture and the next. Thus he passes along with a soul that surrenders

to every detail, with the result each impression is wiped out by the next, and he returns home with a kind of chaos in his soul. He is a very negative person, the exact opposite of the other man.

We could go on giving the most varied examples of the two types. We could describe as negative a person who has learnt so much that on every subject his judgment is uncertain; he no longer knows what is true or false and has become a sceptic with regard to life and knowledge. Another man might absorb just as many of the same impressions, but he works on them and knows how to fit them into the whole of his acquired wisdom. He would be a positive man in the best sense of the word.

A child can be tyrannically positive towards grown-ups if it asserts its own inherent nature and tries to reject everything opposed to it. Or a man who has been through many experiences, errors and disappointments may nevertheless surrender to every new impression and may still be easily elated or depressed: compared with the child he will be a negative type. In brief, it is only when we allow the whole of a man's life, to work upon us, not in accordance with any theoretical ideas but in all its variety, and if we use concepts only as an aid in ordering the facts and events of a life, that we can rightly approach these decisive questions concerning positive and negative man. For in discussing the individual peculiarities of human souls we touch on something of the utmost importance. If we did not have to think of man in all his completeness as a living entity, subject to what we call evolution — so often discussed here — these questions would be much simpler.

We see the human soul passing from one stage of evolution to the next, and, if we are speaking in the true sense of spiritual science, we do not picture the life of an individual between birth and death as following always a uniform course. For we know that his life is a sequel to previous lives on earth and the starting-point for later ones. When we observe a human life through its various incarnations, we can readily understand that in one earthly life a man's development may go somewhat slowly, so that he retains the same characteristics and ideas throughout. In another life he will have to catch up with all the more development, leading him to new levels of soul-life. The study of a single life is always in the highest degree insufficient.

Let us now ask how these indications concerning positive and negative types can help us in studying the human soul on the lines laid down in previous lectures. We showed that the soul is by no means a chaotic flux of concepts, feelings and ideas, as it may seem to be at a casual glance. On the contrary, the soul has three members which must be clearly distinguished. The first and lowest of these we called the sentient soul. Its primal form is best seen in men at a relatively low stage of development who are wholly given up to their passions, impulses, wishes and desires and simply pursue every wish, every desire, that arises within them. In men of this type the ego, the self-conscious kernel of the human soul, dwells in a surging sea of passions, desires, sympathies and antipathies, and is subject to every storm that sweeps through the soul. Such a man will follow his inclinations not because he dominates them but because they dominate him, so that he gives way to every inner demand. The ego can scarcely raise itself out of this surge of desires. When the soul develops further, we see more and more clearly how the ego works from a strong central point.

In due course, as evolution proceeds, a higher part of the soul, which exists in everyone, gains a certain predominance over the sentient soul. We have called this higher part the intellectual soul or mind soul. When man ceases to follow every inclination or impulse, then in his soul something emerges which has always been there but can be effective only when the ego begins to control his inclinations and desires and to impose on the ever-changing impressions he receives some kind of coherence in his inner life. Thus when this second member of the soul, the intellectual soul, comes to prevail, it deepens our picture of man.

Next, we spoke of the highest member of the soul, the consciousness soul, where the ego comes to the fore in full strength. Then the inner life turns towards the outer world. Its conceptual images and ideas are no longer there only to control the passions, for at this stage the entire inner life of the soul is guided by the ego, so that it reflects the outer world and gains knowledge of it. When we attain to this knowledge, it is a sign that the consciousness soul has come to dominate the life of the soul. These three soul-members exist in all human beings, but in every case one of them predominates.

The last lectures have shown that the soul can go further in development — must indeed go further even in ordinary life, if we are to be human beings in the true sense of the word. A man whose motives for action derive entirely from external demands, who is impelled to act only by sympathy or antipathy, will make no effort to realise in himself the true quality of human nature. This will be achieved only by someone who raises himself to moral ideas and ideals, derived from the spiritual world, for that is how we enrich the life of the soul with new elements. Man has a "history" only because he can carry into life something which his inner being draws from unknown depths and impresses on the outer world. Similarly, we would never reach a real knowledge of world secrets if we were not able to attach external experiences to ideas. We draw forth these ideas from the spirit in ourselves and bring them to meet the outer world, and it is only by so doing that we can grasp and elucidate the outer world in its true form. Thus we can infuse our inner being with a spiritual element and enrich our soul with experiences that we could never gain from the outer world alone.

As described in the lecture on mysticism, we can rise to a higher form of soul-life by cutting ourselves off for a while from impressions and stimuli from the outer world, by emptying the soul and devoting ourselves — as **Meister Eckhart** puts it — to the little flame which is usually outshone by the continual experiences of daily life but which can now be kindled into flame. A mystic of this order rises to a soul-life above the ordinary level; he immerses himself in the mysteries of the world by unveiling within himself what the world-mysteries have laid down in his soul. In the next lecture we saw that if a man awaits the future with calm acceptance, and if he looks back over the past in such a way as to feel that dwelling within him is something greater than anything evident in his daily life, he will be impelled to look up in worship to this greater thing that towers above him. We saw that in prayer a man rises inwardly above himself towards something that transcends his ordinary life. And finally, we saw that by real spiritual training, which leads him through the three stages of Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, he can grow into a world which is as unknown to ordinary people as the world of light and colours is to the blind. Thus we have seen how the soul can grow beyond the normal level, and so we have gained a glimpse of the development of the soul through the most varied stages.

If we look at people around us, we find that they are at widely different levels of development. One man will show in life that he has the potential for raising his soul to a certain stage and will then be able to carry through the gate of death what he has gained. If we study how people go from stage to stage, we come to the concepts of positive and negative but we cannot now say simply that an individual is positive or negative, for he will exhibit each characteristic at different stages of his progress.

To start with, a man may have the strongest, most headstrong impulses in his sentient soul; he will then be impelled by definite urges, passions and desires, while his ego-centre remains in relative obscurity and he may be hardly aware of it. At that point he is very positive and pursues his life as a positive type. But, if he were to remain in that condition, he would make no progress. In the course of his development he must change from a positive into a negative person, for he has to be open to receive whatever his development requires. If he is not prepared to suppress the positive qualities in his sentient soul, so that new impressions can flow in; if he is unable to raise himself out of the positive qualities given him by nature and to acquire a certain negative capacity to receive new impressions, he will get no further.

Here we touch on something which is necessary for the soul but can also be a source of danger — something which shows very clearly that only an intimate knowledge of the soul can guide us safely through life. The fact is that we cannot progress if we try to avoid certain dangers affecting the life of the soul. And these dangers are always present for a negative person, since he is open to the influx of external impressions and to uniting himself with them. This means that he will take in not only good impressions, but also bad and dangerous ones.

When a very negative person meets another person, he will be easily carried away by hearing all sorts of things that have nothing to do with judgment or reason, and he will be influenced not only by what the other person says but by what he does. He may imitate the other person's actions and examples, to the point even of coming to resemble him quite closely. Such a man may indeed be open to good influences, but he will be in danger of responding to every kind of bad stimulus and making it his own.

If we rise from ordinary life to the level where we can see what spiritual facts and beings are at work in our vicinity, we must say that a man with negative soul-qualities is particularly open to the influence of those intangible, indefinable impressions which are hardly evident in external life. For example, the facts show that a man alone is a quite different being from what he is in a large assembly of others, especially if the assembly is active. When he is alone, he follows his own impulses; even a weak ego will look for the source of its actions in itself. But in a large assembly there is a sort of mass-soul in which all the various urges, desires and judgments of those present flow together. A positive man will not easily surrender to this collective entity, but a negative man will always be influenced by it. Hence we can repeatedly experience the truth of what a dialect poet, Rosegger, has said in a few words. He puts it crudely, but there is more than a grain of truth in what he says:

*Oaner is a Mensch,
Zwoa san Leit',
San's mehra, san's Viecher.* [38]

We can often notice that men are wiser alone than they are in company, for then they are almost always subject to the prevailing average mood. Thus a man may go to a meeting without any definite ideas or feelings; then he listens to a speaker who takes up with enthusiasm some point which had previously left him cold. He may be affected not so much by the speaker as by the acclamation won from the audience. This grips him and he goes home quite convinced.

Mass-suggestion of this kind plays an enormous part in life. It illustrates the danger to which a negative soul is exposed, and in particular the danger of sectarianism, for while we might fail to convince an individual of something, it becomes relatively easy to do so if we can bring him under the influence of a sect or group, for here mass suggestion will be at work, spreading from soul to soul. There are great dangers here for persons of a negative type.

We can go further. In earlier lectures we have seen how the soul can raise itself into higher realms of spiritual life. And in my **Occult Science** [39] you will find an account of how the soul must train itself to accomplish this stage-by-stage ascent. In the first place it has to suppress the positive element in itself and open itself to new impressions by putting itself artificially into a negative mood. Otherwise it will make no progress. We have often explained what the spiritual researcher has to do if he wishes to reach the higher levels of existence. He has to bring about, deliberately and consciously, the condition which occurs normally in sleep, when the soul receives no outer stimuli. He has to shut out all external impressions, so that his soul is quite empty. Then he must be able to open his soul to impressions which at first, if he is still a beginner, will be quite new to him, and this means that he has to make himself as negative as possible. And everything in mystical life and knowledge of higher worlds that we call inner vision, inward contemplation, does fundamentally bring about negative moods in the soul. There is no way round that. When a man suppresses all stimuli from the outer world and consciously achieves a condition in which he is entirely sunk in himself and has banished all the positive characteristics that had previously been his, then he is bound to become negative and self-absorbed.

Something similar occurs if we employ an easier external method which cannot of itself lead us to a higher life but can give us some support in our ascent — if for instance we turn from foods which stimulate positive impulses in a sort of animal fashion to a special diet, vegetarian or the like. We cannot bring about our ascent into higher worlds by vegetarianism or by not eating this or that; it would be altogether too easy if we could eat our way up to those heights. Nothing but work on our own souls can get us there. But the work can be made easier if we avoid the hampering influence that particular forms of nourishment can have. Anyone who is trying to lead a higher, more spiritual life can readily convince himself that his forces are enhanced by adopting a certain diet. For if he cuts out the foods which tend to foster the robust and positive elements in himself, he will be brought into a negative condition.

Anyone who stands on the ground of genuine spiritual science, free from charlatanry, will never refuse to recognise the things, including external things, which are in fact connected with endeavours to lead a

true spiritual life. But this means that we may be exposed also to bad spiritual influences. When we educate ourselves in spiritual science and eliminate everyday impressions, we open ourselves to the spiritual facts and beings which are always around us. Among them, certainly, will be the good spiritual powers and forces which we first learn to perceive when the appropriate organ has unfolded within us, but we shall be open also to the evil spiritual powers and forces around us just as if we are to hear harmonious musical sounds, we must be open also to discordant ones. If we want to penetrate into the spiritual world, we must be clear that we are liable to encounter the bad side of spiritual experiences. If our approach to the spiritual world were to be entirely negative, we would be threatened by one danger after another.

Let us look away from the spiritual world and consider ordinary life. Why should a vegetarian diet, for example, make us negative? If we become vegetarians because of some popular agitation but without adequate judgment, or as a matter of principle without changing our ways of living and acting, it may under certain conditions have a seriously weakening effect on us in relation to other influences, and particularly perhaps on certain bodily characteristics. But if we have gone over to a life of initiative, involving new tasks that arise not from external life but from a richly developing life of the soul, then it can be immensely useful to take a new line in diet also and to clear away any hindrances that may have arisen from our previous eating habits.

Things have very different effects on different people. Hence the spiritual-scientific researcher always insists on something that has often been emphasised here: he will never impart to anyone the means of rising into higher worlds without making it clear to him that he must not merely cultivate the negative soul-qualities that are necessary for receiving new impressions, nor must be content to develop inner vision and inward concentration, for a life which is to rise to a new level must have a content which is strong enough to fill and sustain it. If we were merely to show someone how he can acquire the strength that will enable him to see into the spiritual world, we should be exposing him to bad spiritual forces of every kind, through the negativity that goes with such endeavours. But if he is willing to learn what the spiritual investigator can tell him about the higher worlds, he will never remain merely negative, for he will possess something which can imbue his soul with positive content at a

higher stage. That is why we so often emphasise that the seeker must not only strive for higher levels, but must at the same time give careful study to what spiritual science communicates. That is how the spiritual researcher takes account of the fact that anyone who is to experience new realms has to be receptive, and therefore negative, towards them.

What we have to call forth, when we set out consciously to develop the soul, can be seen in the various people we encounter in ordinary life, for the soul does not go through development only in its present life but has done so in previous lives and is at a definite stage when it enters earth-existence. Just as in our present life we have to proceed from stage to stage, and must acquire negative characteristics on our way to a positive stage, so the same thing may have happened when we last went through the gate of death and entered a new life with positive or negative characteristics. The design which sent us into life with positive qualities will leave us where we are and act as a brake on further development, for positive tendencies produce a clearly-defined character. A negative tendency, on the other hand, does make it possible for us to receive a great deal into our soul-life between death and a new birth, but it also exposes us to all the chance happenings of earthly life, and especially to the impressions made on us by other people. Thus when a man of negative type meets other persons, we can usually see how their characteristics leave their mark upon him. Even he himself, when he comes close to a friend or to someone with whom he has had an affectionate relationship, can feel how he becomes more and more like the other: in cases of marriage or deep friendship even his handwriting may be influenced. Observation will indeed show how in marriage the handwriting of a negative person may come to resemble increasingly that of his or her spouse.

So it is that negative types are susceptible to the influence of other people, especially of those close to them. Hence they are exposed to a certain danger of losing themselves, so that their individual soul life and ego-sense may be extinguished.

The danger for a positive type is that he will not be readily accessible to impressions from other people and will often fail to appreciate their characteristic qualities, so that he passes them all by and may be

unable to form a friendship or close association with anyone. Hence he is in danger of his soul becoming hardened and desolate.

We can gain deep insight into life when we consider people in terms of the positive and negative aspects in human beings, and this applies also to the different ways in which they respond to the influence of Nature around them. What then is it that acts on a person when he is influenced by other people or when he absorbs impressions from the outer world?

There is one thing that always imparts a positive character to the soul. For modern man, regardless of his stage of development, it is sound judgment, rational weighing up, clarifying for oneself any situation or relationship that may arise in life. The opposite of this is the loss of healthy judgment, so that impressions are admitted to the soul in such a way that positive qualities are no protection against them. We can even observe that when certain human activities slip down into the unconscious, they often have a stronger effect on other people than when they arise from the conscious exercise of normal judgment.

It is unfortunate, especially in a spiritual-scientific movement, that when facts concerning the spiritual world are given in a strictly logical form, a form well recognised in other spheres of life, people are inclined to evade them; they find it uncongenial that such facts should be presented in a rational sequence of cause and effect. But if these communications are imparted to them in such a way that their judgment is not evoked, they are far more ready to respond. There are even people who are highly mistrustful of information about the spiritual world if it is given in rational terms, but very credulous towards anything they may hear from mediums who seem to be inspired by some unknown power. These mediums, who do not know what they are saying and who say more than they know, attract many more believers than do persons who know exactly what they are saying. How is it possible — we often hear it said — for anyone to tell us about the spiritual world unless he is in at least a half-conscious state and evidently possessed by some other power? This is often taken as a reason for objecting to the *conscious* communication of facts drawn from the spiritual world. That is why running to mediums is much more popular than paying heed to communications based on sound judgment and set forth in rational terms.

When anything that comes from the spiritual world is thrust down into a region from which consciousness is excluded, there is a danger that it will work on the negative characteristics of the soul, for these characteristics always come to the fore when we are approached by an influence from dark subconscious depths. Close observation shows again and again how a relatively stupid person, thanks to his positive qualities, can have a strong effect on a more intelligent person if the latter is easily impressed by anything that emerges from subconscious obscurity. So we can understand how it happens in life that persons with fine minds are the victims of robust characters whose assertions derive solely from their own impulses and inclinations.

If we take one further step, we shall come to a remarkable fact. Consider a man who not merely belies his own reason now and then but suffers from mental illness and says things that spring from this deranged condition. So long as his illness is not noticed, he may have an uncommonly strong influence on persons of finer nature.

All this belongs to the wisdom of life. We shall not get it right unless we realise that a man with positive qualities may not be open to reason, while a negative type of man will often be subject to irrational influences he cannot keep out. A subtler psychology will have to take account of these things.

Now we will turn from impressions made by individuals on one another and come to impressions received by people from their surroundings. Here, too, we can gain important results in the context of positive and negative.

Let us think, for example, of a researcher who has worked very fruitfully on a special subject and has brought together a large number of relevant facts. By so doing he has accomplished something useful for mankind. But now suppose that he connects these facts with ideas gained from his education and his life up to date or from certain theories and philosophical viewpoints which may give a very one-sided view of the facts. In so far as the concepts and ideas he has inferred from the facts are the outcome of his own reflective thinking, they will have a healthy effect on his soul, for by working out his own philosophy he will have imbued his soul with positive feelings. But now suppose that he meets some followers who have not themselves worked over the facts but have merely heard of them or read them.

They will lack the feelings that he evoked in himself through his work in laboratory or study, and their frame of mind may be entirely negative. Hence the same doctrine, even though it be one-sided, can be seen as making the leader of their school positive in his soul, while on the whole throng of followers, who merely repeat the doctrine, it can have an unhealthy, negative effect, making them weaker and weaker.

This is something that runs through the whole history of human culture. Even today we can see how men of an entirely materialistic outlook, which they themselves have worked hard to develop from their own findings, are lively positive characters whom it is a pleasure to meet, but in the case of their followers, who carry in their heads the same basic ideas but have not acquired them by their own efforts, these ideas have an unhealthy, negative, weakening effect. Thus we can say that it makes a great difference if a man achieves a philosophical outlook of his own or if he merely takes it from someone else. The first man will acquire positive qualities; the second, negative qualities.

Thus we see how our attitude to the world can make us both positive and negative. For example, a purely theoretical approach to Nature, especially if it omits everything we can actually see with our eyes, makes us negative. There has to be a theoretical knowledge of Nature. But we must not be blind to the fact that this theoretical knowledge gained by the systematic study of animals, plants and minerals and embodied as laws of Nature in the form of concepts and ideas — works on our negative qualities in such a way as to imprison us in these ideas. On the other hand, if we respond with living appreciation to all that Nature in its grandeur has to offer, positive qualities are called forth in our souls — if for example we take delight in a flower, not pulling it to pieces but responding to its beauty, or if we open ourselves to the morning light when the sun is rising, not testing it in astronomical terms but beholding its glory. For anything we adopt by way of a theoretical conception of the world does not implicate our souls; we allow it to be dictated to us by others. But our whole soul is actively involved when we are delighted or repelled by the phenomena of Nature. The truth of Nature is not concerned with the ego, but that which delights or repels us is; for how we respond to Nature depends on the character of our ego.

Thus we can say: Living participation in Nature develops our positive qualities; theorising about Nature does the reverse. But we must qualify this by repeating that a researcher who is the first to analyse a series of natural phenomena is far more positive than one who merely adopts his findings and learns from them. This distinction should be given attention in wide fields of education. And a relevant fact is that wherever there has been a conscious awareness of the things we have been discussing today, the negative characteristics of the human soul have never been cultivated on their own account. Why did Plato inscribe over the entrance to his school of philosophy the words: "Only those with a knowledge of geometry may enter here"? [40] It was because geometry and mathematics cannot be accepted on the authority of another person. We have to work through geometry by our own inner efforts and can master it only by a positive activity of our souls. If this were heeded today, many of the philosophical systems that buzz around would not exist. For if anyone realises how much positive work has gone into formulating a system of ideas such as geometry, he will learn to respect the creative activity of the human mind; but anyone who reads Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe*, [41] for instance, with no notion of how it was worked out, may quite easily arrive at a new world-outlook, but he will do so out of a purely negative state of soul.

Now in spiritual science, or Anthroposophy, we have something which unconditionally requires a positive response. If someone is told that with the aid of popular modern devices, photographs or lantern-slides, he can see some animal or some natural phenomenon brought before his eyes on the screen, he will watch it quite passively, in a negative frame of mind; he will need no positive qualities and will not even need to think. Or he might be shown a series of pictures illustrating the various phases of a glacier on its way down the mountain it would be just the same. These are just examples of how wide is the appeal of these negative attitudes today. Anthroposophy is not so simple. Photographs could at most give a symbolical suggestion of some of its ideas. The only way of approach to the spiritual world is through the life of the human soul. Anyone who wishes to penetrate fruitfully into spiritual science must realise that its most important elements are not going to be the subject of a demonstration. He is therefore advised that he must work on and with his soul, so as to bring out its most positive qualities. In fact, spiritual science is in the highest sense competent to cultivate these qualities in

the human soul. Herein, too, resides the healthiness of its world-outlook, which makes no claim except to arouse the forces sleeping in the soul. In appealing to the activity inherent in every soul, Anthroposophy calls forth its hidden forces, so that they may permeate all the saps and energies of the body; thus it has a health-giving effect, in the fullest sense, on the whole human being. And because Anthroposophy appeals only to sound reason, which cannot be evoked by mass-suggestion but only through individual understanding, and because it renounces everything that mass-suggestion can evoke, it reckons with the most positive qualities of the human soul.

Thus we have brought together, without embellishment, a number of facts and examples which show how man is placed in the midst of two streams, the positive and the negative. He cannot rise to higher stages unless he leaves a lower positive stage and goes over to a negative, receptive condition, so that his soul acquires new content; he takes this along with him and thus becomes positive once more on a higher level. If we learn how to observe Nature rightly, we can see how world-wisdom arranges things so that man may be led from a positive to a negative phase, and on to a positive phase once more.

From this point of view, it is illuminating to study particular topics — for example, Aristotle's famous definition of the tragic. [42] A tragedy, he says, brings before us a complete dramatic action which can be expected to evoke fear and pity in the spectators, but in such a way that these emotions undergo a catharsis or purgation. Let us note that man, on coming into existence with his usual egotism, is at first very positive: he hardens himself and shuts himself off from others. But then, if he learns to sympathise with others in their sorrows and feels their joys as his own, he becomes very negative, because he goes out from his ego and participates in the feelings of other people.

We become negative also if we are deeply affected by some undefined fate which seems to hang over another person, by what could happen on the morrow to someone with whom we are in close sympathy. Who has not trembled when someone is hastening towards a deed which will lead him to disaster — a disaster we can foresee but which he, driven by his impulses, is powerless to avert? We are afraid of what may come of it, and this induces in us a negative state of soul, for fear is negative. We would no longer have any real part in life

if we were unable to fear for someone who is approaching a perilous future. So it is that fear and sympathy make us negative. In order that we may become positive again, tragedy sets before us a Hero. We sympathise with his deeds, and his fate touches us so nearly that our fates are aroused. At the same time the course of the dramatic action brings the picture of the Hero before us in such a way that our fear and pity are purified; they are transformed from negative feelings into the harmonious contentment bestowed on us by a work of art, and so we are raised once more into the positive mode.

Thus the old Greek philosopher's definition of tragedy shows us how art is an element in life which comes to meet an unavoidably negative state of feeling and transmutes it into a positive condition. Art, in all its realms, leads us to a higher level when we have first to be negative in order to progress from a less developed state.

Beauty, initially, must be seen as that which is intended to come before us in order to help us rise beyond our present stage. Ordinary life is then suffused with the radiance of a higher state of soul, if we have first been raised through art to a higher level.

Thus we see how positive and negative alternate, not only in individuals but in the whole life of man, and we see how this contributes to raising both the individual from one incarnation to the next and humanity as a whole. We could easily show, if there were time, how there have been positive and negative epochs and historical periods. The idea of positive and negative throws light into every sphere of the soul's life and of the life of humanity at large.

It never happens that one man is always negative and another always positive. Each of us has to go through positive and negative conditions at different stages of existence. Only when we see the idea in this light shall we accept it as a truth and therefore as a basis for the practice of living. And our discussion today has confirmed the saying that we have put at the beginning and end of these lectures — the saying by the old Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, who, because he could see so deeply into human life, was called the Obscure: "Never will you find the boundaries of the soul, by whatever paths you search, so all-embracing is the soul's being." [43]

Now someone might say: "All study of the soul must then be useless, for if its boundaries can never be discovered, no research can establish them and one could despair of ever knowing anything about them." Only a negative man could take that line. A positive man would add: "Thank God the life of the soul is so far-ranging that knowledge can never encompass it, for this means that everything we comprehend today we shall be able to surpass tomorrow and thus hasten towards higher levels." Let us be glad that at every moment the life of the soul makes a mockery of our knowledge. We need an unbounded soul-life, for this limitless perspective gives us hope that we may continually surpass the positive and rise from step to step. It is precisely because the extent of our soul-life is unbounded and unknowable that we can look forward with hope and confidence. Because the boundaries of the soul can never be discovered, the soul is able to go beyond them and rise to higher and ever-higher levels.



7. Error and Mental Disorder

Berlin, 28th April 1910

The cycle of lectures which I was permitted to hold this winter before you, had the task of illuminating from the point of view of spiritual science as characterised in the first lecture here, the most various manifestations of human soul-life and of life in a wider context. Today, let us observe an area of human life which can lead to misery, suffering and perhaps also to the loss of hope. To make up for this, in the next lecture we will touch on a field entitled "Human Conscience", which will lead us back to the heights where human dignity and value, the power of human self-consciousness is revealed most. And then, this year's cycle will be concluded with a reflection on "The Mission of Art", which will try to show the thoroughly healthy side of what might appear to us today from its most terrible, dark aspect of life.

When error and mental disorder are spoken of, images of deepest human suffering arise in every person's soul, and images, too, of deepest human sympathy. And everything which thereby arises in the soul can also be a challenge to illuminate a little this chasm in the human soul with the light which we hope to have gained in these lectures. Particularly the person who increasingly accustoms himself to proceed in the way of thinking which has passed before our soul here must have the hope that the spiritual-scientific method of observation can illuminate in certain respects this sad chapter of human life. For anyone with some knowledge of the literature, and I am now referring less to the rapidly expanding non-specialist literature than to the specialist one, will be able to note from the point of view of spiritual science that it reaches an extraordinarily long way in some respects and offers a wealth of material for the assessment of the relevant facts. But on the other hand in no literature does it become so clear how little the different theories, views and modes of thinking in our time are appropriate to providing a framework for the experiences and scientific observations which have been collected. In this field in particular it can be seen clearly how spiritual science is in harmony with true and genuine science, with everything which we come up against as scientific facts, results and experiences. But it can also be

seen how at each stage it finds a contradiction between these experiences and the way that they are interpreted from the current scientific point of view. As in other fields, we will again only be able to deal with the subject in outline, but perhaps it will provide the stimulus to gain a relevant understanding which can also flow into our practical life, so that we are increasingly capable of orientating ourselves in respect of the sad condition which we are about to touch upon.

In using the words "error" and "mental disorder" we will be aware that the one is fundamentally different from the other. Nevertheless, the exact observer of a soul-life which can be described truly as mentally disordered will find expressions and appearances which only seem to be different in degree from error committed in some respect in a life which is otherwise regarded as normal. But such observations are liable to misinterpretation in so far as certain directions of thought have the tendency to blur the individual divisions and to state that in fact no firm line exists between a healthy normal soul-life and one which can be described with the words "mental disorder".

Such statements contain a certain danger which must be emphasised when the occasion occurs. And the danger lies not in the fact that the statement is wrong, but that it is correct. This may sound paradoxical, but nevertheless it is true, that wrong statements are sometimes less dangerous than correct ones which can be interpreted and put into practice in a one-sided way because the danger inherent in their correctness is not noticed. It is often thought to be sufficient that if something can be proved in a certain context it is correct; but it should be realised that every matter which is correct also has its reverse aspect and that any truth which we discover is true only in respect of certain facts and experiences. The danger arises in the moment that it is extrapolated to cover other areas, when it is carried too far and becomes dogmatic belief. That is the reason why in general not much is achieved if we know that a truth exists; the important thing is that in true knowledge we should know the limits within which that knowledge is valid.

We can certainly observe phenomena in normal healthy soul-life which, if they go beyond a certain point, are also pathological symptoms. The full weight of this statement will be noticed only by someone who is properly accustomed to observe life on a more

intimate level. Who would deny the pathological aspect which can be included under the heading of "mental disorder" when someone is incapable of linking one comprehended concept with a second one at the right moment, so that he applies the first one in a new and completely inappropriate situation and acts on the basis of an idea which was correct for an earlier situation but not for a later one. Who would deny that this borders on the pathological? If it happens beyond a certain degree it is directly a symptom for mental disorder. But on the other hand, who would deny that there are people who are unable to advance in their work because of their long-windedness, their laboriousness. Here there is a situation in normal soul-life — the impossibility of progressing from an idea — where the point is approached at which it is necessary to stop speaking of error and start speaking of pathological mental disorder.

Let us assume, for example, that someone is prone to the error — and this really does happen — that when someone in the vicinity clears their throat this does not sound to him like a normal cough but gives him the illusion that people are saying unkind things about him. If that person then adjusts his life and actions in response to this illusion he will be considered as someone who is mentally disordered. And yet there is a thin line between this and occurrences in normal life where it happens that someone has overheard something and interprets the meaning in such a way that he thinks he hears something completely different to what was actually said. One meets cases where someone says: "Some person or other said this or that about me" and no trace can be found that the other person actually said that. It is not very easy to determine where the normal soul-life turns from its healthy course into disorder of the soul.

This may seem paradoxical, and it may provoke some reflection in this field, if we imagine that someone in an avenue of trees has the quite normal perception of seeing the trees nearby at their proper distance whilst those further away appear to move closer together and, deciding to tie ropes between the trees, he thereupon makes the lengths of rope shorter the further the trees are away. There we have an example of a person drawing the wrong conclusions from a perfectly healthy observation. But healthy observation only comes about because there is illusion. The illusion is also an observation. The unhealthy, harmful aspect of illusion only comes about when it is considered to be the same reality as a table standing before one. Only

when the observations cannot be interpreted in the correct way can it be described as pathological. Now we can compare the case that someone has a hallucination and considers it to be reality in the normal physical sense with the paradox that someone was going to tie the trees of an avenue together with pieces of rope which became shorter and shorter. Logically, in principle, there would be no difference between the two things. Nevertheless, how easily can an illusion lead us to make a wrong judgment and how rarely would we make a similar wrong judgment in observing an avenue! Some people might consider all this silly. But all the same it is necessary to take such particulars into account, for otherwise one can quickly become side-tracked and does not see how easily normal soul-life can become disordered.

Now we can give further examples of still more striking cases concerning people whose soul-life is considered healthy and clear-sighted to the highest degree. I want to mention a German philosopher who is currently considered among the foremost in his field by those who work in it. The philosopher told of his following experience:

He was once in conversation with a person and this conversation led them to talk about a scholar known to both of them. At the moment when the conversation turned to the scholar, the philosopher was reminded of an illustrated book on Paris and immediately following that of a photograph album of Rome. Meanwhile the conversation continued about the scholar. The philosopher reflected how it was possible that during the conversation the image of first the illustrated book on Paris and then the photograph album of Rome could appear. And, indeed, he managed to establish the correct connections. For the scholar about whom they were talking had a noteworthy goatee. This goatee immediately called forth in the subconscious of the philosopher the image of Napoleon III, who also had a goatee; and this idea of Napoleon III which had pushed its way into his consciousness led via France to the illustrated work about Paris. And now the image of another man appeared before him who also had a Van Dyke beard, the image of Victor Emanuel of Italy; and this image led via Italy to the photograph album of Rome. There we have an arbitrary, haphazard sequence of ideas which unfolds whilst something completely different is happening in the fully conscious soul-life. Let us assume, now, that a person reached the point where the illustrated

work about Paris arose in him and he then could no longer keep hold of the thread of the conversation, and immediately afterwards he had the subsequent idea of the photograph album of Rome; he would be subject to a haphazard life of ideas; he would be unable to hold an orderly conversation with anyone but would be enmeshed in a pathological soul-life which would lead him without rhyme or reason from one set of ideas to the next.

But our philosopher proceeds further and contrasts this with another case by which he hopes to recognise how these things are related. Once he went to the tax office to pay his taxes. He had to pay 75 marks. And since, in spite of his philosophy, he was an orderly man, he had entered these 75 marks in his expenditure book and had then proceeded with his other work. Later he wanted to remember the amount of tax which he had paid. He could not remember. He thought; and, being a philosopher, went to work systematically. He tried to recall the amount by the association of ideas. He concentrated on his walk to the tax office and he recalled the picture of the four gold twenty mark pieces which he had in his purse and, further, the image of the five marks which had then been given to him as change. He recalled these two images and was now able to discover by a simple subtraction that he had paid 75 marks tax.

Here we have two completely different cases. In the first the soul-life acts of its own accord, as it were, without any kind of control by the conscious sequence of ideas; it produces the image of the illustrated work about Paris and the image of the photograph album of Rome. In the second case we see how the soul acts quite systematically, choosing every step it takes. There really is a considerable difference between the two soul processes. But the philosopher fails to draw attention to something which the spiritual researcher would immediately notice. For the essential thing in the first case is that his attention is fixed on the other person, that the whole of his conscious soul-life is taken up with holding the conversation with the other person and that the haphazard images surface as if on a different level of consciousness, left to themselves. In the second case, the philosopher turns the whole of his attention to determining the sequence of ideas. This explains why the images occur haphazardly in the first case, whilst in the second they are under the control of the conscious soul-life.

But why are there images in the first place? The philosopher fails to answer that. Those who observe life, who know similar cases and are in a position to take into account the nature of the philosopher concerned (I happen to know not only the case but also the man) will be able to set up the following hypothesis. The philosopher was talking of a man who did not particularly interest him. A certain effort was necessary to keep up the concentration on the conversation. Because of this he had a certain amount of soul-life to spare which was not engaged in the conversation and which turned inwards. But he did not have the strength to control the resultant sequence of images so that they occurred haphazardly because he had to give his attention to the uninteresting conversation. This gives an indication how such images occur in the background of conscious soul-life as shadows. Numerous other examples could be given. I chose this example because it is very characteristic and much can be learnt from it.

Now the question may be asked: does such an event not prompt us to investigate human soul-life more deeply? And also: how can such a split in the soul-life come about in the first place? And here we come to the realm where experience of that unhappy subject we are dealing with today can be fitted quite naturally into what we have dealt with so often this winter. The philosopher mentioned in the example is faced with a riddle when recounting his experiences. He does not like to continue once he has told the facts because our external science stops short of knowledge about the essence of things and the human being, however much it may be descriptive.

Our observation of the essential nature of the human being has demonstrated that man must be looked at in more ways than is done by external science, that we have to distinguish an outer and an inner human being. We have shown in numerous areas that sleep has to be regarded differently from the way it is understood in ordinary science. We have shown how what remains in bed of the sleeping human being is only the outer man and that ordinary consciousness cannot follow the invisible higher true inner human being who leaves the outer human being in sleep. Ordinary consciousness just does not see that something leaves the human being which is just as real as that part which remains in bed, that the inner human being is given over to his real home, the spiritual world, between going to sleep and waking up. And it also fails to recognise that he extracts from there what he

needs between waking up and going to sleep in order to sustain the ordinary soul-life. That is why we have to regard separately and clearly differentiate the outer human being, who is present with his laws also in sleep, and the inner human being, who is only present in the outer human being in the waking states, but separates himself in sleep. As long as this distinction is not made we will not be able to understand the most important events in human life. Those, who for reasons of convenience see everything as a unity and without a second thought want to establish monism everywhere, will accuse us of being dualists because we divide the human being into two members — an inner and an outer one. But such people should also admit the horrible dualism of the chemist splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen. It is not possible to be a monist in the higher sense if one does not recognise that the monon is something which lies much deeper. But those who see unity only in the most immediate things hinder themselves from being able to observe the manifold nature of life, from recognising those things which alone can explain life.

Now it was also shown that we have to distinguish individual members within the outer and the inner human being. In the outer human being we first distinguished the physical body which we can see and feel. Then there is another member which we call the ether body, which fashions and builds up the physical body. Physical body and ether body remain in bed during sleep. Then the parts which withdraw from the physical and ether bodies during sleep into the spiritual world were described in these lectures as the astral human body which, in turn, encloses the bearer of the ego. But we made still more subtle distinctions. In the astral body we distinguished three soul members, and a careful differentiation of these three members permitted an explanation of many occurrences in life.

We called the lowest soul member the sentient soul, the second member we noted as the intellectual or mind soul and the third one as the consciousness soul. Therefore, when we refer to the inner human being, we do not speak of a chaotic, undifferentiated intermingling of all kinds of will impulses, feelings, concepts and ideas, but we can carefully differentiate in the soul between these three members. Now in ordinary human life there is a certain interrelationship between the outer and the inner human being. The interrelationship can be characterised as follows: the sentient soul, our lowest soul member which contains our desires and passions to which we are slavishly

subject if the higher soul members are little developed, is interrelated with the sentient body; this is similar to the sentient soul, but in the human being it is considered as belonging to the outer human being. The astral body has to be described separately from the sentient body here. For the three individual soul members are only modifications of the astral body, not only fashioned but also separated from it. In the waking state the sentient soul is in constant exchange with the sentient body. Similarly, the intellectual or mind soul is in constant interchange with the ether body, and the consciousness soul is in a certain sense intimately connected with the physical body. That is why we are dependent on waking consciousness as far as everything which is to enter the consciousness soul is concerned. The things transmitted by the physical body, the senses, the activity of the human brain, initially enter the consciousness soul.

Thus we have two three-membered sections of the human being which correspond to one another: the sentient soul and the sentient body, the intellectual or mind soul and the ether body, the consciousness soul and the physical body. This correspondence can help us to unravel the threads leading from the inner to the outer human being which can show us how man's normal soul-life may be disturbed if they fail to function in their normal way. Why does this happen?

The sentient soul is dependent on the effects of the sentient body, and when there is an incorrect correspondence between the sentient soul and the sentient body the healthy soul-life of the sentient soul is interrupted. A similar thing occurs when the intellectual soul cannot regulate the ether body in the correct way to make it a proper instrument for the intellectual soul. And the consciousness soul, too, will appear abnormal when the physical body is a hindrance and obstacle for the normal expression of the consciousness soul. If we divide the human being systematically in this way, an order of correspondence can be seen which is essential for a healthy soul-life. And it can also be understood that all sorts of interruptions can occur in the interrelationship between the sentient soul and the sentient body, the intellectual soul and the ether body, the consciousness soul and the physical body. And only the person who can recognise the threads running through this intricate organism and the irregularities which can arise will be able to recognise the disorder which can occur

in the soul. Disorder only occurs when there is disharmony between the inner and the outer human being. Let us take the case of the philosopher once more.

The soul-life which takes place under the full control of the consciousness shows what is present in the consciousness soul on the one hand and in the intellectual soul on the other. But in the sentient soul the hardly noticed images follow one another: the illustrated work about Paris, the photograph album of Rome. This occurs because the philosopher brings about a split between his sentient soul and sentient body by diverting his attention whilst still relating to the person standing in front of him. The images of the illustrated work on Paris and the Rome photograph album must be sought in the sentient body; the uncontrolled process which was described takes place there. In the consciousness soul the conversation between the two people occurs; and the necessity of being forced to prevent attention from wandering from the conversation in this case causes a split between the sentient body and the sentient soul.

These are only passing states. For the least disturbance of our soul-life occurs when the sentient body alone becomes independent. We can still maintain reason and the inner thread of consciousness which preserves awareness: we are still present, too, beside the compulsive images which appear because of the sentient body which has become independent.

When such a split occurs in respect of the intellectual soul and the ether body, then the situation is a much more difficult one. Then we enter more deeply those states which verge on the pathological. Nevertheless, it is difficult to decide where the healthy state ends and the pathological one begins. An intricate example will make clear how difficult it is to maintain the experiences of the intellectual soul in complete independence when the ether body goes on strike, when it refuses to be merely a tool of our thinking. When the ether body goes independent and resists the intellectual soul it prevents the thought from coming to expression fully, so that the thought becomes stuck half way and cannot be completed. This can happen with the most clever people, so-called. Let us take a grotesque example.

Everyone will smile at and easily recognise the logical absurdity of the statement: it is a logical conclusion that you still possess what you have not lost. You did not lose big ears, therefore you still have big ears. The absurdity arises because the thought is not in accord with the facts. But on exactly the same pattern — that there is a preceding statement "what you have not lost" which makes an unjustified assumption which goes unnoticed — the most unbelievable errors can be committed in the most important questions in life where the matter is a little more complicated. Thus there is a philosopher [44] who greatly emphasised a theory set up by him about the human ego. We have often mentioned here how even in its definition the ego is different from all experiences which we can have. Everyone can call a table "table", a glass "glass" and a watch "watch". Only the word "I" cannot be used by anyone else when it describes ourselves. This is indicative of a fundamental difference between the experience of the ego and all other experience. Such things can be observed; or they can be half observed. And they are only half observed when conclusions are drawn such as by the philosopher: "therefore the ego can never become object, therefore the ego can never be observed." And it seems a clever view when he continues: if the attempt were made to grasp it, the ego would have to be present externally whilst at the same time being present within itself. That would be no different to someone running around a tree and saying if only he runs fast enough he can catch up with himself from behind. Who would not be convinced when the dogma that the ego can never be grasped in itself is backed by such an example! And yet: the whole thing is based on the fact that such a comparison is not valid. For it is based on the assumption that the ego cannot be observed. If the comparison with the tree were to be used, it would be possible to say only: the ego must not be compared with the person running round the tree but at most with a person who winds himself round a tree like a snake; then perhaps the feet could be held with the hands. Thus the ego is something quite different from everything else within our experience. It is a substance which we can grasp as the coincidence of subject and object. This has been hinted at by mystics at all times in the language of symbols, in the image of the snake biting its own tail. Those who used this symbol understood that they were observing themselves, as it were, in the image before them.

This example demonstrates how we advance from the feelings and perceptions of our immediate perception which can become disharmonious only with the sentient body, to those things which affect not only pure feeling, pure perception, but the intellectual or mind soul. Where we have to digest thoughts internally, which is already a much less arbitrary process, a hindrance is caused not only by the images themselves, but there is something which offers quite a different sort of resistance which cannot be recognised by a thinking which fails to pursue its processes rigorously to their conclusion. We had an example how the human being can enmesh himself in a logic whereof he does not notice that it is only his logic and not the logic of the facts. A logic of the facts is only present when we retain mastery over the link between the intellectual soul and the ether body, and thus the mastery over the ether body. Therefore those pathological expressions of our soul-life which are primarily the result of a breakdown in the link between our ideas turn out to be caused by the ether body not being able to serve as a healthy tool for the expressions of our intellectual soul.

But now the question is justified: if an ether body which creates a hindrance for our intellectual soul to unfold, is part of our nature, is there any choice but to say that the causes affecting the soul such that it passes from mere error to mental disorder lie in something over which we have no control? In a certain sense such an example, if it is truly understood, makes us aware of something which has been emphasised here repeatedly and which is considered to be nonsense by many of our contemporaries — even the most enlightened. We observe that our ether body throws obstacles in the way of our intellectual soul, thus not allowing it to finish any train of thought. So instead of admitting here that we are powerless and can go no further, we pass muddled and distorted judgment. Our judgment from the intellectual soul becomes mixed up with the intrusions of our ether body. A peculiar situation: we think that the ether body belongs to the outer human being and then it interferes with the activity of the intellectual soul as if it were on an equal level. How can this be explained?

Purely on a verbal level one can point to "inherited characteristics", etc. That is done by those who, because of certain fixed patterns of thinking, are unable to reflect logically on matters concerning the soul. But the philosophers who are able to reflect on the soul say: the error,

the chaotic confusion which enters the soul in such a case cannot be the result merely of physical heredity. In contrast, a well-known modern philosopher describes our internal processes which go beyond the purely physical with a remarkable phrase. It might be described as a pretty phrase, were we not dealing with a serious subject, when Wundt [45] says: "This leads us into the perpetual darkness of evolution!" A person used to rigorous thinking will find such a phrase by a world famous philosopher strange. Compare with this the truth of spiritual science which says: soul and spirit can only originate from soul and spirit — a statement on a higher level which we have often seen as comparable with another truth which the great natural scientist Francesco Redi voiced in the 17th century in a different field: living matter can only originate from living matter. Spiritual science not only reveals physical heredity, but shows that the spiritual element is active in everything physical. And in the situation where the contrary effect of our ether body on the intellectual soul becomes too great, it is plausible that something must have formed and prepared our ether body which is similar to our intellectual soul — only it has badly prepared it. If we therefore find such an error in our intellectual soul in the present, and if we are able to maintain our reason, we can correct the error in such a way that it does not penetrate as far as our corporeality. And one must not think that every emotion immediately results in sickness. No one is more rigorous than spiritual science in the view that it is nonsense to ascribe to external influences without a second thought when a person becomes mentally disordered. But on the other hand it must be understood, even if we have no power to change our ether body, that it is saturated and imbued with the same laws of error which exist when a mistake is made, but that we become sick when the error comes to expression in the ether body. Such error cannot normally take effect immediately in our present life between birth and death. This only happens if it becomes repeated and habitual. For it is another matter if we continually compound error upon error between birth and death in a specific case, if we regularly succumb to certain weaknesses of the thinking, feeling and willing and live with them between birth and death. The outer bodily nature can only change a limited amount between birth and death. When we pass through the gate of death the physical body with all the good and bad qualities is destroyed and we take with us in our thinking, feeling and willing everything good and bad which we have created. And in

constructing our outer bodily nature in the next existence we transmit into it the errors and the chaos, our weaknesses in thinking, feeling and willing from our present existence.

Therefore, with reference to an ether body which holds us back, an error in our present soul-life cannot immediately take shape in our ether body, but the error which at present is only content if our soul participates in the organisation of our next existence. What appear in our ether body as causes and as certain characteristics will not be traced back to our present existence, but they can certainly be found if we return to an earlier incarnation.

This shows us that we can understand a wide field of mental disorder only if we grope not merely in the secret "perpetual darkness of evolution" but if we go to an earlier existence of the human being. Nevertheless, this truth also must not be taken to extremes; for we must be aware that the human being has within him besides the qualities from an earlier life also those which are inherited, and that certain qualities of our outer human being must be considered as hereditary. It is necessary to distinguish carefully between what the human being carries with him from one existence to the next and his characteristics as descendant of his ancestors.

Now a similar disharmony can arise between our consciousness soul, which forms the basis of our self-consciousness, and our physical body. Then not only do those characteristics appear in our physical body for which we are responsible from earlier incarnations, but also those which can be found in the line of descent. But here, too, the principle is the same. The work of the consciousness soul can find an obstacle in the active laws of the physical body. And when the consciousness soul meets these obstacles then all the things arise which appear so cruelly in certain symptoms of mental disorder. Similarly all the unhappy aspects of a particular organ appear when that organ is particularly prominent in our physical body. When the organs of our physical body work properly together and none of them is more developed than the others, our physical body is a proper instrument for our consciousness soul, just as a healthy eye presents no obstacle to seeing. In this context we can draw attention to a case told by an important scientist of our time. A person had impaired vision in one eye. As a result of this it seemed to him particularly at dusk, as if he saw something of the nature of apparitions. Because

this impairment of the eye influenced his vision, he often felt as if someone was standing in his way. Where such an effect by the eye creates an obstacle normal sight is not possible. These partial defects can appear in all different forms.

When the consciousness soul finds an obstacle in the physical body, this is attributable to the special prominence of the one or the other organ. For when all the organs of the physical body are working together normally it causes no resistance to the consciousness soul and we can give expression to our self-consciousness in a regular way. An obstacle is noticed only when an organ gains special prominence, for then resistance is encountered, but if this free intercourse with the outside world is obstructed and we do not notice the obstacle in our consciousness, ideas of megalomania and paranoia appear as symptoms of the actual, more deeply seated sickness.

In thus observing man as a complex being, disharmony and harmony in life can be understood. It was not possible to indicate more than briefly how the various members interact and how spiritual science can bring order and clarification to the wonderful results which are presented in the relevant literature today.

If we understand this we will be able to gain further insights. Insights into the reality of the inner human being and the interaction of the outer and the inner human being from incarnation to incarnation; how in certain failings of the outer human being, in failings of the ether body for example, there appear the consequences of weaknesses and mistakes from earlier stages of existence. But this also shows us that we will not always manage to overcome them by an inner regulated, strong soul-life, if the obstacles are too great. But it is possible in many respects, because if in abnormal soul-life there is only the conflict between outer and inner human being, then we can also understand that it is important to strengthen the inner human being as much as possible. A weak person who does not like to pursue his thinking rigorously to its conclusion, who does not want to define his ideas clearly, who is not intent on developing his feelings in such a way that they are in accord with his experiences, such a person will be able to show only weak opposition to the resistance of the outer human being: and if he bears the seeds of illness within him he will succumb to mental disorder when the time comes. But the situation is different if we can oppose sickness of the outer human being with a

strong inner being, because the stronger of the two will win! From this we can see that although we cannot always be assured of victory over our outer nature, we can do much to keep the upper hand over it by the development of a strong, regulated soul-life. And we can see the reason for trying to develop our feelings and emotions and our will in such a manner that we do not feel affected by every minor inconvenience; for trying to expand our thinking to encompass the greater context; for seeking to pursue with our thinking not only the most obvious threads but to pursue them to their most detailed entailments; for being concerned to develop our desires in such a way that we do not want the impossible but are in accord with the circumstances. If we develop a strong soul-life we may still encounter a limit, but we will have done the utmost to make our inner being predominate over all external resistance.

Thus we can see the significance for the human being to develop his soul-life correspondingly. In the present there is little understanding for what is meant by developing the soul-life. It has been mentioned on similar occasions before that much weight is given today to gymnastics, for example, going for walks, training the physical body. I do not want to comment on the principle contained therein; these things can be healthy. But they quite certainly do not lead to good results if only the outer human being is taken into consideration, as if he were a machine, when exercises are done which only aim to strengthen physiologically. In gymnastics such exercises should not be undertaken at all which are characterised by the view that this or that muscle should be strengthened in particular; but we should take care that we experience an inner joy with every exercise, that we fetch the impulse for every exercise from an inner feeling of well-being. The impulses for the exercises should come from the soul. The gym teacher, for example, should be able to put himself in a position emotionally of experiencing how the soul feels one or another sort of well-being when one or another exercise is undertaken. Then we strengthen the soul; otherwise we strengthen only the body, and the soul can remain as weak as ever. Those who know life will find that exercises which are undertaken from this point of view have a health-giving effect and make quite a different contribution to the well-being of the human being than the exercises which are undertaken merely as if the human being were an anatomical machine. The connection between the life of soul and the life of the physical body is only revealed by the exact investigation of spiritual science. Those who

believe that the physical can balance spiritual effort are unaware of an essential element. The spiritual scientist knows that he can become extremely tired, for example, when he is required to communicate a truth to another person and then has to listen to the other speak who is not yet able to express himself properly about the subject, who cannot yet form proper images in his thinking — whilst for example he does not become exhausted however much he researches into the spiritual world; that could be continued indefinitely. The reason for this is that when one is listening to someone else one is dealing with physical communication whereby the physical brain is involved, whilst spiritual research still requires the physical organs to some extent on lower levels, but requires them less and less the higher it reaches and therefore becomes correspondingly less exhausting. When the outer human being no longer has to participate exhaustion and tiredness no longer arise. It can be seen that differentiation must be made in spiritual activity, that there are differences whether spiritual activity is given its impulse from the soul itself or whether it is prompted from the outside. That is something which should always be taken into account: in the various stages of the human being's development those events always take place which correspond to the inner impulses.

Let us take an example which has been emphasised before and which can be found in my little work *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*. [46] There it says that the child up to the seventh year of age primarily feels the impulse in all its actions to imitate. Then, between the changing of the teeth and puberty, its development is characterised by what might be called "orientating oneself according to an authority" or acting according to the impression made on us by another person. Let us assume that these two stages of imitation and bowing to authority are ignored. If no account is taken of them the outer body, instead of becoming an instrument of the soul, will develop irregularly and the soul will then no longer have the opportunity in the consecutive periods of human development to affect in the correct way the irregular nature of the outer human being and interact with it. Then, when the human being enters a new stage of development at significant periods in human life, we see that to a certain degree a member of his being may have fallen behind if these rules are not observed. Ignoring this law lies at the basis of schizophrenia, dementia praecox. By ignoring the correct processes in earlier periods dementia praecox can arise as disharmony

between the inner and outer human being, a symptom of belated imitation. It is often the case that the disharmony of those things which are cleanly divided by spiritual science is in many cases the cause of abnormality in the soul. Similarly we can see in the appearance of senile dementia towards the end of life the disharmony between inner and outer human being, brought about because the human being did not live in such a manner that harmony could exist between inner and outer man in the period between puberty and the time when the astral body is fully developed.

This shows us that knowledge of the human being can illuminate the nature of error and mental disorder. And even if we find only a superficial link, if a person cannot say that error, in so far as it is part of normal soul-life, can affect our outer nature, it has to be said in contrast that the law according to which the development of a strong logic, a regulated soul-life harmonious in feeling and willing can strengthen us against the obstacles which arise from the outer human being is greatly encouraging. Thus spiritual science gives us the possibility, perhaps not always, but most of the time, of countering the superiority, the supremacy of the outer human being. It is important that when we strengthen and nurture the inner human being we strengthen and nurture it against the predominance of the outer human being. Spiritual science gives us the healing power to do this. It therefore always emphasises the importance of developing ordered thinking which avoids irrelevancies, not to stop with one's thoughts half-way but to pursue them consistently to the end. That is why spiritual science, with its strict demands to order our soul-life in such a manner that it appears internally disciplined and in harmony, is itself a medicine against the predominance of the pathological symptoms of our outward bodily nature. And the human being can be victorious over pathological pre-dispositions when he can envelop bodily weakness, bodily mis-formation with the light of a healthy willing, a healthy feeling and a self-disciplined thinking. That is something which is unpopular today, and yet it is important for an understanding of the present. Thus spiritual science even gives us some consolation, namely that in the spirit, if we truly strengthen it, we continue to have the best remedy for everything which can affect us in life. By means of spiritual science we learn not merely to theorise about the spirit, but we learn to turn it into a healing power within us when we make the effort to continue where philistines like to stop: the half-finished thought. For it is nothing but half-finished thinking when it is said:

"Prove what you say about repeated earth lives and so on!" It cannot be proved to the person who refuses to lead his thoughts to their conclusion. Whole truths cannot be proved with half thoughts. They can only be proved to whole thinking, and whole thinking has to be developed by the human being within himself.

If the indications which have been given here are developed further, it will be seen that this is central to the evil of our time: the disbelief in the spirit, But it will also be seen that an indication has been given here where the means lie to transform disbelief into belief, into true strong spirituality. The belief in reason is lacking in large measure in mankind today. Therefore the reasoned objectivity which is necessary to understand the truths of spiritual science is not always present. It is not with ridicule and irony, but with a certain sadness that the lines in *Faust* about certain people might be applied to our present time.

*"If they possessed the philosopher's stone,
The philosopher would not match the stone."* [47]

Reason can understand spiritual science and reasoned understanding of spiritual science can heal the furthest reaches of the bodily nature. That, by the way, is claimed by others than only by spiritual scientists today. This claim has also been made by those who tried to approach the spirit by other paths than modern spiritual science, but such people, too, are little understood in the present. Who would not ridicule *Hegel* today precisely because he emphasised the existence, the work and the necessity of reason everywhere? He emphasised it in such a manner that he thought of the work of reason in the human being today in the following way: "I imagine this human life as a cross", and for *Hegel* the roses on the cross were equivalent to reason in the human being. That is why he prefaces one of his works with the motto: "Reason is the rose on the cross of the present", [48] and belief in reason will make the cross victorious. Belief in reason and belief in disciplined thinking, in harmonious feeling and willing will attach the roses to the cross. We have the strength in us to counter what we call mental disorder, at least to a certain degree, when we have belief in harmonious feeling which can be developed, harmonious willing which can be developed and self-disciplined reason which can

be developed and which must be developed. If we develop these three, then under all circumstances we will be more strong and triumphant in life. And because Hegel draws together in reason a harmonious feeling, willing and disciplined thinking, a reasoned intellectuality, he makes the statement which can serve as motto for us in developing our soul-life, that for the human being reason should be the rose on the cross of the present.



8. Human Conscience

Berlin, 5th May 1910

Allow me to begin today's lecture with a personal recollection. As a quite young man, I once had a slight experience of the kind which seem unimportant and yet can yield pleasant memories again and again in later life.

I was attending a course of university lectures on the history of literature. [49] The lecturer began by considering the character of cultural life in the time of **Lessing**, with the intention of going on to discuss various literary developments during the later eighteenth century and part of the nineteenth. His opening words were deeply impressive. In order to characterise the chief innovation which appeared in the cultural life of Lessing's time, he said: "Artistic consciousness acquired an aesthetic conscience." His lecture showed that what he meant by this statement — we need not now ask whether it was justified — was roughly as follows:

All the artistic considerations and intentions connected with the endeavours of Lessing and his contemporaries were imbued with a deeply earnest wish to make something more of art than a mere appendage to life or a mere pleasure among others. Art was to become a necessary element in every form of human existence worthy of the name. To raise art up to the level of a serious human concern, worthy to be heard in the concert of voices which speak of the great and fruitful activities of mankind — such was the aim of the pioneer thinkers of that period. That is what the lecturer wanted to say when he emphasised that an aesthetic conscience had found its way into the artistic and literary life of those times.

Why was this statement important for a soul seeking to grasp the riddles of existence, as reflected in one or another human mind? Because a conception of art was to be ennobled and given expression in a way that left no doubt as to its importance for the whole character and destiny of human life. The serious nature and significance of artistic work were intended to be placed beyond discussion, and it is indeed true that the experiences denoted by the

word "conscience" are such that all the situations to which they apply are ennobled. In other words, when "conscience" is spoken of, the human soul recognises that the word refers to a most valuable element in its own life, and that to be without this element would indicate a serious deficiency.

How often has the significance of conscience been brought out by the words, no matter whether they are taken literally or metaphorically: "When conscience speaks in the human soul, it is the voice of God that speaks." And one could scarcely find anyone, however unprepared to reflect on higher spiritual concerns, who has not formed some idea of what conscience is. Everyone feels vaguely that whatever conscience may be, it is experienced as a voice in the individual's breast which determines with irresistible power what is good and what is bad; what man must do in order to gain his own approval and what he must leave undone if he is not to despise himself. Hence we can say: Conscience appears to every individual as something holy in the human breast, and that to form some kind of opinion about it is relatively easy.

Things are different, however, if we glance briefly at man's history and his spiritual life. Anyone who is trying to look more deeply into a spiritual situation of this kind will surely wish to consult those in whom a knowledge of such matters may be presupposed — the philosophers. But in this case, as in so many others of wide human concern, he will find that the explanations of conscience given by various philosophers are very different, or so it seems, though a more or less obscure kernel is similar in all of them. But that is not the worst of it. If anyone were to take the trouble to inquire what the philosophers of ancient and modern times mean by conscience, he would be met with all sorts of very fine phrases and also by many that are hard to understand, but he would find nothing of which he could say beyond question that it reflected his feeling: that is conscience.

Of course it would lead us too far if I were to give you an anthology of the various explanations of conscience that have been given over the centuries by the philosophical leaders of mankind. But we may note that from about the first third of the Middle Ages and on through mediaeval philosophy, whenever conscience was spoken of, it was always said to be a power in the human soul which was capable of immediately declaring what a man should do and what he should

leave undone. However, these mediaeval philosophers say also that underneath this power of the soul there is something else, something of finer quality than conscience itself. A personality often mentioned here, Meister **Eckhart**, [50] tells of a tiny spark that underlies conscience; an eternal element in the soul which, if it is heeded, declares with unmistakable power the laws of good and evil.

In modern times, we encounter once more the most varied accounts of conscience, including some which make a peculiar impression, for they clearly fail to recognise the serious nature of the divine inner voice that we call conscience. There are philosophers who say that conscience is something that a man acquires when, by extending continually his experience of life, he learns what is useful, harmful, satisfying and so on for himself. The sum of these experiences gives rise to a judgment which says: "Do this — don't do that."

There are other philosophers who speak of conscience in terms of the highest praise. One of these is the great German philosopher, **Johann Gottlieb Fichte**, who pointed above all to the human ego not the transient personal ego but the eternal essence in man — as the fundamental principle of all human thought and being. At the same time, he held that the highest experience for the human ego was the experience of conscience, [51] when a man hears the inward judgment: "This you must do, for it would go against your conscience not to do it." The majesty and nobility of this judgment, he believed, could not be surpassed. And if Fichte was the philosopher who laid the strongest emphasis on the power and significance of the human ego, it is characteristic of him that he ranked conscience as the ego's most significant impulse.

The further we move on into modern times, and the more materialistic thinking becomes, the more do we find conscience deprived of its majesty — not in the human heart, but in the thinking of philosophers who are more or less imbued with materialism. One example will be enough to illustrate this trend.

In the second half of the 19th century, there lived a philosopher who for nobility of soul, harmonious human feelings and generous breadth of mind must rank with the finest personalities. I mean Bartholomew Carnieri: [52] he is seldom mentioned now. If you go through his writings, you find that in spite of his fine qualities, he was deeply

imbued with the materialistic thinking of his time. What, he asks, are we to make of conscience? Fundamentally, he says, it is no more than the sum of habits and judgments instilled in us during early youth and strengthened by the experience of life. These influences, of which we are no longer fully conscious, are the source of the inner voice which says: "This you must do — this you must not do,"

Thus the origin of conscience is traced back to external influences and habits, and even these are confined to a very narrow range. Some even more materialistically-minded philosophers of the 19th century have gone further still. Paul Ree, [53] for example, who at one time had great influence on Nietzsche, wrote on the origin of conscience. His book is interesting as a symptom of the outlook of our times. His ideas — allowing for some inevitable distortion of details in any brief sketch of them — are roughly as follows. Man, says Paul Ree, has developed in respect of all his faculties, and therefore in respect of conscience. Originally he had no trace of what we call conscience. It is gross prejudice to hold that conscience is eternal. A voice telling us what to do and what not to do did not exist originally, according to Ree. But in human nature there was something else which did develop — something we can call an instinct for revenge. This was the most primitive of all impulses. If anyone suffered at the hands of another, the instinct for revenge drove him to pay back the injury in kind. By degrees, as social life became more complicated, the carrying out of vengeance was handed over to the ruling authorities. So people came to believe that any deed which injured another person had by necessity to be followed by something that had previously been called vengeance. Certain deeds which had bad results had to be requited by other deeds. In the course of time, this conviction gave rise to an association of certain feelings with particular actions, or even with the temptation to commit them. The original urge for revenge was forgotten, but a feeling became ingrained in the human soul that a harmful action must be paid for. So now, when a man believes he is hearing an "inner voice", this is in fact nothing but the voice of vengeance, changed into an inward form. Here we have an extreme example of this kind of interpretation — extreme in the sense that conscience is portrayed as a complete illusion.

On the other hand, we must admit that it is going much too far to assert, as some people do, that conscience has existed as long as human beings have been living on the earth; in other words, that

conscience is in some sense eternal. Since mistakes are made both by those who think more spiritually about it, and by those who regard conscience as a pure illusion, it is very difficult to reach any agreement on the subject, although it belongs to our everyday inner life, and indeed to a sacred part of it.

A glance over the philosophers will show that in earlier times even the best of them thought of conscience differently from the way in which we are bound to think of it today. For when we say that conscience is a voice speaking out of a divine impulse in the breast of the simplest man, saying, "This you must do — that you must leave undone" this is somewhat different from the teaching we find in Socrates [54] and in his successor, Plato. [55] They both insist that virtue can be learnt. **Socrates**, indeed, says that if a man forms clear ideas as to what he should and should not do, then gradually, through this knowledge of what virtue is, he can learn to act virtuously.

Now one could easily object, from a modern standpoint, that things would go badly if we had to wait until we had learnt what is right and what is wrong before we could act virtuously. Conscience speaks with elemental power in the human soul and is heard by the individual as saying "This you must do, and that you must leave alone", long before we learn to form ideas concerning good and evil and thus begin to formulate moral precepts. Moreover, conscience brings a certain tranquillity to the soul on occasions when a man can say to himself: "You have done something you can approve of." It would be bad — many people might say — if we had to learn a lot about the nature and character of virtue in order to arrive at an agreed estimation of our behaviour. Hence we can say that the philosopher to whom we look up as a martyr of philosophy, whose death crowned and ennobled his philosophical work — I mean Socrates — sets before us a concept of virtue which hardly tallies with our view of conscience today: and even with later Greek thinkers we always find the assertion that perfect virtue is something that can be learnt, a doctrine not in keeping with the primitive, elemental, power of conscience.

How is it, then, that so pre-eminent and powerful a person as Socrates is not aware of the idea of conscience that we have today, although we feel whenever we approach him, as Plato describes him, that the purest morality and the highest degree of virtue speak through his words? The reason is, that the ideas, concepts and inward

experiences which feel today as though they were innate, were in fact acquired laboriously by the human soul in the course of time. When we trace the spiritual life of humanity back into the past, we find that our idea of conscience and our feeling for it were not present in the same way in ancient times, and therefore not among the Greeks. Conscience, in fact, was *born*. But nothing about the birth of conscience can be learnt by the easy methods of external experience and scholarship, as Paul Ree, for example, tried to do. We have to go more deeply into the matter if we are to gain enlightenment for the human soul.

Now our task in these lectures has been precisely to illuminate the constitution of the soul, with the aid of the light that comes from raising the soul to higher levels of knowledge. The whole life of the soul has been described, as it reveals itself to the inner eye of the seer: the eye which does not gain knowledge of the sense-world only, but looks behind the veil of the sense-world into the region where the primary sources, the spiritual foundations of the sense-world are to be found. And it has repeatedly been shown — for example in the lecture, "What is Mysticism?" — that the consciousness of the seer opens the way into deeper regions of the soul, over and above the soul-life we experience in everyday life. We believe that even in ordinary life we come to know something of this deeper level when we look into ourselves and encounter the experiences of thinking, feeling and willing. But it was pointed out also, that in ordinary waking consciousness the soul reveals only the outer aspect of the spiritual. Just as we have to penetrate behind the veil that is spread over the sense-world if we are to discover the underlying causes of these appearances as they are revealed behind everything we see and hear and our brain apprehends, so we must look behind our thinking, feeling and willing, and thus behind our ordinary inner life, if we are to get to know the spiritual background of our own lives.

From these starting-points, we set out to throw light on the life of the human soul in its many interwoven branches. We saw that it must be conceived as made up of three members which must be distinguished but not — please note — treated as quite separate from one another. We named these three members the sentient soul, the intellectual soul and the consciousness soul, and we saw how the ego is the unifying point which holds the three members together, plays on them as though on the strings of an instrument, causing them to

sound together in the most varied ways, harmonious or dissonant. This activity of the ego developed by gradual stages, and we shall understand how our present-day consciousness and soul-life have evolved from primeval times if we glance at what man can become in the future, or even today, if from within the consciousness soul he develops a higher, clairvoyant form of consciousness.

The consciousness soul in its ordinary condition enables us to grasp the external world perceived through our senses. If anyone wishes to penetrate behind the veil of the sense-world, he must raise his soul-life to a higher level. Then he makes the great discovery that something like an awakening of the soul can occur — something comparable to the outcome of a successful operation on a man blind from birth, when a hitherto unknown world of light and colour breaks in upon him. So it is with someone who by appropriate methods raises his soul to a higher level of development. A moment comes when those elements in our environment which we normally ignored, although they are swarming around us all the time, enter into our soul-life as a wealth of beings and activities because we have acquired a new organ of perception for them.

When someone achieves by training, a conscious seership of this kind, his ego is completely present throughout. This means that he moves among spiritual facts and beings, on which our sense-world is based, just as he finds his way among chairs and tables in the physical world: and he now takes up into a higher sphere of soul-life the ego which had led him through his experiences of sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness soul.

Let us now turn back from this clairvoyant consciousness, which is illuminated and set aglow by the ego, to the ordinary life of the soul. The ego is alive in the most varied ways in the three soul-members. If we have a man whose life is given over to the desires, passions and instinctive urges that arise from his sentient soul, we can say that his ego is hardly at all active; it is like a feeble flame in the midst of the surging waves of the sentient soul and has little power against them. In the intellectual soul the ego gains some freedom and independence.

Here man comes to himself and so to some awareness of his ego, for the intellectual soul can develop only in so far as man reflects upon and elaborates, in inner tranquillity, the experiences that have come to him through the sentient soul. The ego becomes more and more radiant and at last achieves full clarity in the consciousness soul. Then a man can say to himself: "I have grasped myself — I have attained real self-consciousness." This degree of clarity can be activated by the ego only when it has reached the stage of working in the consciousness soul, after progressing from the sentient soul through the intellectual soul.

If, however, a human being can further rise in his ego to clairvoyant consciousness beyond the consciousness soul, comparable to yet higher soul-principles, we can well understand that the seer, looking back over the course of human evolution, should say to us: just as the ego rises in this way to higher states of soul, so did it enter the sentient soul from a subordinate condition. We have seen how the soul-members sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness soul — are related to the members of his bodily organisation — physical body, etheric and astral or sentient body. Hence you will find it understandable that as spiritual science indicates — the ego, before rising to the sentient soul, was active in the sentient body, and earlier still in the etheric and physical bodies. In those times the ego still guided man from outside. It held sway in the darkness of bodily life; man was not yet able to say "I" regarding himself, to find the central point of his own being within himself. What are we to think of this ego which held sway in the primeval past and built up man's exterior bodily organisation? Are we to regard it as less perfect, compared with the ego we bear within our souls today?

We look on our ego as the real inner focus of our being: it endows us with inner life, and is capable, through schooling, of endless progress in the future. We see in it the epitome of our human nature and the guarantor of our human dignity. Now when we were not yet aware of this ego, while it was working on us from out of the dark spiritual powers of the world, was it then less perfect, by comparison with what it is now? Only a quite abstract way of thinking could say so.

Consider our physical body; we look on it as having been formed out of the spiritual world in the primordial past as a dwelling for the human soul. Only a materialistic mind could believe that this human body had not been born originally from the spirit. Seen merely from an external point of view, the physical body must appear a miracle of perfection. What do all our intellectual ability and technical skill amount to, compared with the wisdom manifest in the structure of the human heart? Or take the engineering technique that goes into the building of bridges, and so forth — what is it compared with the construction of the human thigh-bone, with its wonderful crisscross of support members, as seen through the microscope. It would be sheer boundless arrogance for man to suppose that he has attained in the slightest degree to the wisdom inherent in the formation of the external physical body. And consider our soul-life, taking into account only our instincts, desires and passions — how do they function? Are we not doing all we can to undermine inwardly the wisdom-filled organisation of our body? Indeed, if we consider without prejudice the marvel of our physical organisation, we have to admit that our bodily structure is far wiser than anything we can show in our inner life, although we may hope that our inner life will advance from its present imperfection towards increasing perfection. We can hardly come to any other conclusion, even without clairvoyance, if we simply look impartially at the observable facts.

Is not this wise activity, which has built up the human body as a dwelling-place for the ego, bound to have something in common with the nature of the ego itself? Must we not think of this formative power as having the character of an immeasurably more advanced ego? We must say: Something related to our ego has worked during primordial times at building a structure which the ego could come to inhabit. Anyone who refuses to believe this may imagine something different, but then he must also suppose that an ordinary house, built for human habitation, has not been designed by a human mind but has been put together merely by the action of natural forces. One assumption is as true as the other. Thus we look back to a primordial past where a spiritual power endowed with an ego-nature of unlimited perfection worked upon our bodily sheaths. In those times our own ego was hidden in subconscious depths, thence it worked its way up to its present state of consciousness.

If we look at this evolution from the far-distant past, when the ego was hidden within its sheaths as though in the darkness of a mother's womb, we find that although the ego had no knowledge of itself, it was all the closer to those spiritual beings who worked on our bodily vehicles and were related to the human ego, but of incomparably greater perfection. Clairvoyant insight thus looks back to a far-distant past when man had not yet acquired ego-consciousness, for he was embedded in spiritual life itself, and when his soul-life, too, was different, for it was much closer to the soul-forces from which the ego has emerged. In those times, also, we find in man a primal clairvoyant consciousness which functioned dimly and dreamily, for it was not illumined by the light of an ego; and it was from this mode of consciousness that the ego first came forth. The faculty that man in the future will acquire *with* his ego was present in the primeval past *without* the ego. Clairvoyant consciousness entails that spiritual beings and spiritual facts are seen in the environment, and this applies to early man, although his clairvoyance was dreamlike and he beheld the spiritual world as though in a dream. Since he was not yet shone through by an ego, he was not obliged to remain within himself when he wished to behold the spiritual. He beheld the spiritual around him and looked on himself as part of the spiritual world; and whatever he did was imbued, for him, with a spiritual character. When he thought of something, he could not have said to himself, "I am thinking", as a man might do today; his thought stood before his clairvoyant vision. And to experience a feeling he had no need to look into himself; his feeling radiated from him and united him with his whole spiritual environment.

Such was the soul-life of man in primordial times. From out of his dreamlike clairvoyant consciousness he had to develop inwardly in order to come to himself, and in himself to that centre of his being which today is still imperfect but will advance ever more nearly towards perfection in the future, when man with his ego will step forth into the spiritual world.

Now if light is thrown on those primordial times by means of clairvoyance in the way already described, what does the seer tell us concerning the human consciousness of those times when a man had, for example, committed an evil deed? His deed did not present itself to him as something he could inwardly assess. He beheld it, with all its harmfulness and shamefulness, as a ghostly vision confronting his

soul. And when a feeling concerning his evil deed arose in his soul, the shamefulfulness of it came before him as a spiritual reality, so that he was as though surrounded by a vision of the evil he had wrought.

Then, in the course of time, this dreamlike clairvoyance faded and man's ego came increasingly to the fore. In so far as man found this central point of his being within himself, the old clairvoyance was extinguished and self-consciousness established itself more and more clearly. The vision he had previously had of his bad and good deeds was transposed into his inner life, and deeds once clairvoyantly beheld were mirrored in his soul.

Now what sort of forms were beheld in dreamy clairvoyance as the counterpart of man's evil deed? They were pictures whereby the spiritual powers around him showed how he had disturbed and disrupted the cosmic order, and they were intended to have a salutary effect. It was a counteraction by the Gods, who wished to raise him up and, by showing him the effect of his deed, to enable him to eliminate its harmful consequences. This was indeed a terrifying experience for him, but it was fundamentally beneficial, coming as it did from the cosmic background out of which man himself had emerged. When the time came for man to find in himself his ego-centre, the external vision was transferred to his soul in the form of a reflected picture. When the ego first makes its appearance in the sentient soul, it is weak and frail, and man first has to work slowly upon himself in order that his ego may gradually advance towards perfection. Now what would have happened if, when the external clairvoyant vision of the effects of his misdeeds had disappeared, it had not been replaced by an inward counterpart of its beneficial influence? With his still frail ego, he would have been torn to and fro in his sentient soul by his passions, as though in a surging boundless sea. What, then, was it that was transferred at this historic moment from the external world to the inner life of the soul? If it was the great cosmic Spirit that had brought the harmful effects of a man's deed before his clairvoyant consciousness as a healing influence, showing him what he had to make good, so, later on, it was the same cosmic Spirit that powerfully revealed itself in his inner life at a time when his ego was still weak. Having previously spoken to man through a clairvoyant vision, the cosmic Spirit withdrew into man's inner life and imparted to him what had to be said about correcting the distortion caused in the world-order. Man's ego is still weak, and the cosmic

Spirit keeps a perpetual, unsleeping watch over it and passes judgment where the ego could not yet judge. Behind the weak ego stands something like a reflection of the powerful cosmic Spirit which had formerly shown to man through clairvoyant vision the consequences of his deeds. And this reflection is now experienced by him as conscience watching over him.

So we see how true it is when conscience is naively described as the voice of God in man. At the same time we see how spiritual science points to the moment when external vision became inward experience and conscience was born.

What I have now been saying can be drawn purely from the spiritual world. No external history is required; the facts I have described are seen by the inward eye. Anyone who can see them will experience them as incontestable truths, but a certain necessity of the times may lead us to ask: Could external history perhaps reveal something that would confirm, in this case, the facts seen by inner vision?

The findings of clairvoyant consciousness can always be tested by external evidence, and there is no need to fear that the evidence will contradict them. That could seem to happen only if the testing were inexact. But we will give one example that can show how external facts confirm the statements here derived from clairvoyant insight.

It is not so very long since the time when the birth of conscience can be seen to occur. If we look back to the fifth and sixth centuries BC, we encounter in ancient Greece the great dramatic poet [Aeschylus](#), [56] and in his work we find a theme which is especially remarkable for the reason that the same subject was treated by a late Greek poet in a quite different way.

Aeschylus shows us how Agamemnon, on returning from Troy, is killed by his wife, Klytemnestra, when he arrives home. Agamemnon is avenged by his son Orestes, who, acting on the advice of the gods, kills his mother. What, then, is the consequence for Orestes of this deed? Aeschylus shows how the burden of matricide calls forth in Orestes a mode of seeing which was no longer normal in those times. The enormity of his crime caused the old clairvoyance to awake in him, like an inheritance from the past. Orestes could say: "Apollo, the god himself, told me it was a just act for me to avenge my father

upon my mother. Everything I have done speaks in my favour. But the blood of my mother is working on!" And in the second part of the Orestean trilogy we are powerfully shown how the old clairvoyance awakens in Orestes and how the avenging goddesses, the Erinyes — or Furies, as they were later called by the Romans — approach.

Orestes sees before him, in dreamlike clairvoyance, the effect of his act of matricide in its external form. Apollo had approved the deed; but there is something higher. Aeschylus wished to indicate that a still higher cosmic ordinance obtains, and this he could do only by making Orestes become clairvoyant at that moment, for he had not yet gone far enough to dramatise what today we call an inner voice. If we study his work, we feel that he was at the stage when something like conscience ought to emerge from the whole content of the human soul, but he never quite reached that point. He confronts Orestes with dreamlike, clairvoyant pictures that have not yet been transformed into conscience. Yet we can see how he is on the verge of recognising conscience. Every word that he gives to Klytemnestra, for example, makes one feel unmistakably that he ought to indicate the idea of conscience in its present-day sense; but he never quite gets that far. In that century, the great poet could only show how bad deeds rose up before the human soul in earlier times.

Now we will pass over **Sophocles** and come to **Euripides**, [57] who described the same situation only a generation later. Scholars have rightly pointed out — though spiritual science alone can show this in its true light — that in Euripides the dream-pictures experienced by Orestes are no more than shadowy images of the inward promptings of conscience — somewhat as in **Shakespeare**. Here we have palpable evidence of the stages whereby the idea of conscience was taken hold of by the art of poetry. We see how Aeschylus, great poet as he was, cannot yet speak of conscience itself, while his successor, Euripides, does speak of it. With this development in mind, we can see why human thinking in general could work its way only slowly towards a true conception of conscience. The force now active in conscience was active also in ancient times; the pictures showing the effects of a man's deeds rose before his clairvoyant sight. The only difference is that this force became internalised; but before it could be inwardly experienced, the whole process of human development, which led gradually to the concept of conscience, had to take its course.

Thus we see in conscience a faculty which comes to the fore by degrees and has to be acquired by man's own endeavours. Where, then, should we look for this most intense activity of conscience? At that point where the human ego was beginning to make itself known and was still weak, that is something which can be shown in human development. In ancient Greece it had already advanced to the stage of the intellectual soul. But if we look further back to Egypt and Chaldea outer history knows nothing of this, but Plato and Aristotle were clairvoyantly aware of it — we find that even the highest culture of those times was achieved without the presence of an inwardly independent ego. The difference between the knowledge that was nurtured and put to use by the sanctuaries of Egypt and Chaldea and our modern science is that our science is grasped by the consciousness soul, whereas in pre-Hellenic times it all depended on inspirations from the sentient soul. In ancient Greece the ego progressed from the sentient soul into the intellectual soul. Today we are living in the epoch of the consciousness soul, which means that a real ego-consciousness arises for the first time. Anyone who studies the evolution of mankind, and in particular the transition from eastern to western culture, can see how human progress has been marked by ever-increasing feelings of freedom and independence. Whereas man had formerly felt himself entirely dependent on the Gods and the inspirations that came from them, in the West, culture first came to spring from the inner life.

This is especially evident, for example, in the way Aeschylus strives to bring about a consciousness of the ego in the human soul. We see him standing on the frontier between East and West, with one eye on the East and the other on the West, gathering from the human soul the elements that will come together to form the concept of conscience. He strives to give this new form of conscience a dramatic embodiment, but is not yet quite able to do so. Comparisons are apt to be confusing; we must not only compare, but also distinguish. The point is, that in the West everything was designed to raise the ego from the sentient soul to the consciousness soul. In the East the ego was veiled in obscurity and had no freedom. In the West, by contrast, the ego works its way up into the consciousness soul. If the old dreamlike clairvoyance is extinguished, everything else tends to awaken the ego and to evoke conscience as guardian of the ego as a divine inner voice. Aeschylus was the corner-stone between the worlds of East and West.

In the Eastern World men had retained a living awareness of their origin in the divine cosmic Spirit, and this made it possible for them to gain understanding of the event which took place a few hundred years after endeavours had been made by many — or Aeschylus for example — to find something that spoke as the voice of God within themselves. For this event brought to mankind the impulse which from all spiritual standpoints must be seen as the greatest impulse ever to enter into the evolution of the earth and man — the impulse we call the Christ-Impulse.

It was the Christ-impulse that first made it possible for humanity to realise that God, the Creator of things and of the external sheaths of man, can be recognised in our inward life. Only by understanding the divine humanity of Christ Jesus were men enabled to understand that the voice of God could be heard within the soul. In order that men should be able to find something of the divine nature in their own inner life, it was necessary for Christ to enter into the evolution of humanity as an external historical-event. If the Christ, a Divine Being, had not been present in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, if he had not shown once and for all that God can be discerned in our inner life, because he had once been present in a human body; if he had not appeared as the conqueror of death through the Mystery of Golgotha, men would never have been able to comprehend the indwelling of Divinity in the human soul.

If anyone claims that this indwelling could be discerned even if there had been no historical Christ Jesus, he could equally well say that we should have eyes even if there were no sun. As against this one-sided view of some philosophers that, since without eyes we could not see the light, the origin of light must be traced to the eyes, we must always set Goethe's aphorism: The eye is created by light for light. [58] If there were no sun to fill space with light, no eyes would ever have developed in the human organism. The eyes are created by light, and without the sun there would be no eyes. No eye is capable of perceiving the sun without having first received from the sun the power to do so. In the same way, there could be no power to grasp and recognise the Christ-nature if the Christ-Impulse had not entered into external history. What the sun out there in the cosmos does for human sight, so the historical Christ-Jesus makes possible what we call the entry of the divine nature into our inner life.

The elements necessary for understanding this were present in the stream of thought that came over from the East; they needed only to be raised to a higher level. It was in the West that souls were ripe to grasp and accept this impulse — the West, where experiences which had belonged to the outer world were transferred to the inner life most intensively, and in the form of conscience watched over a generally weak ego. In this way souls were strengthened, and prepared to hear the voice of conscience now saying within them: The Divinity who appeared in the East to those able to look clairvoyantly into the world — this Divinity now lives in us!

However, what was thus being prepared could not have become conscious experience if the inward Divinity had not spoken in advance in the dawning of conscience. So we see that external understanding for the Divinity of Christ Jesus was born in the East, and the emergence of conscience came to meet it from the West. For example, we find that conscience is more and more often spoken of in the Roman world, at the beginning of the Christian era, and the further westward we go, the clearer is the evidence for the recognised existence of conscience or for its presence in embryonic form.

Thus East and West played into each other's hands. We see the sun of the Christ-nature rising in the East, while in the West the development of conscience is preparing the way for understanding the Christ. Hence the victorious advance of Christianity is towards the West, not the East. In the East we see the spread of a religion which represents the final consequence — though on the highest level — of the eastern outlook: Buddhism takes hold of the eastern world. Christianity takes hold of the western world, because Christianity had first created the organ for receiving it. Here we see Christianity brought into relation with the deepened element in western culture: the concept of conscience embodied in Christianity.

Not through the study of external history, but only through an inward contemplation of the facts, shall we come to knowledge of these developments. What I am saying today will be met with disbelief by many people. But a demand of the times is that we should recognise the spirit in external phenomena. This, however, is possible only if we are at least able initially to discern the spirit where it speaks to us in the form of a clear message. Popular consciousness says: When conscience speaks, it is God speaking in the soul. The highest

spiritual consciousness says that when conscience speaks, it is truly the cosmic Spirit speaking. And spiritual science brings out the connection between conscience and the greatest event in the evolution of mankind, the Christ-Event. Hence it is not surprising that conscience has thereby been ennobled and raised to a higher sphere. When we hear that something has been done for reasons of conscience, we feel that conscience is regarded as one of the most important possessions of mankind.

Thus we can see how natural and right it is for the human heart to speak of conscience as "God in man". And when **Goethe** says that the highest experience for man is when "God-Nature reveals itself to him", we must realise that God can reveal himself in the spirit to man only if Nature is seen in the light of its spiritual background. This has been provided for in human evolution, on the one hand by the light of Christ, shining from outside, and on the other by the divine light within us: the light of conscience. Hence a philosopher such as Fichte, who studies human character, is justified in saying that conscience is the highest voice in our inward life. On this account, also, we are aware that our dignity as human beings is inseparable from conscience. We are human beings because we have an ego-consciousness; and the conscience we have at our side is also at the side of our ego. Thus we look on conscience as a most sacred individual possession, inviolable by the external world, whose voice enables us to determine our direction and our goal. When conscience speaks, no other voice may intrude.

So it is that on one side conscience ensures our connection with the primordial power of the world and on the other guarantees the fact that in our inmost self we have something like a drop flowing from the Godhead. And man can know: **When conscience speaks in him, it is a God speaking.**



9. The Mission of Art

Berlin, 12th May 1910

This last lecture of the winter series will be devoted to that realm in the life of the soul which has been enriched by so many of the greatest treasures that spring from man's inner life. We will consider the nature and significance of art in the evolution of mankind. Since the field is so wide, we will confine ourselves to the art of poetry, and you will understand that we have time to consider only the highest achievements of the human spirit in this realm.

Now someone might say: "The lectures this winter have been concerned with various aspects of the human soul, and their central purpose has been to seek for truth and knowledge in relation to the spiritual world — what have these studies to do with the human activities which strive, above all, to give expression to the element of beauty?" And in our time it would be easy to take the view that everything connected with truth and cognition should be kept far, far apart from the aims of artistic work. A widely prevalent belief today is that science in all its branches must be subject to strict rules of logic and experiment, whereas artistic work follows the spontaneous promptings of the heart and the imagination. Many of our contemporaries, accordingly, would say that truth and beauty have nothing in common. And yet, the great leaders in the realm of artistic creation have always felt that true art should flow from the same deep sources in the being of man as do knowledge and cognition.

To take one example, only, we will turn to **Goethe**, a seeker both for beauty and for truth. As a young man he strove by all possible means to acquire knowledge of the world and to find answers to the great riddles of existence. Before the time of his journey to Italy, which was to take him to a country enshrining longed-for ideals, he had pursued his search for truth, together with his Weimar friends, by studying, for example, the philosopher **Spinoza**, [59] who sought to find a uniform substance in all the phenomena of life. Spinoza's dissertations on the idea of God made a deep impression on Goethe. Together with Merck [60] and other friends he believed he could hear in Spinoza something like a voice which spoke through all surrounding phenomena and

seemed to give intimations concerning the sources of existence — an idea which could appease in some way his Faustian aspirations. But Goethe's soul was too richly endowed for him to gain from a conceptual analysis of Spinoza's works a satisfying picture of truth and knowledge. What he felt about this, and what his heart longed for, will emerge most clearly if we accompany him on his travels in Italy where he beheld great works of art and caught in them an echo of the art of antiquity. In their presence he experienced the feeling he had hoped in vain to draw from the ideas of Spinoza. Thus he wrote to his friends in Weimar: "One thing is certain: the ancient artists had as much knowledge of Nature, and as sure an idea of what can be represented and of how it should be done, as **Homer** himself. Unfortunately, works of art of the highest order are all too few. But when one contemplates them, one's only desire is to get to know them rightly and then to depart in peace. These supreme works of art have been created by men as the highest products of Nature in accordance with true natural laws. Everything arbitrary or merely fanciful falls away; there is necessity, there is God." [61]

Goethe believed he could discern that the great artists who had created works of art of this high order had drawn them out of their souls in accordance with the same laws that Nature herself had followed. This can mean only that in Goethe's view of the laws of Nature, which operate in the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, are raised to a new level and gain new strength in the human soul, so that they come to full expression in the soul's creative powers. Goethe felt that in these works of art the laws of Nature were operative again and thus he wrote to his Weimar friends: "Everything arbitrary or merely fanciful falls away; there is necessity, there is God." At such moments, Goethe's heart is stirred by the recognition that art in its highest manifestations comes from the same sources as do knowledge and cognition, and we realise how deeply Goethe felt this to be true when he declares: "Beauty is a manifestation of Nature's secret laws, which would otherwise remain forever hidden." [62] Thus Goethe sees in art a revelation of Nature's laws, which in its own language confirms the findings of cognition in other fields of investigation. If now we turn from Goethe to a modern personality who also sought to invest art with a mission and to bestow on mankind, through art, something related to the sources of existence — if we turn to **Richard Wagner**, we find in his writings, where he tries to clarify for himself the nature and significance of artistic creation, many similar indications of the

inner relationships between truth and beauty, cognition and art. In writing of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, for example, he says that these sounds convey something like a revelation from another world something quite different from anything we can grasp in merely rational or logical terms. [63]

Of these revelations through art, one thing at least can be said with certainty. They act upon the soul with convincing power and permeate our feeling with a conviction of their truth, in face of which all merely rational or logical considerations are powerless.

Again, in writing about symphonic music, Wagner says that something resounds from it as though its instruments were an organ for revealing the feelings that went into the primal act of creation, when chaos was ordered and harmonised, long before any human heart was there to echo those feelings. Thus in the revelations of art Wagner saw a mysterious truth that could stand on an equal footing with knowledge gained by the intellect.

Something else may be added here. When we make acquaintance with great works of art in the sense of spiritual science, we feel that they communicate their own revelation concerning man's search for truth, and the spiritual scientist feels himself inwardly related to this message. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that he feels more closely related to it than he does to many of the so-called spiritual revelations that people accept so light-heartedly today.

How is it, then, that truly artistic personalities attribute to art a mission of this kind, while the spiritual scientist feels his heart so strongly drawn to these mysterious revelations of great art? We will approach an answer to this question by bringing together many things that have come before our souls during these winter lectures.

If we are to study the significance and task of art from this point of view, we must not go by human opinions or the quibblings of the intellect. We must consider the development of art in relation to the evolution of man and the world. We will let art itself speak to us of its significance for mankind.

If we wish to trace the beginnings of art, as it first appears among men in the guise of poetry, then according to ordinary ideas we have to go back very far indeed. Here we will go back only as far as the extant documents can take us. We will go back to a figure often regarded as legendary — to Homer, the originator of Greek poetry, whose work has come down to us in the two great epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Whoever was the author — or authors, for we will not go into that question today — of these two poems, the remarkable thing is that both poems begin on a quite impersonal note:

Sing, O Muse, of the wrath of Achilles ...

With those words the *Iliad*, the first Homeric poem, begins and

Sing, O Muse, of much-travelled man ...

are the opening words of the second Homeric poem, the *Odyssey*. The author thus wishes to indicate that he is indebted to a higher power for his verses, and we need only a little understanding of Homer to realise that for him this higher power was not a symbol but a real, objective Being. If this invocation to the Muse means nothing to modern readers, this is because they no longer have the experiences from which a poem as impersonal as Homer's could derive. And if we are to understand this impersonal element in early Western poetry, we must ask: What preceded it? Whence did it arise?

In speaking of human evolution, we have often emphasised that in the course of millennia the powers of the human soul have changed. In the far-distant past, beyond the reach of external history but open to spiritual-scientific investigation, human souls were endowed with a primitive dreamy clairvoyance. In times before men were so deeply embedded in material existence as they came to be later on, they perceived the spiritual world as a reality all around them. We have pointed out also that the ancient clairvoyance was different from the

trained, conscious clairvoyance that can be attained today, for this is bound up with the existence of a firm centre in the life of the soul, whereby a man takes hold of himself as an ego. This ego-feeling, as we now have it after its gradual development through long ages, was not present in the far-distant past. But for this very reason, because man lacked this inner centre, his spiritual senses were open and with his dreamy, ego-less clairvoyance he looked into the spiritual world from which his true inner being had emerged in the primal past. Powerful pictures, like dream-pictures, of the forces behind our physical existence came before his soul. In this spiritual world he saw his gods, he saw the actions and events that were played out among them. And present-day research is quite wrong in supposing that the sagas of the gods, found in various forms in different countries, were the product merely of popular fantasy. If it is thought that in the remote past the human soul functioned just as it does today, except that it was more prone to imagine things, including the imaginary gods of the sagas *that* is sheer fantasy and it is those who believe it who are imagining things. For people in that remote past, the events described in their mythologies were realities. Myths, sagas, even fairy-tales and legends, were born from a primeval faculty in the human soul. This is connected with the fact that man had not yet acquired the firm central point in his soul which now enables him to live within himself and in possession of himself. In the far past he could not shut himself up in his ego, within the narrow boundaries of his soul, separated from his environment, as he came to do later on. He lived in his environment, feeling that he belonged to it, whereas a modern man feels that he stands apart from it. And just as man today can feel in his bodily organism the inflow and outflow of the physical strength he needs to sustain his life, so primeval man, with his clairvoyant consciousness, was aware of spiritual forces flowing in and out of him, so that he lived in inward reciprocity with the forces of the great world; and he could say: "When something takes place in my soul, when I think, feel or will, I am not a separate being. I am open to forces from the beings who come before my inward sight. By sending their forces into me, they stimulate me to think and feel and will. "That was the experience of man when he was still embedded in the spiritual world. He felt that spiritual powers were active in his thinking, and that when he accomplished anything, divine-spiritual powers had poured into him their willing and their purpose. In those primeval times, man felt himself to be a vessel through which spiritual powers expressed themselves.

Here we are looking back to a period far away in the past, but this period extended, through all sorts of intermediate stages, right up to the time of Homer. It is not difficult to discern how Homer was giving continued expression to the primeval consciousness of mankind: we need only look at some features of the *Iliad*. Homer describes a great armed struggle between the Greeks and the Trojans, but *how* does he do this? What did the struggle signify for the Greeks of that time?

Although Homer may not start out from this aspect, there was more in this struggle than the antagonism generated by the passions, desires and ideas which stem from the human ego. Was it merely the personal and tribal emotions of Trojans and Greeks that clashed in this fighting? No! The legend which provides a connecting link between primeval and Homeric consciousness tells how three goddesses, Hera, Pallas Athene and Aphrodite, competed at a festival for the prize of beauty, and how a human connoisseur of beauty, Paris, son of the king of Troy, was appointed to judge the contest. Paris gave the prize to Aphrodite, who had promised him the most beautiful woman in the world for his wife. The woman was Helen, wife of king Menelaus of Sparta. In order to gain possession of Helen, Paris had to abduct her by force. In revenge for this outrage, the Greeks armed themselves for war against the Trojans, whose country lay on the far side of the Aegean sea, and it was there that the struggle was fought out.

Why did human passions flare up in this way, and why did all the events described by Homer's Muse take place? Were they merely physical events in the human world? No. Through the consciousness of the Greeks we see depicted the antagonism of the goddesses behind the strife of men. A Greek of that time could have said: "I cannot find in the physical world the causes which have brought human beings into violent conflict. I must look up to a higher realm, where the gods and their powers are set against one another." The divine powers, as they were seen at the time in the images which we have just described, were actively involved in human conflicts. Thus we see the first great work of poetic art, Homer's *Iliad*, growing out of the primeval consciousness of mankind. In Homer we find presented in metrical form, from the standpoint of a later consciousness, an echo of the clairvoyant vision which came naturally to primeval humanity. And it is precisely in this Homeric period that we must look for the first time when clairvoyant consciousness came to an end for the Greek people, and only an echo of it remained.

A primeval man would have said: "I can see my gods battling in the spiritual world, which lies open to my clairvoyant consciousness." In Homeric times this was no longer possible, but a living memory of it endured. And just as primeval man had felt inspired by the divine worlds wherein he had his being, so the author of the Homeric epics felt the same divine forces holding sway in his soul. Hence he could say: "The Muse that inspires me inwardly is speaking." Thus the Homeric poems are directly connected with primeval myths, if these are rightly understood. From this point of view, we can see arising in Homer's poetic imagination something like a substitute for the old clairvoyance. The ruling cosmic powers withdrew direct clairvoyant vision from man, and gave him, instead, something that could live similarly in the soul and could endow it with formative power. Poetic imagination is compensation for the loss of ancient clairvoyance.

Now let us recall something else. In the lecture on Conscience we saw that the withdrawal of the old clairvoyance occurred in quite different ways and at different times in various countries. In the East the old clairvoyance persisted up to a relatively late date. Over towards the West, among the peoples of Europe, clairvoyant faculties were less widely present. In the latter peoples, a strong ego-feeling came to the fore while other soul-powers and faculties were still relatively undeveloped. This ego-feeling emerged in the most varied ways in different parts of Europe — differently between North and West, and notably different in the South. In pre-Christian times it developed most intensively in Sicily and Italy. While in the East men remained for a long time without an ego-feeling, in these regions of Europe there were people in whom the ego-feeling was particularly strong because they had lost the old clairvoyance. In the proportion that the spiritual world withdraws externally from man does his inward ego-feeling light up.

Hence there was bound to be a great difference at certain times between the souls of the Asiatic peoples and the souls living in the parts of Europe we are concerned with here. Over there in Asia we see how the cosmic mysteries still rise before the soul in great dream-pictures, and how man can witness the deeds of the gods as they unroll externally before his spiritual eye. And in that, which such a man can relate, we can discern something like a primeval account of

the spiritual facts underlying the world. When the old clairvoyance was succeeded in Asia by the substitute for it, imagination, this gave rise especially to visionary symbols in picture form.

Among the Western peoples, in Italy and Sicily, a different faculty, arising from a firmly-grounded ego, produced a kind of excess of strength, an enthusiasm that broke forth from the soul, unaccompanied by any direct spiritual vision but inspired by a longing to reach up to things unseen. Here, therefore, we find no recounting of the deeds of the gods, for these were no longer evident. But when with ardent devotion, expressed in speech and song, the soul aspired to the heights it could only long for, primitive prayer and chant were born, addressed to powers which could not now be seen after the waning of old clairvoyant consciousness.

In Greece, the intermediate country, the two worlds meet. There we find men who are stimulated from both sides. Pictorial vision comes from the East; from the West comes the enthusiasm which inspires devotional hymns to the unseen divine-spiritual powers. This intermingling of the two streams in Greek culture made possible a continuation from Homeric poetry, which we can locate in the 8th or 9th century BC, to the works of [Aeschylus](#), three or four hundred years later.

Aeschylus comes before us as a personality who was certainly not open to the full power of Eastern vision, the convincing power we find in Homer as an echo of the old clairvoyant vision of the deeds of the gods and their effect on mankind. This echo was always very weak, and in Aeschylus so weak that he came to feel a kind of unbelief in the pictorial visions of the world of the gods that ancient clairvoyance had brought to men. Homer, we find, knew very well that human consciousness had once been open to these visions of the divine-spiritual powers which stand behind the interplay of human passions and emotions in the physical world. Homer, accordingly, does not describe merely a human conflict. Zeus and Apollo intervene where human passions are involved, and their influence is apparent in the course of events. The gods are a reality which the poet brings into his poem.

How different it all is with Aeschylus. The stream of influence from the West, with its emphasis on the human ego and the inward isolation of the human soul, had a particularly strong effect on him. For this reason he was the first dramatist to portray man as acting from out of his ego and beginning to release his consciousness from the inflow of divine powers. In Aeschylus, in place of the gods we find in Homer, the independent man of action appears, though still at an initial stage. As a dramatist, Aeschylus puts this kind of man at the centre of things. The epic had to emerge under the influence of the pictorial imagination that came from the East, while Western influence, with its emphasis on the personal ego, gave rise to drama, wherein the man of action is the central character.

Let us take, for example, Orestes, who is guilty of matricide and as a consequence sees the Furies. Yes, that is still Homer: things do not pass away so quickly. Aeschylus is still aware that the gods were once visible in picture form, but he is very near to giving up that belief. It is characteristic that Apollo, who in Homer acts with full power, incites Orestes to kill his mother, but after this no longer has right on his side. The human ego begins to stir in Orestes, and we are shown that it gains the upper hand. The verdict goes against Apollo, he is repudiated, and we see that his power over Orestes is no longer complete. Aeschylus was thus the right and proper poet to dramatise the figure of Prometheus, the divine hero who titanically opposes the might of the gods and represents the liberation of mankind from them.

Thus we see how the awakening ego-feeling from the West mingles in the soul of Aeschylus with memories of the pictorial imagination of the East, and how from this conjunction drama was born. And it is decidedly interesting to find that tradition wonderfully confirms the findings derived entirely from spiritual-scientific research.

One remarkable tradition partly acquits Aeschylus of the charge that he had betrayed certain secrets of the Mysteries; he replied that he could not have done so, for he had not been initiated into the **Eleusinian** Mysteries. It certainly never was his intention to present anything derived from temple secrets, from which Homer's poems had originated. In fact, he stood somewhat apart from the Mysteries. On the other hand, the story goes that at Syracuse, in Sicily, he had gained knowledge of secrets connected with the emergence of the

human ego. This emergence took a particular form in regions where the Orphic devotees cultivated the older form of ode, the hymn, addressed to the divine-spiritual worlds that could no more be seen but only aspired to. In this way art took a step forward. We see it emerging naturally from ancient truths and finding its way to the human ego. Inasmuch as man, after living predominantly in the outer world, took possession of his own inner life, the figures in the Homeric poems became the dramatic characters of Aeschylus; and so, side by side with the epic, drama arose.

Thus we see primeval truths living on in another form in art, and the achievements of ancient clairvoyance reproduced by poetic imagination. And whatever was preserved from ancient times by art was applied to the human personality, to the ego becoming aware of itself.

Now we will take an immense step forward in time — on to the 13th and 14th centuries of the Christian era. Here we encounter the great mediaeval personality who leads us so impressively to the region which the human ego can reach when, by its own endeavours, it ascends to the divine-spiritual world. We come to **Dante**, whose *Divine Comedy* (1472) was read and re-read by Goethe. It affected him so strongly that when an acquaintance sent him a new translation of it, he wrote his thanks to the sender in verse:

*Great gratitude is due to him
Who brings us freshly to this book once more,
The book which in a glorious manner makes us cease
All our searchings and complaints.* [64]

How did art progress from Aeschylus to Dante? How does Dante bring before us a divine-spiritual world once again? How does Dante lead us through its three stages, Inferno, Purgatory and Heaven — the worlds which lie behind our physical existence?

Here we can see how the fundamental spiritual impulse that guides human evolution has continued to work in the same direction. Aeschylus, quite clearly, is still in touch with spiritual powers.

Prometheus is confronted by the gods, Zeus, Hermes and so on, and this applies also to Agamemnon. In all this we can discern an echo of the ancient clairvoyance. With Dante it is quite different. He shows us how, solely through immersing himself in his own soul, developing the forces slumbering there and overcoming all the obstacles to this development, he was able, as he says, in "the middle of life" — which means his thirty-fifth year — to gaze into the spiritual world. Where as men endowed with the old clairvoyance directed their gaze to their spiritual environment, and whereas Aeschylus still reckoned with the old divinities, in Dante we see a poet who goes down into his own soul and remains entirely within his personality and its inner secrets. By pursuing this path of personal development he enters the spiritual world, and is thus able to present it in the powerful pictures we find in the *Divine Comedy*. Here the soul of Dante is quite alone with his personality; he is not concerned with external revelations. No one can imagine that Dante could have taken over from tradition the findings of the old clairvoyance. Dante relies on the inner development that was possible in the Middle Ages, with the strength of human personality as its only aid; and he brings before us in visionary pictures something often emphasised here — that a man has to master everything that clouds or darkens his clairvoyant sight. Whereas the Greeks still saw realities in the spiritual world, Dante here sees pictures only — pictures of the soul-forces which have to be overcome. Such are those lower forces of the sentient soul, the intellectual soul and the consciousness soul which tend to hold the ego back from higher stages of development. The good, opposite forces were already indicated by Plato: wisdom for the consciousness soul, self-reliant courage for the intellectual soul, moderation for the sentient-soul. When the ego goes through a development which enlists these good forces, it comes gradually to higher soul experience which lead into the spiritual world; but the hindrances must first be overcome.

Moderation works against intemperance and greed, and Dante shows how this shadow-side of the sentient soul can be met and mastered.

He depicts it as a she-wolf. We are then shown how the shadow-side of the intellectual soul, senseless aggression, depicted as a lion, can be overcome by its corresponding virtue, self-reliant courage. Finally we come to wisdom, the virtue of the consciousness soul. Wisdom

which fails to strive towards the heights, but applies itself to the world in the form of mere shrewdness and cunning, is pictured as a lynx. The "lynx-eyes" are not the eyes of wisdom, able to gaze into the spiritual world, but eyes focused only on the world of the senses. After Dante has shown how he guards against the forces which hinder inner development, he describes how he ascends into the world which lies behind physical existence.

In Dante we have a man who relies upon himself, searches within himself, and draws from out of himself the forces which lead into the spiritual world. With him, poetry takes closer hold of the human soul and becomes more intimately related to the human ego. Homer's characters are woven into the doings of the divine-spiritual powers, as indeed Homer felt himself to be, so that he says: "Let the Muse sing the story I have to tell." Dante, alone with his soul, knows that the forces which will lead him into the spiritual world must be drawn from within himself. We can see how it becomes less and less possible for imagination to depend on external influences. A small fact will show that on this point we are concerned not with mere opinions but with forces deeply rooted in the human soul. Gottlieb Friedrich Klopstock [65] was a deeply religious man and a profounder spirit even than Homer. He wished to write a sacred epic poem, with the conscious intention of doing for modern times what Homer did for antiquity. He sought to revive Homer's manner, but without being untrue to himself. Hence he could not say, "Sing for me, O Muse," but had to open his *Messias* with the words: "Sing, immortal soul, of the redemption of sinful man." Thus we see how progress in artistic creation does indeed occur among men.

Now let us take a further giant stride over several centuries, from Dante to another great poet, **Shakespeare**. Here again we see a remarkable step forward in the sense of a progression. We are not concerned with criticism of Shakespeare or with setting one poet above another, but solely with facts that point to a necessary, legitimate advance.

What was it about Dante that specially impressed us? He stands there by himself, with his own revelations of the spiritual world, and describes the great experience that came to him from within his own soul. Can you imagine that Dante would have given so effective expression to the truth as he saw it if he had described his visions five

or six times over in various ways? Do you not feel that the world into which Dante has transposed himself is such that it can be described once only? That is indeed what Dante did. The world he describes is the world of one man at the moment when he feels himself to be at one with what the spiritual world is for him. Hence we must say: Dante immerses himself in the element of human personality, and in such a way that it remains his own. And he sets himself to traverse this human-personal aspect from all sides.

Shakespeare, on the other hand, creates an abundance of all possible characters — a Lear, Hamlet, Cordelia, Desdemona; but we have no direct perception of anything divine behind these characters, when the spiritual eye beholds them in the physical world, with their purely human qualities and impulses. We look only for what comes directly from their souls in the form of thinking, feeling and willing. They are all distinct individuals, but can we recognise Shakespeare himself in them, in the way that Dante is always Dante when he immerses himself in his own personality? No — Shakespeare has taken another step forward. He penetrates still further into the personal element, but not only into one personality but into a wide variety of personalities. Shakespeare denies himself whenever he describes Lear, Hamlet and so on; he is never tempted into presenting his own ideas, for as Shakespeare he is completely blotted out; he lives entirely in the various characters he creates. The experiences described by Dante are those of one person; Shakespeare shows us impulses arising from the inner ego in the widest diversity of characters. Dante's starting-point is human personality; he remains within it and from there he explores the spiritual world. Shakespeare has gone a step further: he, too, starts from his own personality and slips into the individuals he portrays; he is wholly immersed in them. It is not his own soul-life that he dramatises, but the lives of the characters in the outer world that he presents on the stage, and they are all depicted as independent persons with their own motives and aims.

Thus we can see here, again, how the evolution of art proceeds. Having originated in the remote past, when human consciousness was devoid of ego-feeling, with Dante, art reached the stage of embracing individual man, so that the ego itself became a world. With Shakespeare, it expanded so far that other egos became the poet's world. For this step to be possible, art had to leave the spiritual heights from which it had sprung and descend into the actualities of

physical existence. And this is just what we can see happening when we pass on from Dante to Shakespeare. Let us try to compare Dante and Shakespeare from this point of view.

Superficial critics may reproach Dante for being a didactic poet. Anyone who understands Dante and can respond to the whole range and richness of his work will feel that his greatness derives precisely from the fact that all the wisdom and philosophy of the Middle Ages speak from his soul. And for the development of such a soul, endowed with Dante's poetic power, the totality of mediaeval wisdom was a necessary foundation. Its influence worked first on Dante's soul and was again evident, later on, in the expansion of his personality into a world. We cannot properly understand or appreciate Dante's poetic creation unless we are familiar with the heights of mediaeval spiritual life. Only then can we come to appreciate the depths and subtleties of his achievement.

Certainly, Dante took one step downwards. He sought to bring the spiritual down to lower levels, and this he did by writing in the vernacular, not in Latin as some of his predecessors had done. He ascends to the loftiest heights of spiritual life, but descends into the physical world as far as the vernacular of his place and time.

Shakespeare descends still further. The origin of his great poetic characters is nowadays the subject of all sorts of fanciful speculation, but if we are to understand this descent of poetry into the everyday world — still often looked down on by the highly placed — we must bear in mind the following facts.

We must picture a small theatre in what was then a suburb of London, where plays were produced by actors who, except for Shakespeare, would not be rated highly today. Who went to this theatre? The lower orders. It was more fashionable in those days to patronise cockfights and other similar spectacles than to go to this theatre, where people ate and drank and threw eggshells to mark their disapproval and overflowed on to the stage itself, so that the players acted in the midst of their audience. Thus it was before a very low-class London public that these plays were first performed, although many people today fondly imagine that from the first they were acclaimed in the highest circles of cultural life. At best, unmarried sons, who allowed themselves to visit certain obscure

resorts in disguise, would go now and then to this theatre, but for respectable people it would have been highly improper. Hence we can see that poetry came down into a realm of the most unsophisticated feelings.

Nothing human was alien to the genius who stood behind Shakespeare's plays and the characters in them. So it happened — in respect even of external details — that art, after having been a narrow stream flowing on high levels, descended into the world of ordinary humanity and broadened into a wide stream running through the midst of everyday life. And anyone who looks more deeply into this will see how necessary it was that a lofty spiritual stream should be brought down to lower levels in order that such vital figures as Shakespeare's highly individual characters should appear.

Now we will move on to times nearer our own — to Goethe. We will try to connect him with his own creation — the figure of *Faust*, in whom were embodied all his ideals, endeavours and renunciations during the sixty years he worked on his masterpiece. Everything he experienced in his innermost soul in the course of his rich life, while he climbed from stage to stage of knowledge in his search for higher answers to the riddles of the world — all this is merged in the figure of Faust that we encounter today. What sort of figure is he in the context of Goethe's poetic drama?

Of Dante we can say that what he describes is portrayed as the fruit of his own vision. Goethe had no such vision: he makes no claim to having had a special revelation at a particularly solemn time, as Dante does with regard to the *Divine Comedy*. Everywhere in *Faust* Goethe shows that he has worked inwardly on what he presents. And whereas the experiences that came to Dante could be described only in his own one-sided way, Goethe's experiences were no less individual but they were translated into the objective character of Faust. Dante gives us his most intimate personal experience; Goethe, too, had personal experiences, but the actions and sufferings of Faust are not those of Goethe's life. They are free poetic transformation of what Goethe had experienced in his own soul. While Dante can be identified with his *Divine Comedy*, it would take almost a literary historian to identify Goethe with Faust. Faust is an individual character, but we cannot imagine that an array of Faust-like figures could have been created, as numerous as the characters created by Shakespeare. The ego

depicted by Goethe in his *Faust* can be created once only. Besides Hamlet, Shakespeare created Lear, *Othello*, and so on. Goethe, it is true, also wrote *Tasso* and *Iphigenia*, but the difference between them and Faust is obvious. Faust is not Goethe; fundamentally he is every-man. He embodies Goethe's deepest longings, but as a poetic figure his is entirely detached from Goethe's own personality. Dante brings before us the vision of one man, himself; Faust is a character who in a certain sense lives in each one of us. This marks a further advance for poetry up to Goethe.

Shakespeare could create characters so individualised that he immersed himself in them and enabled each one of them to speak with a distinctive voice. Goethe creates in Faust an individualised figure, but Faust is not a single individual; he is every-man. Shakespeare entered into the soul-natures of Lear, Othello, Hamlet, Cordelia and so on. Goethe entered into the highest human element in all men. Hence he creates a representative character relevant to all men. And this character detaches himself from Goethe's personality as a poet, and stands before us as a real objective figure in the outer world.

Here is a further advance of art along the path we have outlined. Starting from the direct spiritual perception of a higher world, art takes hold of man's inner life to an ever-increasing degree. It does so most intimately when — as with Dante — a man is dealing with himself alone. In Shakespeare's plays the ego goes out from this inwardness and enters other souls. With Goethe, the ego goes out and immerses itself in the soul-life of every-man, typified by Faust. And because the ego is able to go out from itself and understand other souls only if it develops its own soul-powers and sinks itself in another's spirituality, so it is in line with the continued advance in artistic creation that Goethe should have been led to depict not only physical acts and experiences in the outer world, but also the spiritual events that everyone can experience if he opens his ego to the spiritual world.

Poetry came from the spiritual world and entered the human ego; with Dante it took hold of the ego at the deepest level of the inner life. With Goethe we see the ego going forth from itself again and finding its way to the spiritual world.

The spiritual experiences of ancient humanity are reflected in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; and in Goethe's *Faust* the spiritual world comes forth again and stands before man. That is how we should respond to the great final tableau in *Faust*, where man, after having descended into the depths, works his way up again by developing his inner forces until the spiritual world stands open to him once more. It is like a chorus of primal tones, but ever-renewed in ever-advancing forms. From the imperishable spiritual world resounds the imagination, bestowed on man as a substitute for spiritual vision and given form in the perishable creations of human genius. Out of the imperishable were born the perishable poetic figures created by Homer and Aeschylus. Once more poetry ascends from the perishable to the imperishable, and in the mystical chorus at the very end of *Faust* we hear:

Everything transient is but a parable ... [66]

And so, as Goethe shows us, the power of man's spirit ascends from the physical world into the spiritual world again.

We have seen artistic consciousness advance with great strides through the world and in representative poets. Art emerges from the spiritual, its original source of knowledge. Spiritual vision withdraws more and more in proportion as the sense-world commands ever-wider attention, thereby stimulating the development of the ego. Human consciousness follows the course of world evolution and so has to make the journey from the spiritual world to the world of the ego and the senses. If man were to study the world of the senses only through the eyes of external science, he would come to understand it only intellectually in scientific terms. But in place of clairvoyance, when this passes away, he is granted imagination, which creates for him a kind of shadowy reflection of what he can no longer perceive. Imagination has had to follow the same path as man, entering eventually into his self-awareness, as with Dante. But the threads that link humanity to the spiritual world can never break, not even when art descends into the isolation of the human ego. Man takes imagination with him on his way; and when *Faust* appears, we see the spiritual world created anew out of imagination.

Thus Goethe's *Faust* stands at the beginning of an epoch during which man is to re-enter the spiritual world where art originated. And so the mission of art, for all those who cannot reach the spiritual world through higher training, is to spin the threads that will link the spirituality of the far-distant past with the spirituality of the future. Art has indeed already advanced so far that it can give a view of the spiritual world in imagination, as in the second part of *Faust*. Here we have an intimation that man in his evolution is at the point when he must learn to develop the powers which will enable him to re-enter the spiritual world and to gain conscious knowledge of it. Moreover, having led man towards the spiritual world with the aid of imagination, art has prepared the way for spiritual science, which presupposes clear vision of the spiritual world, based on full ego-consciousness. To point the way towards that world — the world that human beings long for, as we have seen in the examples drawn from the realm of art — that is the task of spiritual science, and it has been the task also of this winter's lectures.

Thus we see how great artists can be justified in feeling that reflections of the spiritual world are what they have to give to mankind. And the mission of art is to mediate these revelations during the time when direct revelations of the spiritual world were no longer possible. So Goethe could say of the works of the old artists: "There is necessity, there is God!" They bring to light the hidden laws of nature which would otherwise never be found. And so could Richard Wagner say that in the music of the Ninth Symphony he could hear revelations of another world — a world which a mainly intellectual consciousness can never reach. The great artists have felt that they are bearers of the spirit, the original source of everything human, from the past, through the present, into the future. And so with deep understanding we can agree with words spoken by a poet who felt himself to be an artist: "The dignity of mankind is given into your hands." [67]

In this way we have tried to describe the nature and mission of art in the course of human evolution, and to show that art is not as separate from man's sense of truth as people today may lightly suppose. On the contrary, Goethe was right when he refused to speak of the idea of truth and the idea of beauty as separate ideas. There is, he said, *one* idea, that of the necessary workings of the divine-spiritual in the world, and truth and beauty are two revelations of it.

Everywhere among poets and other artists we find agreement with the thought that the spiritual foundations of human existence find utterance in art: or there are artists with deeper feelings who will tell you that art makes it possible for them to believe that their work carries a message to mankind from the spiritual world. And so, even when artists are most personal in expression, they feel that their art is raised to a universal human level, and that in a true sense they speak for humanity when the characters and revelations of their art give effect to the words spoken by Goethe's Mystical Chorus:

Everything transient is but a parable ...

And on the strength of our spiritual-scientific considerations we may add: Art is called upon to transfuse the transient and the perishable with the light of the eternal, the imperishable. That is the mission of art.

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Concerning the Transcripts of the Lectures

From Rudolf Steiner's autobiography *Mein Lebensgang* ("My Life"), Chapter 35, 1925. It was subsequently published in English, *Rudolf Steiner, An Autobiography*, 2nd Edition, Multimedia Pub. Corp., New York, 1980.



Two consequences of my anthroposophical activity are the books which were made accessible to the general public and an extensive series of lecture courses which were initially intended for private circulation and were available only to members of the Theosophical (later Anthroposophical) Society. The transcripts of the latter were taken down — some more accurately than others — during my lectures. But time did not permit me to undertake their correction. I, for my part, would have preferred spoken word to remain spoken word, but the members were in favour of private publication of the courses. And so it came about. If I had had time to correct the transcripts, the reservation "For Members Only" need not have been made from the very first. Now it has been dropped for over a year.

Here in "My Life" it is above all necessary to explain how the two — the publications in general and in private circulation — are accommodated in my elaboration of anthroposophy.

Whoever wishes to pursue my own inner conflict and toil in my effort to introduce anthroposophy to contemporary thought, must do so with the aid of the works in general circulation which include analysis of all forms of cognition of this age. Therein also lies that which crystalised within me in "spiritual vision" and from which came into existence the structure of anthroposophy, even if imperfect in many respects.

Apart from this obligation to construct anthroposophy and thereby to serve only that which ensues when communications from the spirit world are to be transmitted to modern civilisation, the need also arose to meet the claims which were manifested within the membership as a compulsion, a yearning of the soul.

Above all, many members were greatly disposed to hearing the gospels and the spiritual content of the Bible presented in an anthroposophical light. Courses were requested which were to examine such revelations to humanity.

Internal courses were held to meet this requirement. At these lectures only members were present who were initiated in anthroposophy. It was possible to speak to them as to those well-versed in anthroposophy. The delivery of these internal lectures was such as simply could not be communicated in written works intended for the general public.

In these closed circles I was able to discuss subjects which I would have had to present quite differently if they had been intended for a general public from the very first.

Thus in the duality of the public and private works there actually exists something of two-fold diverse origin. The wholly public writings are a result of that which struggled and toiled within me; in the private publications, the Society struggles and toils with me. I listen to the vibrations within the soul-life of the membership and within my own being, and the tone of the lectures arises from what I hear there.

Nowhere has even the slightest mention of anything been made which does not proceed from the substance of anthroposophy. No concessions can be made to any prejudices or presentiments existing within the membership, Whoever reads these private publications can accept them as a true representation of anthroposophical conviction. Thus when petitions became more urgent, the ruling as to the private circulation of these publications within the membership could be amended without any hesitation. Any errors occurring in transcripts which I have not been able to revise will however have to be tolerated.

The right to pass judgment on the content of any such private publication is nevertheless reserved to those possessing the prerequisite to do so. For the great majority of these publications, this is at least an anthroposophical knowledge of man and the universe, in so far as its essence is presented in anthroposophy, and of "the history of anthroposophy" such as it is derived from communications from the spirit world.

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Notes

Book Notes: Volume One

1. The "Libellus de hominis convenientia" by Francis Joseph Philipp Count von Hoditz and Wolframitz is a manuscript which was discovered in the Fürstenberg Library in Prague and which was written approximately between 1696 and 1700.
2. Aristotle, 384–322 B.C. Cf. the *Parva Naturalia*.
3. René Descartes, 1596–1650. Cf. for example the work "Meditationes de prima Philosophia", 1641/42.
4. With this answer Hoditz goes back to the Neo-Platonist Philo of Alexandria (see Rudolf Steiner's comments on him in *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1972) who in turn revives the Old Testament tradition; I Moses 1, 26/27
5. Goethe: Winkelmann, "Antikes" and "Schönheit"; in: Goethe, *Werke*, Weimar Edition, vol.46 (Weimar, 1891).
6. Cf. for example Goethe's essay "Wenige Bemerkungen" in *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, edited by Rudolf Steiner, Dornach, 1975, vol. 1, p.107 or in "Entwurf einer Einleitung in die vergleichende Anatomie", *op. cit.*, p.262: "We learn to see with the eyes of the spirit, without which we grope around blindly as everywhere so also in natural science". Also *Faust II*, sc. 1, 1 1.4667.
7. Immanuel Kant, 1724–1804. Cf. the chapter "The time of Kant and Goethe" in Rudolf Steiner's *The Riddles of Philosophy*, Anthroposophic Press, New York 1973.
8. Goethe, "Anschauende Urteilskraft" in: *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, edited by Rudolf Steiner, Dornach, 1975, vol. 1, p.1 15/116.

9. Cf. fundamental account of the stages of knowledge in Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science, An Outline*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1979, in the chapter "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds".
10. The symbol of two intertwined triangles, the one pointing upwards, the other downwards.
11. Eliphas Levi, 1810–1875, occultist. Pseudonym for the originally catholic deacon Alphonse Louis Constant from Paris. *Dogme et Rituel de la haute Magie*, 2 vols, 1854 and 1856.
12. Philo of Alexandria (25 B.C.–50 A.D.) describes the life and thought of the Therapeutae in his work "De vital contemplative". Cf. also Rudolf Steiner, *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London 1972, p.137.
13. Decisive in this respect are the writings of Thomas Aquinas, especially the four books of the *Summa philosophica*. Cf. also Rudolf Steiner, *The Riddles of Philosophy and The Redemption of Thinking*.
14. St. Augustine, 354–430 A.D.. Had the greatest influence of the Church Fathers on theology and philosophy.
15. *Faust I*, sc.1,11.443–446.
16. Cf. Hermann Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. Herakleitos aus Ephesus, Nr. 45. Also: *The art and thought of Heraclitus*.
17. An edition of the fragments with translation and commentary by Charles H. Kahn. CUP, Cambridge, 1979, No. XXXV.
18. Francesco Redi, 1626–98. Italian doctor, scientist and poet. Cf. his work *Osservazione intorno agfi animafi viventi che si trovano negli animali viventi*, 1684.
19. Giordano Bruno, born 1548, was burnt in 1600 in Rome as a heretic.

20. Arthur Schopenhauer, 1788–1860. Cf. his work *The World as Will and Representation*, Book 1, par. 1.
21. Cf. for example the polemic "Eine Duplik" (1778), part 1.
22. Edward Henry Harriman, 1848–1909. North American railway magnate.
23. Herman Grimm, 1828–1901, in his essay "Ernst Curtius, Heinrich von Treitschke, Leopold von Ranke", in: *Fragmente*, vol 1, Berlin & Stuttgart, 1900, p.246.
24. Heinrich von Treitschke, 1834–96. German historian.
25. Karl Friedrich Solger, 1780–1819, from 1811 Professor of Philosophy in Berlin. Cf. *Erwin. Vier Gespräche über das Schöne und die Kunst*, 1815, and *Vorlesungen über Aesthetik*, ed. Heyse, 1829.
26. Robert Zimmermann, 1824–98. Professor in Vienna. Member of the school of Herbart. Cf. his *Aesthetik*, 1858–65.
27. The first quotation is from the poem "Vermächtnis", 1829; the second is from the "Sprüche in Prosa" in vol V, p.402 of *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, edited with a commentary by Rudolf Steiner, 5 vols, Dornach, 1975.
28. *Faust* 1, 11.1224 and "Prometheus", a dramatic fragment, 1773.
29. From the poem "Sprichtwörtlich".
30. From the poem "Bei Betrachtung von Schillers Schädel", 1826.
31. *Faust I*, 11.1112–1117.
32. Cf. 19th Book, 1.137ff.
33. Johann Joachim Winkelmann, 1717–68. Cf. his "Geschichte der Kunst im Altertum", part 11.

34. Agesander, a Rhodian sculptor, is mentioned by Pliny as the creator, together with Polydorus and Athenodorus, of the Laocoon group, which dates from the period 42–21 B.C. Now in the Vatican.
35. For his concept of asceticism see *The World as Will and Representation*, Book IV. Particularly from par. 68.
36. Cf. also the chapter "Sleep and Death" in Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science, An Outline*.
37. Cf. also the chapter "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds" in Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science, An Outline*.
38. Last verse of the poem "Selige Sehnsucht" from the *Westöstliche Divan*.
39. See note 20.
40. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Second Division, Book 11, Chapter III, Section 4: "The impossibility of an Ontological Proof of the Existence of God".
41. Pythagoras of Samos, c. 580–495 B.C. Cf. also Rudolf Steiner, *Christianity as Mystical Fact* and *The Riddles of Philosophy*.
42. From the poem "Das Höchste", 1795.
43. From the "Cherubinischen Wandersmann" by Angelus Silesius (1624–1677), Book 1, Verse 289.
44. End of the poem "Welt und Ich" by Friedrich Rückert (1788–1866).
45. See note 5.
46. "Sprüche in Prosa", vol. V, p.495 of *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, as note 27.
47. See "Entwurf einer Farbenlehre", vol. III, p.88 of *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, as note 27.

48. Rudolf Steiner is here presumably referring to the sentence from Schopenhauer's introduction to his treatise "On Vision and Colours": "That the colours which ... appear to clothe the objects are really only in the eye".
49. In the conversation with Chancellor von Müller of 22nd January 1821.
50. "Spruche in Prosa", vol. V, p.482 of *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, as note 27.
51. In the conversation of 29th May, 1814.
52. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, 1762–1814. "Vorbericht" to *Einige Vorlesungen über die Bestimmung des Gelehrten*.
53. Rudolf Steiner is here referring to the lectures on 22nd and 24th October 1908: "Goethe's Secret Revelation, Exoteric and Esoteric" and on 11th and 12th March 1909: "The Riddles in Goethe's Faust, Exoteric and Esoteric".
54. Cf. Pindar (522–C.448 B.C.) *Pythian Odes*, 8th Ode, 5th Epode.
55. In connection with this lecture cf. also: Gautama Buddha's sayings from the middle Majjhimanikayo collection of the Pali Canon; *The Gospel of Buddha according to old Records* by Paul Carus, Chicago & London, 1917; Hermann Beckh, *Buddha und seine Lehre*, Stuttgart, 1958. For a contrast of Buddha and Christ also Rudolf Steiner in *Christianity as Mystical Fact*.
56. Max Muller, 1823–1900, Orientalist, religious and linguistic researcher. The quotation about the grunting pig attributed to him could not be traced.
57. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, 1831–1891. She founded the Theosophical Society in New York together with H.S. Olcott in 1875, which soon thereafter transferred its headquarters to India.

58. Milindapanha (Milinda's Questions): Discussion between Menandros (Milinda), king of the Greco-Indian empire (c.110 B.C.), and the Buddhist saint Nagasena on the central questions of Buddhist dogma. Translated from the Pali by I.B. Horner, Luzac & Co., London, 1963/64.
59. 'Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.(Matt. 5, 3)
60. And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matt. 3, 2)
61. Cf. Rudolf Steiner, *The Riddles of Philosophy*.
62. See note 35.
63. *Faust II*, 11. 1 1583/4.
64. Johann Peter Eckermann, *Conversations with Goethe in the Last Years of his Life*, conversation of 6th June 1831.
65. Matthias Jakob Schleiden, 1804–1881, Professor of Botany at the University of Jena.
66. Gustav Theodor Fechner, 1801–1887, Professor of Physics at the University of Leipzig. See *The Riddles of Philosophy*, 1973 edition, pp. 279, 375ff., 376, 380, 383. Published by Anthroposophic Press, New York.
67. G. Th. Fechner, *Professor Schleiden und der Mond*, Leipzig, 1856, p.1 56.
68. Julius Robert Mayer, 1814–1878, doctor and physicist, discovered the law of conservation of energy in 1842.
69. *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, as note 27, vol. 11, book 3, Meteorology, pp.323–398.
70. Johann Peter Eckermann, *Conversations with Goethe in the Last Years of his Life*, conversation of 11th April 1827.

71. See *Leonardo da Vinci, der Denker, Forscher und Poet*, from the published manuscripts; selection, translation and introduction by Marie Herzfeld (Jena, 1906), p.61 and following chapters.
72. Johannes Kepler, 1571–1630. Cf. for example in *Harmonices Mundi* book IV, chapter 7.
73. The correspondence between the moon's orbit and the tides can be led back to a joint cause, but the former does not cause the latter, just as the hand moving round the clock corresponds to the path of the sun, although no-one would suggest that the sun caused the clock-hand to move round.
74. Wilhelm Müller, 1794–1827, known for the cycles of poems "Die Winterreise" and "Die schöne Müllerin" which were set to music by Franz Schubert. This poem is the last verse from "Mondlied", from *Lieder der Griechen*, 2nd edition, Leipzig, 1844.



Book Notes: Volume Two

1. Cf. the lecture "Sprachwissenschaft", Dornach, 7th April 1921, in: *Die Befruchtende Wirkung der Anthroposophie auf die Fachwissenschaften*, Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland. (GA 76)
2. Max Müller, 1823–1900. Noted Orientalist, religious and linguistic researcher.
3. Cf. the lecture "Die Seele der Tiere im Lichte der Geisteswissenschaft", Berlin, 23rd January 1908, in: *Die Erkenntnis der Seele und, des Geistes*, Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland. (GA 56)
4. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Entwurf einer Farbenlehre", des ersten Bandes erster, didaktischer Teil, in: **Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften**, ed. Rudolf Steiner, reprint Dornach 1975, vol. 111, P.88.

5. Arthur Schopenhauer, 1788–1860, German philosopher.
6. Fritz Mauthner, 1849–1923. A new edition of this work, *Die Kritik der Sprache*, was just being published in 1910.
7. In 1898 already Rudolf Steiner wrote in his essay "Noch ein Wort über die Vortragskunst": "Artistic speech is often considered today to be failed idealism". In: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Dramaturgie 1889–1900*, Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland. (GA 29)
8. Cf. also chapter 33 of *Rudolf Steiner, An Autobiography*, Steiner Books, New York, 1980.
9. Rudolf Steiner repeatedly noted in his later work that for example the 7th scene of his mystery drama "The Portal of Initiation" (in: Rudolf Steiner, *Four Mystery Plays*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1983) showed in the most direct sense this transformation of spiritual experience into sound.
10. Friedrich von Schiller, Poetry in *Homage to the Arts (Die Huldigung der Künste)*.
11. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust I*, 1.784.
12. And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. (*Genesis 2, 7*)
13. On this subject and the mystics mentioned in the lecture cf. also Rudolf Steiner, *Mysticism at the Dawn of the Modern Age*, Multimedia Publishing Corp., New York, 1980.
14. Meister Eckhart, 1260–1327.
15. Angelus Silesius, 1624–1677.
16. Johannes Tauler, c. 1300–1361.
17. Heinrich Suso, c. 1300–1366.

18. Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, 1646–1716. Cf. for example his *Monadology*, a short treatise which he wrote in 1714 (without title) as a summary of his philosophy of unities.
19. Johann Friedrich Herbart, 1776–1841. Philosopher and pedagogue.
20. Angelus Silesius, *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*, Book 4, Verse 56.
21. Valentin Weigel, 1533–1588.
22. Jakob Boehme, 1575–1624.
23. Hermann Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. Herakleitos aus Ephesus, Nr 45. Also, *The art and thought of Heraclitus*. An edition of the fragments with translation and commentary by Charles H. Kahn. CUP, Cambridge, 1979, No. XXXV.
24. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust I*, 11. 1699–1702.
25. 32:24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.
32:25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.
32:26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.
32:27 And he said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob.
32:28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.
32:29 And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore *is* it *that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.
32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.
32:31 And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.
32:32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not *of* the sinew

which shrank, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

(*Genesis* 32, 24–32)

26. *The Lord's Prayer*, Anthroposophic Press Inc., Spring Valley, N.Y., 1977.
27. Cf. Friedrich Rückert's poem "Welt und Ich": "in adorning itself,/The rose adorns the garden too".
28. Miguel de Molinos, 1640–1697, Spanish mystic. See his *Guida Spirituale* (1675). Molinos was sentenced to life imprisonment in Rome for this book by the Pope in 1686.
29. Angelus Silesius, *Cherubinischer Wandersmann*, Book 1, Verse B.
30. "Wie begreift man Krankheit und Tod", Berlin, 13th December 1906, in: *Die Erkenntnis des Übersinnlichen in unserer Zeit und deren Bedeutung für das heutige Leben*, Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland. (GA 55)
31. "Der Krankheitswahn im Lichte der Geisteswissenschaft", Berlin, 13th February 1908; "Das Gesundheitsfieber im Lichte der Geisteswissenschaft", Berlin, 27th February 1908. The parallel lectures held in Munich (3rd and 5th December 1907) are printed in *Die Erkenntnis der Seele und des Geistes*, Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland. (GA 56)
32. See *Odyssey*, 19th Book, 1.137 ff.
33. The reference is to the work *De Natura Rerum* by Isidore of Seville, c. 560-636, the last Occidental Church Father. Cf. also Rudolf Steiner's lecture of 18th January 1912 in *Menschengeschichte im Lichte der Geistesforschung*, Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland. (GA 61)
34. Francesco Redi, 1626–1698. Italian doctor, scientist and poet. Cf. his work *Osservazione intorno agli animali viventi che si trovano negli animali viventi*, 1684.

35. Volcano on the West Indian island of Martinique; largest eruption on 8th May 1902.
36. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust I*, Prologue in Heaven, 1.317.
37. See note 20.
38. Peter Rosegger, 1843–1918. Styrian writer: "One is a man/Two are people/Any more are cattle".
39. Rudolf Steiner, *Occult Science*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1969.
40. These words over the entrance to the Platonic Academy can be found neither in Plato nor in any of his Greek and Roman contemporaries. They are first found in commentators on Aristotle in the 6th century AD; thus Elias, *Aristotelis Categorias commentaria*, ed. A. Busse (Comm. in Arist. Graeca XVIII, pars 1), Berlin 1900, 118.18; and Philoponus Joannes, *Aristotelis de Anima Libris commentaria*, ed. M. Hayduck (Comm. in Arist. Graeca XV), Berlin 1897, 117.29.
41. Ernst Haeckel, 1834–1919. *Die Welträtsel Gemeinverständliche Studien über monistische Philosophie*, Bonn 1899.
42. See Aristotle, *Poetics*, chapter 6.
43. See note 23.
44. The reference is likely to be to Johann Gottlieb Fichte, whose philosophy of the ego bases on the principle that the true ego, as the founding principle which determines subject and object, can never become object itself.
45. Wilhelm Wundt, 1832–1920. Philosopher.
46. Rudolf Steiner, *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1980.

47. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust II*, Act 1, Imperial Palace, 11.5063/64.
48. Cf. the Introduction to G.W.F. Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. (*Grundlinien einer Philosophie des Rechts oder Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft im Grundriss*).
49. Held by his teacher and friend Karl Julius Schröer, 1825–1900. Cf. also Rudolf Steiner's remarks in the lecture of 29th October 1914 in Berlin, in: *Aus schicksaltragender Zeit*, Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland. (GA 64)
50. See notes 14 and 13.
51. See J.G. Fichte, *Die Bestimmung des Menschen*, 1800, Book 3: Glaube.
52. Bartholomew Carnieri, 1821–1909. Cf. his characterisation of conscience in the introduction to *Der moderne Mensch. Versuch einer Lebensführung*, Stuttgart, 1904.
53. Paul Ree, 1849–1901. *Die Entstehung des Gewissens*, Berlin, 1885.
54. Socrates, 470–399 BC
55. Plato, 427–347 BC
56. Aeschylus, 525–456 BC, in his *Oresteia* trilogy.
57. Euripides, c. 480–406 BC, deals with this subject in *Electra* and in *Orestes*.
58. See note 4.
59. Baruch Spinoza, 1632–1677. For Goethe's relationship to Spinoza cf. Goethe's description in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Part III Book 14.
60. Johann Heinrich Merck, 1741–1791. Writer.

61. See *Italienische Reise*, Rome, 6th September 1787.
62. See Goethe, "Sprüche in Prosa", in: *Goethes Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften*, ed. Rudolf Steiner, reprint Dornach 1975, vol. V, p. 495.
63. Cf. "Beethoven," 1870, in vol. XI of Wagner's *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen*.
64. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Zahme Xenien* VIII, dated 23rd July 1824.
65. Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, 1724–1803. He concluded his "Messias" in 1773.
66. Concluding lines to Goethe's *Faust* (*Faust II*, 1. 12, 104ff.).
67. Friedrich von Schiller in the poem "Die Künstler".



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