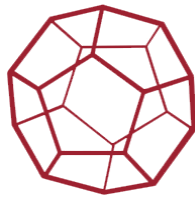


**The Effect of Occult
Development
Upon the Self and the
Sheaths**

GA 145



The Effect of Occult Development Upon the Self and the Sheaths

GA 145

by

Rudolf Steiner

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Summary

Steiner delineates the almost imperceptible changes that take place in the physical body's experience of food as a consequence of spiritual development. He goes on to describe how we develop an inner experience of the etheric body and how our judgments, feeling, and willing are transformed. Gradually we are led to a direct perception of the reality of the great legends, notably the Paradise story and the Holy Grail legend.

These 10 lectures were given by Rudolf Steiner in March, 1913 at The Hague. They are a part of the lecture series entitled, *What Significance Has Occult Development of the Human for the Sheaths: Physical Body, Etheric Body, Astral Body, and the Self*, published in German as, *Welche Bedeutung Hat die Okkulte Entwicklung des Menschen Fuer Seine Huellen - Physischen Leib, Aetherleib, Astralleib - Und Sein Selbst?* (vol. 145 in the Bibliographic Survey).



Lecture 1

20 March 1913, The Hague

I have to speak to you on a subject which may be important to many at the present day; it is important to all who try in any way to make Theosophy not merely a theory, but to take it into their hearts and minds so that it becomes a vital thing to them; something that enters into the whole of their life as human beings of the present day. It will be important, not only for true esotericists, but also for those who wish to take up theosophical thoughts into the forces of their soul, to know of the changes which take place in the whole human being when the exercises are carried out which are mentioned in my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*, or those which are mentioned briefly in the second part of my book *An Outline Of Occult Science*, or when merely the theosophical thoughts are absorbed in heart and mind and made one's own. Theosophy, when taken up seriously, whether esoterically or exoterically, brings about certain changes in the whole organisation of man. It may be boldly affirmed that the student becomes a different man through Theosophy, he transforms the whole construction of his being. The physical body, the etheric body, the astral body and the true Self of a man are all in a certain way transformed through his really taking Theosophy into his inner being. In their order we shall speak of the changes which these human sheaths undergo under the influence of esotericism, or even through the earnest exoteric study of Theosophy. It is especially difficult to speak about the changes in the physical human body, for the simple reason that although the changes that take place there at the beginning of the theosophical or esoteric life are indeed important and significant, they are often indistinct and apparently insignificant. Important, significant changes take place in the physical body, but they cannot be observed externally by an external science. They cannot be observed, simply because the physical is that which man has least of all under his control from within, and because there would at once be danger if esoteric exercises or theosophical effort were to be so directed that the changes in the physical body went beyond the measure of what the student is able fully to control. The changes in the physical body are kept within certain limits; but still it is important that the pupil should know something about them, and that he should understand them. To begin with, if we wish to describe briefly the changes which the human physical body undergoes under the conditions just mentioned, we

might say: This human physical body becomes more mobile and inwardly active. More mobile — what does that mean? Now in the normal life of man we see the human physical body with its several organs in communication with one another, and in a certain way connected with one another. The activities of the several organs pass over into each other. When the pupil takes up esotericism or Theosophy seriously, the several organs become more independent of one another. In a certain sense the collective life of the physical body is suppressed, and the separate life of the organs strengthened. Although the extent of the suppression of the collective life and of the strengthening of the separate life of the organs is extremely small, yet we must say that through the influence of esotericism and Theosophy the heart, the brain, the spinal cord and other organs all become more independent of one another, they become inwardly more active and more mobile. If I were to speak in a learned manner, I should say that the organs pass from a stable condition to a more mobile condition of balance. It is well to know this fact, because when the pupil perceives something of this different state of equilibrium in his organs he is very easily inclined to ascribe it to sickness or indisposition. He is not accustomed to feel the mobility and independence of the organs in this manner. He only becomes aware of or feels his organs when they do not function normally. He can now perceive that the organs become independent of one another, even though at first this may be hardly perceptible, and he might think that it was an illness. Now you see how careful we must be when dealing with the physical human body. Obviously, what may at one time be an illness, may at another time be merely a phenomenon pertaining to the inner theosophical life. Hence it is necessary to judge each case individually; although what is here attained through theosophical life will really come without this, in the normal course of the development of humanity. In ancient periods of human development the several organs were still more independent of one another than they are now in external life, and in the future they will again become more and more independent. As the pupil of Theosophy must always, to a certain extent, anticipate in the various realms of life and knowledge the stages of development which will only in the future be reached by the general mass of humanity, he must not mind at this stage of development if his organs become more independent of one another. This change may take place quietly and gently in the several organs and systems of organs. I will give a particular example.

You are all acquainted with the fact that when a man is a 'stay-at-home,' when his calling does not allow of much travelling, he becomes in a way attached to his immediate environment, and does not wish to leave it. If you go into the country among the peasants you will find that this exists to a much greater extent than among those who live in towns, and who indeed frequently sojourn in the country; the people have grown one with their soil and climate, and when for some reason they are transported into another district or into a different climate they find it difficult to acclimatise themselves; you will find in their soul, in the form of a home-sickness which often cannot be overcome, the longing for their native soil. This is only to show how necessary it is for the pupil to do something which we see to be necessary in another respect when a man comes into a different region, that is, he must adapt his whole organism to this region, to this climate. Now, in our normal life, this adaptation actually does take place within the whole human organism. Everything is sympathetically affected, in a certain way, when we go from the plains to the mountains, or when we travel to a somewhat distant place. Now, in the esotericist, or in one who seriously takes up Theosophy, it is noticeable that all the organism is not equally affected sympathetically, but the blood-system separates, and the circulation of the blood is severed, as it were, from the rest of the organism, and when the student goes from one district to another the circulation of the blood is the most affected. One who has become sensitive to these things can observe an appreciable difference in the pulsation of the blood, in the beating of the pulse, when simply taking a journey from one place to another. While in the case of a person who is not permeated with esotericism or theosophical life, the nervous system is strongly affected by the necessary acclimatisation; in one who does take up esotericism or a serious theosophical life, the nervous system is but little affected. The intimate union between the nervous system and the blood-system is weakened and divided through the theosophical life, the blood-system becomes in a way more sensitive to the influences of climate and country, and the nervous system becomes more independent of them. If, my dear theosophical friends, you wish to have proofs of this, you must look for them in the most natural way in which they are to be found, that is, when you find yourselves in a similar position, when you yourselves journey to a different place. Try to observe yourselves, and you will find these facts of Occultism confirmed. It is extremely important to bear such facts in mind, simply for the reason that these things gradually develop into a very definite power of perception. A man who has become a Theosophist

at heart can tell the character of a strange town by his blood. He need not go very much into other things, he can tell by his blood how the various regions of the earth are different from one another.

On the other hand, the nervous system separates from the whole organism in a different way. A man who studies Theosophy in the right way will gradually notice that he perceives the difference between the four seasons of the year — the difference between summer and winter, for instance — in quite a different way than does the ordinary man of the day. The latter only feels in his own physical body, as a rule, the difference in temperature. One who has taken Theosophy into his soul in the recognised manner, not only perceives the difference in temperature, but, apart from that, he has a particular experience in his nervous system, so that, for instance, it is easier for him in summer to think certain thoughts that are connected with the physical brain than it is in winter. Not that it is impossible to think one thought or another in winter, but one can experience quite distinctly that it is easier to do so in summer; such thoughts flow more easily, as it were, in summer than in winter. We can notice that in winter it is easier to form abstract thoughts, while in summer it is easier to make them concrete and 'picture-like.' This is because the nervous system, the instrument for the physical plane, vibrates in a more subtle manner in harmony with the change of the seasons, and more independently of the whole organism than it otherwise does.

But one fundamental change in the physical body is that the student begins to feel his physical body more strongly than before, and this can take very serious forms, the body becomes more sensitive to the soul-life, it becomes harder to bear. It is extremely difficult to explain this clearly. Imagine a glass of water in which a certain substance, salt for instance, has been dissolved, yielding an opaque solution. Suppose in the normal condition of man his etheric body, astral body, and Self to be the fluid, and his physical body dissolved in it to be the salt. Now cool down the fluid in the glass. The salt gradually hardens, it becomes heavier as it grows more independent. In the same way the physical body hardens from the whole structure of the four principles of the human being. It shrinks, though only to an insignificant degree. This must be taken quite literally. It shrinks together, in a certain sense. Now you must not picture this too intensely, the student need not fear that through his theosophical development he will grow very wrinkled. This shrivelling is an inward densification. But through this the body is really felt as something harder to bear than it was before. It is felt as being less mobile than before. On the other hand the other principles are more flexible. The pupil feels something that — when

he was quite healthy — he never felt before at all; something which he had quite comfortably addressed as 'I' he afterwards feels as something within him which seems to have become heavier, and he begins to experience it as a whole. And he becomes especially aware of all those parts in his body which from the beginning, lead, as it were, a certain independent existence. And here we come to a question which can really only be fully understood in this connection. We come to the question of meat-diet — of course, we are not advocating any 'cause,' our business is only to present the truth of the matter.

Now, as we are dealing with the physical body, we must describe the nature of animal food, plant food, and food as a whole. This forms an item in the discussion of the influence of theosophical life upon the sheaths of man, which may be described as the perfecting, the regeneration of the physical body from outside, through the external substances he consumes. The relation of man to his food is only properly understood when the relation of man to the other kingdoms of nature, and above all to the plant kingdom, is borne in mind. The plant kingdom, as a kingdom of life, carries the inorganic substances, the lifeless substances, to a certain stage of organisation. In order that the living plant may develop, the lifeless substances must be worked upon in a certain way, as if in a living laboratory, and carried to a certain stage of organisation. In a plant we have a living being which brings the lifeless products of nature to a certain stage of organisation. Now man is so organised physically that he is in a position to take up this process where the plant left it, and to carry it on further from this point, so that the higher human organisation comes into being when man organises further that which the plant has already brought to a certain stage. Things have been so arranged that there is really a perfect continuation when a man plucks an apple or a leaf and eats it. That is the most perfect continuation. If all things were so arranged that the most natural thing could always be done, we might say that man should simply continue the process of organisation where the plant left off, that he should take the organs of the plants which he finds outside him and organise them further within himself. That would be a straight line of organisation which would not be broken through anywhere in any way: from the lifeless substance to the plant up to a certain stage of organisation, and thence to the human organism.

Let us now take the grossest case, when a man eats animal flesh. In an animal we have a living being which carries on the process of organisation further than the plant, it carries it to a certain stage beyond the plant organisation. We may therefore say of the animal that it continues the

process of organisation begun by the plant. Let us now suppose that a man eats the animal; what then occurs is, in a sense, as follows: It is not now necessary for the man to exercise the inner forces that he would have had to exercise if he had eaten a plant. If he had been obliged to organise the food from where the plant had left off, he would have had to use certain forces. These forces are not used when he eats animal flesh, for the animal has already carried the organisation of the plant to a certain higher stage, and the man need only begin at this point. Thus we may say that he does not continue the work of organisation from the stage at which he might have done, but he leaves unused forces that are within him, and only continues the organising process from a later stage; he lets the animal do part of the work that he would have had to do if he had eaten the plant food. Now the well-being of an organism does not consist in its doing as little as possible, but in its really bringing all its forces into activity. When a man eats animal flesh he does with the forces which, if he were to eat plant food alone, would develop organic activities, exactly what he would do if he said: 'I will do without my left arm, I will bind it down so that it cannot be used.' Thus he fetters his forces within him when he eats animal flesh, forces which he would call upon if he were to eat plant food, and condemns them to inactivity. But, through their condemnation to inactivity, it comes about that the organisations in question which would otherwise be active remain fallow, they are crippled and become hardened. So that when a man eats animal flesh he kills a part of his organism, or at least disables it, This part which thus becomes hardened he carries with him through life as a foreign body. In normal life a man does not feel this foreign body, but when his organism becomes more inwardly mobile, and when his various systems of organs become more independent of one another, as happens in theosophical life, then his physical body, which even without this feels uncomfortable, begins to feel still more uncomfortable, because it now has a foreign body within it. As already mentioned, we are not promulgating any special cause, but are only concerned with presenting the truth; and we shall learn other effects of animal food; we shall go into this subject more minutely in the course of these lectures. Hence it comes about that progress in the inner theosophical life gradually produces a sort of disgust for animal food. It is not necessary to forbid animal food to Theosophists, for the healthy progressing life of instinct gradually turns against animal food, and no longer likes it; and this is much better than becoming a vegetarian from any abstract principle. It is best when Theosophy leads a man to have a sort of disgust and loathing for animal food; and it is not of much use, with respect to what may be called his higher development, if a man gives up animal food for other reasons.

So that we may say: Animal food produces in man something that is a burden to his physical body, and this burden is felt. That is the occult fact of the matter looked at from one side.

We shall describe it from a different point of view later on in these lectures. As another example, I might mention alcohol. The relation of man to alcohol also alters when he seriously and earnestly takes up Theosophy. Alcohol is quite a special thing in the kingdoms of nature. It proves itself to be not only a burdensome product in the human organism, but it shows itself positively as producing within it an opposing power. When we observe the plants we find that in their organisation they all reach a certain point, with the exception of the vine, which goes beyond this. That which other plants save up solely for the young germ — that is, all the productive force which is usually saved up only for the young germ and is not poured into the rest of the plant — is in the case of the grape poured in a certain way into the flesh of the fruit as well; so that through what is known as fermentation, the transmutation of that which is thus poured into the grape, of the force already developed to the utmost in the grape itself, something is produced which has actually within the plant a power only comparable occultly to the power which the ego of man has over the blood. Thus what arises in the making of wine, what is always developed in the production of alcohol, is that in another kingdom of nature the same thing is produced as that which a man must produce when he works upon his blood from his ego. You all know the inner connection between the ego and the blood; this is expressed externally by the fact that when shame is felt by the ego, a blush rises to the face, and when fear or anguish is felt by the ego the face grows pale. This usual effect of the ego on the blood is occultly quite similar to the effect which appears when the plant process is reversed, and what is contained in the fruit substance of the bunch of grapes, or generally speaking, that which comes from the plant-nature, is transformed into alcohol. As we have said, the ego must normally produce in the blood — speaking occultly, not chemically — a process very similar to that produced by the reverse process, the retrogression of organisation through the mere chemicalising process when alcohol is produced. The consequence of this is that through alcohol we take into our organism something which from another direction works just as the ego works on the blood. This means that with alcohol we take into ourselves an opposition ego which is a direct opponent of the deeds of our spiritual ego. From the opposite side, the blood is influenced by alcohol precisely as it is influenced by the ego. Thus we kindle an inner war, and in truth we condemn to powerlessness all that proceeds from the ego when we take

alcohol, which is its opponent. That is the occult fact. A man who takes no alcohol ensures for himself the power to work freely upon his blood from his ego; one who drinks alcohol is like one who wishes to knock down a wall and beats on one side, at the same time placing people on the other side who beat against him. In exactly the same way, through taking alcohol, the activity of the ego on the blood is eliminated. Hence one who makes Theosophy the element of his life feels the work of alcohol in his blood as a direct battle against his ego, and therefore it is natural that a spiritual development is only easy for him who does not create this opposing condition. From this illustration you will see how that which is also present normally becomes perceptible through the change of equilibrium which comes about in the physical body of the Esotericist or the Theosophist.

In many other respects also do the several organs and systems of organs of the human physical organism become independent; among others, the spinal cord and the brain become much more independent of each other. We shall say more in the next lecture about food, about the occult physiology of nutrition; for the present we will keep rather to the subject of the independence of the organs. The independence of the spinal cord of the brain may become evident, because through filling his soul with Theosophy the student gradually becomes able to feel in his physical body as if this physical organism obtained greater independence within itself. This again may give rise to very uncomfortable situations. Hence it is all the more necessary that one should know these matters. It may occur, for example, that whereas normally one has oneself in hand, as it is called, the more advanced student may suddenly find himself saying several words without really having intended so to do. He goes along the street; suddenly he notices that he has said something which may perhaps be a favourite expression of his, but which he would have refrained from expressing if he had not undergone what is known as the separation of the spinal cord from the brain. What is usually restrained now acts as mere reflex phenomena through the spinal cord becoming independent of the brain.

And in the brain itself certain parts become more independent of the other parts. For example, the inner parts of the brain become more independent of the outer, surrounding ones, while in normal life they work more in harmony. This is manifest in the fact that to the Esotericist or the true Theosophist, abstract thinking becomes more difficult than it was before, and opposition is gradually raised in the brain. As he develops it is easier for the pupil to think in pictures, to conceive of things more through the imagination; it is more difficult to think abstractly. This can very soon

be noticed, particularly in ardent Theosophists. They appear to have predilection only for theosophical activity. They now begin to like to read Theosophy and to think on theosophical subjects, not merely because they are ardent Theosophists, but because it is easier for them to think along these more spiritual lines. So far as the physical plane is affected, these more spiritual ideas require the middle parts of the brain, while abstract thinking requires the outer parts; hence the disinclination of many over-ardent Theosophists to abstract thought and abstract science. Hence it is again that some Theosophists notice with some regret that while formerly they were very well able to think abstractedly, this abstract thinking now becomes more difficult. Thus the various organs become relatively more independent, and even certain parts of these organs become more living and independent. You will see from this that something fresh, as it were, must appear in one who experiences this. Formerly it was benevolent Nature which, without his doing, brought his organs into the right connection; now these organs, having grown independent, are more disconnected, he must now have within him the strength to re-establish harmony among them. This is attained in an orderly theosophical training, because all that upholds the lordship of man over his organs which are becoming independent is continually emphasised. Therefore, remember, my dear theosophical friends, why in our literature such a great role is played by something which many people simply describe by saying, 'Oh! but it is so frightfully difficult.' I have often had to give a very characteristic answer when I have been told that, 'for beginners the book *Theosophy* is really too difficult.' I have had to say: 'It must not be easier, because if it had been, people would have taken certain theosophical truths into their souls, which would also have had the effect of making the several parts of the brain independent; but this book is built up as a regular structure of thought, so that thereby the other part of the brain should be brought continually into play, and not be left behind, as it were.' This is the characteristic feature of a movement resting on an occult basis, not only to pay attention to what in an abstract sense is correct and simply impart this in any way one pleases, but it is essential to impart it in a sound and healthy way, and honourably guard against these matters being made known for the sake of popularity in such a way that they may do harm. In Theosophy it is not merely a matter of imparting certain truths in books and lectures, but it does matter how they are written and how they are imparted. And it is all the better if those who wish to be the vehicle of such a movement do not allow themselves to be turned aside from carrying out this rule for the sake of popularity. In Theosophy, more than in any other realm of thought, the point in question is the acknowledgment of pure and

honest truth. And the very going into such a question as the change in the human sheaths through theosophical life makes us observe how necessary it is to bring Theosophy before the world in the right way. I might remark that these lectures are to be taken as a whole, and hence many difficulties that may arise in various souls with respect to what has been said in this first lecture will be smoothed out later.



Lecture 2

21 March 1913, The Hague

To a theosophist the effects of Esotericism or Theosophy on the etheric and astral bodies and the Self are naturally much more important than the effects produced on the physical body. Nevertheless, we shall gain a foundation for the next lectures, when we have to consider the more spiritual principles of the nature of man from this point of view, if we also bear in mind what may be said about the changes in the physical body. It should, however, be expressly noticed that the changes dealt with here do not refer to the highest stages of initiation, but rather to the early stages of the esoteric or theosophical life, and are therefore of a certain general importance.

You will have gathered from the last lecture that under the influence of Esotericism, or the serious study of Theosophy, the physical body of man becomes more alive, in a certain way, more filled with movement inwardly; and it may on that account become more uncomfortable. It is more felt than in the external, exoteric, so-called normal life of man. We shall have to speak later of the difference between vegetable and animal food in connection with the other sheaths; but in the construction and organisation of the physical body, the difference between vegetable and animal food is greater to an amazing degree. Emphasis must always be laid upon the fact that it cannot be our mission to make propaganda for any particular system of diet, but only to state what is right and true on this subject; and as the soul develops, the matters now under consideration become matters of personal experience. Above all, it becomes a matter of experience that when meat is eaten our physical body has more to bear, more to drag about, as it were, than when we eat vegetable food.

We emphasised in the last lecture the fact that in the course of development the physical body seems to shrink; it separates from the higher, spiritual principles. Now, when animal food is taken, this is felt — as was described in the last lecture — in the human organism as something like a foreign substance, as a thorn in the flesh — if we may use a common expression. In an esoteric or theosophical development we feel the weight of the earth in animal food more than we usually do, and above all, we experience the fact that animal food inflames the instinctive life of the will.

This more unconscious life of the will, which flows more in emotions and passions, is inflamed by animal food. Hence the observation is an absolutely correct one which declares that warlike peoples are more inclined to animal food than peaceful peoples. But this need by no means lead to the belief that vegetable food must take away all courage and energy. Indeed, we shall see that all that a man loses in the way of instincts, aggressive passions and feelings through refraining from animal food — all of which will be dealt with when we speak of the astral body — all this is compensated for from within the soul. These things are all connected with the whole position of man and the other kingdoms of nature towards the Cosmos, and we gradually gain — though perhaps not yet through higher clairvoyance — a sort of proof, a sort of confirmation of what the Occultist affirms regarding the relation of human life to the Cosmos. We gain a sort of proof of this when, through experiencing the more mobile and living processes of the physical body, we ourselves learn to a certain extent the nature and properties of those substances of the earth which are used for food.

It is interesting to compare three kinds of food with respect to their cosmic significance. These are: milk and all connected with it; the plant world and all connected with that, and the foods prepared from it; and animal food. We may learn to compare milk, plants and animals as nourishment when, through theosophical or esoteric development, we become more sensitive to the effects of these foods; and it will then also be easier for us to observe the verification obtainable from a rational observation of the outer world.

If you were to investigate the cosmos as an occultist, you would find milk-substance on our earth, but on no other planet in our solar system. That which is produced in a similar manner within the living beings on other planets in our solar system would appear as something quite different from earthly milk. Milk is specifically earthly; and if you wished to speak about milk you would have to say that the living beings on each planet have their own special milk.

If the plant system belonging to our earth be investigated by the occultist, and compared with that of other planets, with what there can be compared with it, we must admit that the forms of the plant nature on our earth do indeed distinguish them from the plant nature on other planets in our solar system, but yet the inner being of the plants on the earth is not merely earthly, but belongs to the solar system; this means that the plant

nature on our earth is related to that of the other planets of our solar system. Thus there is in our plants something that can also be found on other planets of our system.

As far as the animal kingdom is concerned it follows, indeed, from what has been said about milk, and, apart from that, it can easily be proved by the occultist, that the animal kingdom of our earth is radically different from any corresponding kingdom to be found on other planets.

Now let us consider the experience of milk-food. To the vision and experience of the occultist this milk-food appears in such a way that to the human body — we will only consider man — it signifies that which binds him, as it were, to the earth, to our planet; it connects him with the human race on the earth as a member of it belonging to a common family. Owing to the production of nourishment by the living for the living in the animal nature, mankind, as regards the physical system of sheaths, forms one whole. And we may say that all that is carried into the human organism through milk prepares man to be an earthly human creature, it unites him with earthly conditions, but it does not really chain him to the earth. It makes him a citizen of earth, but does not hinder him from being a citizen of the whole solar system.

It is different with animal-food. Animal-food which is taken from the kingdom that is specifically earthly, and which is obtained not, like milk, directly from the life-processes of the human or animal living being, but from that part of the animal substance which is already prepared for the animal — this animal-food chains man specially to the earth. It makes him into a being of earth, so that we have to say: To the extent that a human being fills his own organism with the effects of animal-food, he deprives himself of power to become free from the earth at all. Through animal-food he binds himself in the highest degree to the planet earth. Whereas milk renders him capable of belonging to the earth as the temporary scene of his development, animal-food condemns him — unless he is uplifted by something else — to make his sojourn on earth permanent, a residence to which he adapts himself exactly. The resolve to live on milk diet means: 'Though I will stay on the earth, and fulfil my mission there, I will not be attached exclusively to the earth.' The will to eat meat means: 'I so pledge myself to the earth-existence that I renounce all heaven, and prefer to be wholly and solely engrossed in the conditions of earthly existence.'

Plant diet is of such a nature as to bring into action in the organism those forces which bring man to a certain cosmic union with the whole of the planetary system. That which a human being has to accomplish when he continues the assimilation of plant nourishment in his own organism is to call forth forces contained in the whole solar system, so that in his physical sheath he becomes a partaker of these solar forces; so that he does not become alienated from them, he does not tear himself away from them. This is something which the soul developing theosophically or esoterically is really able gradually to experience within; with the vegetable food it takes into itself something not pertaining to the heaviness of the earth, but in a certain sense the peculiar property of the sun, that is, of the central body of the entire planetary system. The lightness in his organism which he obtains through a plant diet lifts a man above the heaviness of earth, and gradually develops a certain inner perception of taste in the human organism, so that it is as though the latter really in a way shared with the plant the enjoyment of the sunlight, which accomplishes so much work in the plant.

From what has been said you will gather that in the case of occult, esoteric, or theosophical development, it is extremely important not to chain oneself to the earth, as it were, not to make the heaviness of earth a part of our nature through the enjoyment of an animal diet, if, according to individual conditions and conditions of heredity, it can be dispensed with; the actual decision can, of course, only be made according to the personal conditions of the individual.

It would facilitate the whole evolution of a man's life if he could refrain from eating meat. On the other hand, serious consequences might ensue if a person were to become such a fanatical vegetarian that he avoided milk and all milk-products. In the development of the soul towards the spiritual, certain dangers may easily step in, because in avoiding milk and all milk-products, a person may very easily acquire a love of striving to get away from the earth and lose the threads uniting him to his human tasks upon the earth. Therefore it should be carefully noticed that in a certain sense it is well if the earnestly striving theosophist does not allow himself to become a fanatical spiritual dreamer by creating the difficulty in his physical sheath, which will separate this physical sheath from all that relates it to what is earthly and human. In order that we may not become too eccentric when striving for psychic development, in order that we may not become estranged from human feeling and human effort on the earth, it is well for us to load ourselves in a certain way like travellers upon the earth, by the use of milk and milk-products. And it may even be a really

systematic training for a person who is not in the position to be always living only in the spiritual world, as it were, and thereby becoming estranged from the earth, but who, besides this, has to fulfil his duties upon the earth, it may be part of his training not to be a strict vegetarian, but to take milk and milk-products as well. He will thereby relate his organism, his physical sheath, to the earth and to humanity, but not chain it to the earth, and weight it with earthly existence, as he would were he to enjoy meat.

Thus it is interesting in every way to see how these things are connected with cosmic secrets, and how through the knowledge of these cosmic secrets we can trace the actual effect of food substances in the human organism.

As people interested in occult truths, you must gradually realise more and more that that which appears on our earth — and our physical body belongs above all to our earthly existence — is not merely dependent on the forces and conditions of the earth but is also absolutely dependent on the forces and conditions of supra-mundane life, of cosmic life. This comes about in various ways. Thus, for example, if we consider the animal albumen contained, let us say, in hens' eggs, we must clearly understand that such animal albumen is not merely what the chemist finds by analysis, but that it is in its structure the result of cosmic forces. When we speak of albumen, this in its construction is the product of cosmic forces. Essentially, the cosmic forces really only work upon this albumen after they have first worked upon the earth itself, and, moreover, chiefly upon the moon which accompanies the earth. Thus the cosmic influence upon animal albumen is an indirect one. The cosmic forces do not work directly upon albumen, but indirectly; they work first upon the earth, and the earth reacts upon the construction of animal albumen with the forces it receives from the cosmos. Chiefly the moon takes a share in it, but only in such a way that it first receives the forces from the cosmos, and only then, with these forces that it rays forth from itself, reacts upon the animal albumen. In the tiniest cells of animals, and thus also in albumen, one who is able to look into these things with occult vision can see that not merely the physical and chemical forces belonging to the earth are to be found there, but that the smallest cell in a hen's egg, let us say, is built up of the forces which the earth first obtains from the Cosmos. Thus the substance we call albumen is indirectly connected with the cosmos, but this animal albumenous substance as we know it on the earth would never come into being if the earth were not there. It could not originate directly out of the cosmos; it is absolutely a product of what the earth has first to receive from the cosmos.

Again, it is different, for example, with what we know as fatty substance of earthly living beings, which also forms part of the foods of those who eat meat. We are speaking of animal fat. What we call fatty substance, whether a person eats it or whether it forms part of his own organism, is formed according to entirely different cosmic laws from those forming albumen. While the cosmic forces proceeding from the beings of the Hierarchy of Form are concerned with the latter, pre-eminently those beings whom we call the Spirits of Motion are concerned with the building-up of fatty substance. Now, it is important to relate these things, because only in this way does one really gain an idea how complicated is such a matter, which external science may conceive of as infinitely simple. No living being could have either albumen substance on the one hand or fatty substance on the other if the Spirits of Form and the Spirits of Motion did not work from the cosmos — even though indirectly.

Thus we can trace the effects proceeding from the beings of the various Hierarchies even into the substance of which our physical sheath consists. Therefore, in the experience which comes when the student undergoes a theosophical development, the experience which he has in respect of the albumen and the fat which he bears in his physical sheath becomes more differentiated, more mobile in itself. This is one perception. The forces which in a man living the ordinary life are combined in a single sensation, namely, that which in his organism makes the fat and that which makes the albuminous substance, are now felt separately. As the whole physical organism becomes more mobile, the evolving soul learns to distinguish two different sensations in his own body, one which so pervades him inwardly that he feels: 'This constructs me, and gives me stature' ... he is then perceiving the albuminous substances within him. When he feels: 'This makes me callous to my inner limitations, this uplifts me in some sense, above my form, this makes me more sluggish with respect to my inner human feelings,' when he disdains those perceptions of his feelings (in theosophical development these perceptions differ very greatly) — this last sensation is aroused by his experiencing the fatty substance in his physical sheath.

Thus his inner experience, even as regards his physical body, becomes more complex. This is perceived very strongly when the experience of starch or sugar is in question. Sugar has especially distinct characteristics. In a classification of tastes, sugar stands out very strongly amongst other substances. This appreciation of difference can easily be observed in ordinary life, not only in children, but also very often in older people, in their preference for sweet substances; but usually this does not go beyond

the taste. When the soul undergoes development, it then experiences all the sugar it takes into its body, or already has within it, as something giving it inner firmness, supporting it inwardly, permeating it to a certain extent with a sort of natural sense of selfhood. And in this respect a sort of eulogy might even be pronounced on sugar. In passing through a soul development a person may even often notice that he needs to take sugar, because the psychic development inevitably tends to make him become more and more selfless. Through an orderly theosophical development the soul of itself becomes more selfless. Now, in order that a man — by virtue of his physical sheath, having an earthly mission — may not lose, as it were, the connection of his Ego-organism with the earth, it is well to create a counterpoise in the physical, where, indeed, realisation of the Ego is not of such great importance as in the realm of morals. It might be said that, through eating sugar, a sort of blameless ego-sense is produced, forming a counterpoise to the necessary selflessness in the spiritual realm of morals. Otherwise there might all too easily be the temptation not only to become selfless, but also dreamy and fantastic, to lose the healthy capacity for judging earthly conditions. An addition of sugar to the food gives the power, in spite of the ascent into the spiritual world, to stand firmly on the earth with both feet, and to cultivate a healthy estimate of earthly things. You see that these matters are complex; but everything grows complex when one begins to penetrate the actual secrets of life. Thus to the student as his soul progresses in theosophy it becomes evident now and then that in order not to acquire a false selflessness — namely, a loss of his personality — it is necessary at times to eat sugar; and then his experience when eating sugar is such that he says: 'Now I am adding to myself something that, without lowering myself morally, gives me, as though automatically, as though by higher instinct, a certain firmness, a certain sense of my Ego.' On the whole, we may say the consumption of sugar intensifies physically the character of the human personality. We may be so certain of this that we may even say that it is easier for those who take sugar to imprint the character of their personality upon their physical body than for those who do not; but it stands to reason that this must be kept within healthy limits.

These things may even lead to the understanding of something that can be observed externally. In countries where, according to statistics, little sugar is eaten, the people have less character as personalities than where more sugar is eaten. If you go to countries where the people have more personality, where each one is conscious in himself, as it were, and then from there go into countries where the people have more of the common

race-type and have less personality as external physical beings, you will find that in the former a great deal of sugar is consumed, and in the latter very little.

If we wish to have still more obvious ideas of this experience of various substances we can do so by considering the so-called luxuries, such as coffee and tea, of the effects of which we have already become vividly aware in external life. The experience of a normal person is greatly heightened in a theosophical student. As said already, all this is not an agitation either for or against coffee, but simply a statement of things as they are, and I beg you to take it only in this sense. Even in an entirely normal human life, coffee and tea act as stimulants, but these excitations are felt more vividly by the soul that is undergoing a theosophical development. Of coffee, for example, it may be said that it so works as to cause the human organism to lift its etheric body out of the physical body, but in such a manner as to feel the latter as a solid foundation for the former. That is the specific action of coffee. When coffee is taken, the physical body and the etheric body are felt as differentiated, but in such a way that the physical body — especially in its qualities of form — seems under the influence of coffee to radiate into the etheric body, like a sort of solid basis for what is then experienced through the latter. Truly this ought not to be considered as an agitation for the use of coffee, for it rests upon a physical basis; a person relying too much on the use of this substance would become a completely dependent being; we are only concerned with describing the influence of this food or stimulant. But as logical, consecutive thinking depends very much upon the structure and form of the physical body, so through the peculiar action of coffee, which, as it were, gives a sharper emphasis to the physical structure, logical accuracy is assisted physically. By drinking coffee logical accuracy, the arrangement of facts in logical sequence is promoted by physical means. And it can be said that even though there may be healthy doubts about drinking much coffee, yet for those who wish to ascend to the higher regions of spiritual life, it is not amiss; it may be very good, occasionally, to obtain logical accuracy by means of coffee. We might say that it seems quite natural for one whose profession necessitates a good deal of writing, and who cannot readily find the logical sequence from one sentence to another, and has to get it all out of his pen, to make use of the stimulus of coffee. This seems quite comprehensible to one who understands how to observe these things in their secret occult foundations. Though such a drink may be necessary for us for a time as citizens of the earth, according to personal and individual conditions, it must also be emphasised that the use of coffee,

with all its faults, can contribute a great deal towards the acquisition of stability. Not that it is to be commended as a means of developing stability, but it must be said that it has the power of so doing, and that if, for example, a student's thoughts have a tendency to stray in the wrong direction, we need not take it amiss if he makes himself somewhat more stable by drinking coffee.

It is different in the case of tea. Tea produces a similar effect — viz., a sort of consciousness of difference between the physical nature and the etheric nature; but the structure of the physical body is disconnected in a certain way. The etheric body appears more in its own fluctuating nature. Thought becomes volatile when tea is taken, less fitted to keep to the facts; indeed, fancy is stimulated by it, very often in a way neither sympathetic to nor in conformity with truth or with sound proportion. Hence one may say that it is comprehensible that in gatherings where flashes of thought and the development of sparkling mentality are in question, the stimulus of tea might be preferred; on the other side, it is also comprehensible that when tea-drinking gets the upper hand, it gives rise to a certain indifference to the demands arising through the healthy structure of the physical earthly body. So that dreamy fancy and a certain careless, nonchalant nature, a nature that likes to overlook the demands of the sound external life, is awakened by tea-drinking. And in the case of a soul undergoing a theosophical development we feel tea less suitable, as a beverage, than coffee, since it leads more easily to shallowness. The latter tends to soundness, the former more to charlatanry, although this word applied to these things is much too severe.

All these are things which — as we have said — are experienced through the mobility acquired by the physical sheath of the student undergoing a theosophical development. Only I might add — you may meditate further upon this afterwards or try really to experience such things — that while coffee-drinking promotes something like stability in the physical sheath, and tea-drinking favours shallowness, chocolate promotes prosaic thought. Chocolate can be felt by direct experience as the true beverage of the commonplace merry-maker, when the physical sheath becomes more mobile in itself. Therefore, chocolate may well be recommended for commonplace festivities, and thus we can now understand very well — excuse this aside — that at family festivals, birthday festivals, christenings, especially in certain circles, on certain festive occasions, chocolate is the beverage.

Then when we bear in mind these things which are means of enjoyment, the case appears to us still more significant, because that which usually is experienced concerning the means of nourishment throws its rays upon the ordinary so-called normal life; moreover, not only in such a way as to bring to notice the material substance from which the body is constructed and continually renewed, but also — as was mentioned in the last lecture — the inner disconnection, the separation of the organs from each other. That is important; that is significant.

And here we must bring specially into prominence the fact that occult observation makes clear the experience of the relation between the physical sheath and the physical heart. The physical human heart is to the occultist an extremely interesting, an extremely important organ; for it can only be understood when we bear in mind the entire mutual relationship, including the spiritual relationship, of the sun and the earth. Even at the time when, after the Saturn period, the ancient Sun was a sort of planetary predecessor of the earth, even then began the preparation, as it were, of the relation which now exists between these two heavenly bodies, the Sun and the Earth. And we must so bear in mind this relation between Sun and Earth that we thereby really comprehend how the earth of to-day, being nourished, as it were, by the solar activities, takes in these solar activities and transmutes them. What the solid substance of the earth takes in as solar forces, what the earth takes up in its envelopes of air and water, in its changing conditions of heat, what it takes up in the light that encompasses the earth, what it takes up in that part of the earth which is now no longer physically perceptible in any way — the Earth-part of the harmony of the spheres — what the earth receives as life-forces directly from the sun — all this is in connection with the inner forces that work upon the human heart through the circulation of the blood. In reality all these act upon the circulation of the blood, and through this upon the heart. All external theory with respect to this process is radically wrong. External theory calls the heart a pump that pumps the blood through the body, so that one has to look upon the heart as the organ regulating the circulation of the blood. The reverse is the truth. The heart-circulation responds to the impulse given by the circulation of the blood, which is the original source of action. The blood drives the heart; not the reverse, the heart the blood. And the whole of this organism just described, which is concentrated in the activity of the heart, is none other than the human microcosmic reflection of the macrocosmic activities first received by the earth from the sun. The impulse received by the earth from the sun is reflected in that which the heart receives from the blood.

It is different with the brain. Some details of the correspondence of the brain were given in the last lecture. The human brain has very, very little to do directly with the solar activities on the earth. Directly, I say. Indirectly, as an organ of perception it is concerned with them; it perceives the external light and colour, for instance; that, however, is only perception. But directly, in its construction, in its inner mobility, in the whole of its inward life, the brain has little, scarcely anything, to do with the effects of the sun upon the earth; it is much more concerned with all that streams to the earth from outside our solar system; it is concerned with the cosmic relationship of the whole starry heavens, but not with the narrower relationships of our solar system. However, in a more limited sense, what we have to describe as the brain-substance is connected with the Moon, though only in so far as the Moon does not depend upon the Sun, but has preserved independence of it. So that what goes on in our brain corresponds to activities lying outside the forces which are imaged microcosmically in our heart. Sun dwells in the human heart; all else besides the sun in the cosmos dwells in the human brain.

Thus man, as regards these two organs, is a microcosm, because through his heart he is given up to the influences exercised by the sun on the earth, and reflects these, as it were; but through his brain he has an inner life directly connected with the cosmos outside the sun. That is a connection of extreme interest and significance. The brain is only connected with the effect of the sun on the earth through external perception. But just this very thing is overcome in theosophical development. Theosophical development surmounts the external sense world.

Hence the brain is set free for an inward life so cosmic that it is unsuitable for the specialised influence of the sun itself. When the student surrenders himself in meditation to some imagination, processes take place in his brain which have nothing at all to do with our solar system, but correspond to the processes outside it. Hence, in fact, the relationship between the heart and the brain is like that between the sun and the starry heavens, and this manifests, in a certain respect, in the experience of the soul developing through theosophy through the fact that while this soul is devoted seriously and deeply to purely theosophical thought, the heart forms, as it were, an opposite pole, and comes in opposition to what one might call the starry-brain. This opposition is expressed in the fact that the student learns to feel that his heart and brain begin to go different ways;

while previously he had no need to give attention to both separately, because they were indistinguishable, he must now begin so to do — if he is developing through Theosophy.

It gives us an accurate idea of man's place with regard to the whole Cosmos when we thus consider the physical sheath, and bear in mind the position of man here upon the earth. Through his blood-system and heart there is within him the whole relationship between the sun and the earth, and when his inner powers are devoted solely to that for which on earth he needs the brain as his instrument, then in that brain there are cosmic processes at work extending beyond our solar system. It will be evident that the pupil has an entirely new experience with respect to his heart and brain. His sensations really classify themselves, so that in the serene course of the stars displayed in the heavens at night he learns to feel the processes of his brain, and he feels the movements of the solar system in his heart. In this you see at the same time a path which becomes more important at a higher stage of initiation; you see the doors, as it were, which open from man to the cosmos. The student who, through higher development, steps out of himself — as has been described even in exoteric lectures — and looks back at his own body, learns to recognise all the processes in his physical body; in the circulation of the blood and the activity of the heart a reflection of the hidden forces of the solar system, and in the processes of his brain, which he then sees spiritually from the outside, the secrets of the cosmos.

The matters expressed in this last sentence are connected with an observation which I once made in Copenhagen, and which then appeared in my book, *The Spiritual Guidance of Man*. From this you may gather that, in a certain respect, even the structure of the brain is a sort of reflection of the position of the heavenly bodies at the time of a man's birth as seen from that part of the earth where he is born. It is profitable to approach such things from time to time from a different aspect, for in this way you may appreciate the method of occult science and the narrow-mindedness that many critics show when such an observation is made from one aspect or another. Of course, one may explain important facts like this of the mirroring of the world of stars in the human brain from a definite point of view, and it may appear arbitrary. But when other points of view are added, these all support one another. Later you will become aware of what I might call other streams of occult science which combine and flow together, and their meeting will show you more and more clearly what you

feel to be a complete proof, even to external reason, of things which, if they were expressed from one aspect only, might often seem open to question.

From this also you may gain an idea of the delicacy of the whole human structure. And if now you reflect that man, in the taking in of food, binds himself completely to earth, and only through some substances, such, for instance, as vegetarian food, releases himself again, if you reflect that precisely through taking in food does man make himself a citizen of the earth, you will then comprehend the threefold division of man with respect to his physical sheath. Through his brain he belongs to the whole of the starry heavens, through his heart and all connected with it to the sun; through all his digestive system and all appertaining to that, he is, in another sense, an earthly being. This also may be experienced, and is experienced, when the external physical sheath of man becomes more mobile within. Through what comes into him from the earth alone, a man may very greatly sin against what is reflected in him through the pure forces of the cosmos. By producing disturbances through his bodily food, by the purely earthly laws which act in the digestion and which work further as sun-laws in the activity of the heart, and as the cosmic laws outside the solar system in the activity of the brain — a man can, because through external nourishment he causes disturbances, sin very deeply against the cosmic activities in his brain; and this can be experienced by the theosophically developing soul, particularly at the moment of waking. During sleep it also comes about that the digestive activity extends to the brain, flashes into the brain. On waking, the power of thought works upon the brain; and the digestive activity in the brain then withdraws. When thinking is at a standstill during sleep, the digestive activity then works into the consciousness; and when a man awakes and notices an after-effect of it, his experience may then very well be a true barometer for the suitability or unsuitability of his food. He feels this extension of his organism, as it were, into his brain as deadening, stabbing sensations, sensations which — if he has eaten something unsuitable — may often seem like little benumbed centres in his brain. All this is experienced in the most delicate manner, particularly by the theosophically developing soul. And the moment of waking is tremendously important, I mean as regards the perception of the conditions of health in the physical sheath depending upon the digestion. In perceptions which gradually become finer and finer, localising themselves in the head, the student perceives whether in his digestion he is placing himself in opposition to the cosmic laws outside our solar system or in harmony with them. Here you see the wonderful

relationship of this physical sheath to the whole cosmos, the moment of waking as a barometer showing the student whether through his digestion, he is setting himself against the cosmic conditions or placing himself in harmony with them. These observations will gradually lead us to the changes which take place in the etheric body and astral body through esoteric or theosophical development.



Lecture 3

22 March 1913, The Hague

The changes which take place in the pupil through his occult or theosophical development as regards his muscular system, and especially as regards his senses, his sense organs, lead over, as it were, from man's physical system of sheaths to the etheric-system, the etheric body. With respect to the muscular system, the pupil not only feels this muscular system gradually becoming more mobile — as may also be said with respect to the other physical organs — but, besides becoming more alive, he feels this muscular system permeated by a delicate inner consciousness. It is as though consciousness actually extended to the muscular system. And without inaccuracy, speaking as it were in paradox about this experience, we might say that in the course of his esoteric or theosophical development the student gradually becomes conscious of his several muscles and his muscular system in an inner dreamy way; he always carries his muscular system about with him in such a way that he entertains vague thoughts, dreams of its activity in the midst of his ordinary waking consciousness.

It is always very interesting to grasp the reason of this changing of the physical sheath because in this perception the student has something which informs him that in a certain direction he has made progress. When he begins to feel his several muscles, so that when for example, contracting and extending them he is faintly conscious of what is going on, he has a dim feeling of sympathy which means: something is going on in the muscles. When the movements of his muscles become ideas to him it is a proof that he is beginning gradually to feel the etheric body impregnating the physical body; for what he then actually feels are the forces of the etheric body which are active in the muscles. So that when a man begins to have a shadowy feeling of his several muscles, a dreamy consciousness of himself, as it were, just as in text-books on anatomy one may see the picture of a man whose skin has been removed so that only the muscles appear, that is the beginning of the perception of the etheric body. Indeed, when one begins to perceive the etheric entity, it is in a certain sense like this 'drawing off one's skin' and having a shadowy consciousness of one's several members as of a jointed doll.

Less comfortable, but nevertheless present, is the sensitiveness when the bone-system begins to draw upon the consciousness. This is a more uncomfortable feeling, because to become aware of this bone-system is to be forcibly struck by the fact of increasing age. It is not precisely pleasant to notice the faculty for sensation with respect to the bone-system — not usually felt at all in ordinary life; but a man begins to feel his bone-system as something like a shadow within him, when he is developing etherically. And he then realises that the symbolical representation of death as a skeleton was in accordance with a certain clairvoyant faculty of mankind in primeval times, for they knew that in his skeleton a man gradually learns to feel the approach of death.

But much more significant than all this is the experience which the student has during his esoteric or theosophical development with respect to his sense organs. Now we know that these sense organs must really be stripped off when the pupil undergoes an esoteric development; they must be silent, as it were. The physical sense organs thereby feel that during esoteric development they are condemned, as it were, to inactivity; they are disconnected. Now when they are disconnected as physical sense-organs, something else comes in their place. The student first becomes gradually conscious of the sense-organs as distinct worlds which penetrate him. He learns to feel the eye, the ears, even the sense of warmth, as if they had been bored into him. But what he thus learns to feel are not the physical sense organs, but the etheric forces, the forces of the etheric body, which act constructively upon the sense organs. So that when he shuts off the activity of the senses, he sees the nature of these sense-organs appearing as so many etheric organisations penetrating him. It is extremely interesting.

To the extent that during his esoteric development the student shuts off his eyes, for example, and no longer thinks of physical sight, to that extent does he learn to recognise something that penetrates his own organisation like organisms of light, he then really learns to recognise that the eyes have gradually come into being through the working of the inner forces of light upon our organism. For during the time that he withdraws from all the activity of the physical eyes, he feels the field of vision to be permeated by the etheric light-forces which organise the eyes. This is a peculiar phenomenon: when one shuts off the eyes themselves, one learns through them to know the forces of light. All physical theories are nothing as compared to the knowledge of the inner nature of light and its activity which the student experiences when he has accustomed himself to

eliminate the physical seeing-power of the eyes, and gradually becomes able, in place of the physical use of the eyes, to perceive the inner nature of the etheric forces of light.

The sense of warmth is at a lower stage, as it were, and it is extremely difficult really to shut off sensitivity to heat and cold; this end is best attained during esoteric development, by trying not to be disturbed during the time of meditation, by any feeling of heat. It is therefore good to perform meditation while surrounded by a temperature which is neither hot nor cold, so that no irritation is produced by either feeling. If this can be done, the inner nature of the heat-ether which radiates through space can gradually be recognised, only then does a student feel himself in his own body as though permeated by the true activity of the warmth-ether. Having no longer the external perception of heat, he can learn the nature of the warmth-ether through himself.

By shutting off the sense of taste — of course, it is shut off during the esoteric exercises — but when he attains the faculty of calling up the sensation of taste as a memory, that becomes the means of recognising the so-called chemical ether, still finer than the light-ether. This also is not very easy, but it can be experienced.

In the same way, by shutting off the sense of smell, one may recognise the life-ether.

The shutting off of the hearing yields an unique experience. For this, however, such a power of abstraction must be attained, that even if something audible is going on around, it is not heard. Everything audible must be shut out. Then come towards one, as if piercing one's organism, the forces in the etheric body which organised our organ of hearing. Thereby a remarkable discovery is made. These matters really belong to the secrets of still higher and higher regions. Therefore, there is no difficulty in stating that it is not possible to understand all at once all that is said regarding experiences with such a sense as that of hearing. We make the discovery that this ear, as man bears it in its wonderful organisation, could not possibly have been formed through the etheric forces which play around the earth as such. The light-forces, the etheric forces of light which play around the earth are inwardly connected with the formation of our eyes; even though the foundations for the eyes were already in existence, yet by the formation of the eye, by its position in the organism, it is inwardly connected with the forces of the light-ether of the earth. In the same way, our sense of taste is connected with the forces of the chemical-

ether of the earth, out of which for the most part it is developed. Our sense of smell is connected with the life-ether of the earth; it is organised almost exclusively from the life-ether which plays round the earth. But when our organ of hearing is met with in occultism during esoteric development, it shows us that it owes an infinitesimal part of its being to the etheric forces playing round the earth. It might be said that the etheric forces which play round the earth have given the finishing touch to our organ of hearing; but the latter has been so influenced by these etheric forces that they have really made it — not more perfect, but more imperfect; for they can only work upon the ear by their activities in the air, which continually offers resistance to them. Hence we may say — although a paradox — that our organ of hearing is the degenerate manifestation on earth of a much more delicate organisation previously existing; and at this stage, through his own experience, the developing student will know that he brought the ear, the complete organ of hearing, with him to the earth when he made his way from the ancient Moon to the Earth; indeed, he will find that this organ of hearing was much more perfect on the ancient Moon than it is upon the earth. With respect to the ear, we gradually learn to feel — we are often obliged to make use of paradoxical expressions — that we might be saddened by this thought, because the ear belongs to those organs which, in their entire arrangement, in their entire structure, bear witness to past perfections. And one who is gradually approaching the experience we have thus briefly indicated will understand the occultist who really gains his knowledge from still deeper powers, the occultist who tells him: on the ancient Moon, the ear had much greater significance for man than it has now. At that time the ear enabled him to live entirely, as it were, in the music of the spheres which still rang out, in a certain sense, on the ancient Moon. The ear was so related to the sounds of the sphere-music, which, although weak as compared to what it had been before, still rang out on the Moon; it was so related to these sounds that it received them. On account of its perfection on the ancient Moon, the ear was, so to say, always immersed in music. This music on the ancient Moon was still imparted to the whole of the human organisation; these waves of music still permeated the human organisation on the ancient Moon, and the inner life of man was in sympathy with all the music around him, adapted to the whole musical environment; the ear was the organ of communication, so that the outer sphere-music might be imitated in corresponding inner movements. On the ancient Moon, man still felt himself to be a sort of instrument on which the cosmos with its forces played, and the ears in their perfection were at that time on the ancient Moon intermediary between the players of the cosmos and the instrument of the human

organism. Thus the present arrangement of the organ of hearing serves to awaken a remembrance, connected with the idea that by a sort of deterioration of the organ of hearing man has become incapable of hearing the music of the spheres; he has emancipated himself from it, and can only catch the reflection of the sphere-music in the music of the present day, which, however, can, in reality, only play in the air surrounding the earth.

Experiences also emerge with respect to other senses, but they become more and more indistinct, and it would be of little avail to follow the experiences connected with other sense-organs, for the simple reason that it is difficult to explain by means of ordinary human ideas these changes which take place in one through esoteric development. For example, of what use would it be as regards what man can now experience on earth if we were to speak of the sense for language — I do not mean the sense for speaking? Those who heard the lecture on Anthroposophy in Berlin already know that there is a special sense for language. Just as there is a sense for sound, so there is a special sense, which only has an organ inwardly but none externally, for the perception of the spoken word itself. This sense has deteriorated still further, so that to-day there remains but a last echo of what it was, for instance, on the ancient Moon. That which to-day has become the sense for language, the understanding of the words of our fellow-men, served on the ancient Moon to enable a man to feel himself consciously in the whole environment, with imaginative consciousness, to move round the ancient Moon, as it were. There the sense for language dictated the movements to be made, showed how to find the way. A gradual acquaintance with this experiencing the sense for language is made when the student acquires a perception of the inner value of the vowels and consonants, as exemplified in mantric sentences. But what the earthly man generally attains in this respect is but a faint echo of what the sense for language was at one time.

Thus you see how the pupil gradually gains the perception of his etheric body; you see how that from which he turns away in his occult development, namely, the activity of his physical senses, compensates him on the other side, for it leads him to the perception of his etheric body. But it is peculiar that when we experience the perceptions of the etheric body of which we have just spoken, we feel as if they did not really belong to us, but as we have already said — as though they penetrated us from outside. We feel the body of light as though it were drilled into us, we feel something like a musical movement inaudible on the earth penetrating us through our ear; the warmth-ether, however, we do not feel as penetrating but as permeating us; and we learn to feel in place of the eliminated taste

the activity of the chemical ether working in us, etc. Thus as compared with what is known as the normal condition, the pupil feels his etheric body transformed, as though other conditions were grafted on to it from outside, as it were.

The pupil now, however, begins to perceive his etheric body more directly. The most striking change that takes place in the etheric body, which many do not appreciate at all, and which is not recognised as a change in the etheric body, although it is such, is that as a result of esoteric or theosophical development it becomes very distinctly evident that the power of memory begins somewhat to diminish. Through esoteric development, the ordinary memory almost invariably suffers diminution. At first one's memory becomes poorer. If the student does not wish to have a less efficient memory, he cannot undergo an esoteric development. Especially does that memory cease to be strongly active which may be described as the mechanical memory, best developed in human beings in childhood and youth, and generally meant when memory is alluded to. Many esotericists have to complain of the diminution of their memory, for it soon becomes perceptible. In any case, this depreciation of the memory can be observed long before one perceives the more delicate things which have just been explained. But as the student, by pursuing correct theosophical training, can never suffer injury in his physical body — in spite of its becoming more mobile — neither will his memory be injured for long. But care must be taken to do the correct thing. As regards the physical organisation, while the external body is growing more flexible, while inwardly its organs are becoming more independent, so that it is more difficult to bring them into harmony than before, inner strength must be sought. This is done by means of the six exercises described in the second part of my book, *An Outline Of Occult Science*

Now, as regards the memory, we must also do the correct thing. We lose the memory belonging to the external life: but we need suffer no injury if we take care to develop more interest, a deeper interest in all that affects us in life, more concern than hitherto. We must especially acquire a sympathetic interest for the things which to us are important. Previously we developed a more mechanical memory, and the working of this mechanical memory was fully reliable for a time, even without any particular liking for the things observed; but this ceases. It will be noticed that when undergoing a theosophical or esoteric development it is easy to forget things. But only those things fly away for which one has not a sympathetic interest, which one does not particularly care for, which do not become part of one's soul, as it were. On the other hand, that which

appeals to one's soul fixes itself in the memory all the more. Therefore, the student must try systematically to bring this about. The following may be experienced. Let us imagine a man in his youth, before he came to Theosophy when he read a novel he was quite unable to forget it; he could relate it again and again. Later, when he has come into Theosophy, if he reads a novel, it very often vanishes from his mind; he cannot recount it. But if a student takes a book, of which he has been told — or tells himself — that it might be valuable, and reads it through once and then tries directly afterwards to repeat it mentally, and not only to repeat it, but repeat it backwards, the last matters first and the first last; if he takes the trouble to go through certain details a second time, if he becomes so absorbed in it that he even takes a piece of paper and writes brief thoughts on it, and tries to put the question: — what aspect of this subject specially interests me — then he will find that in this way he develops a different kind of memory. It will not be the same memory. By using it, the difference can be accurately observed. When we use the human memory, things come into our soul as remembrances; but if, in the manner just described, we systematically acquire a memory as an esotericist or theosophist, then it is as though the things thus experienced had remained stationary in time. We learn to look back into time, as it were, and it really seems as though we were looking at what we were remembering; indeed, we shall notice that the things become more and more picture-like and the memory more and more imaginative. If we have acted in the manner just described — for instance, with a book — then, when it is necessary to bring the matter to mind again, we need only meet with something in some way connected with it, and we shall look back, as it were, at the occasion when we were studying the book, and see ourselves reading it. The remembrance does not arise, but the whole picture appears. Then we are able to notice that, while previously we only read the book, now the contents actually appear. We see them as at a distance in time; the memory becomes a seeing of pictures at a distance in time. This is the very first beginning, elementary to be sure, of gradually learning to read the Akashic Record. The memory is replaced by learning to read in the past. And very often a man who has gone through a certain esoteric development may have almost entirely lost his memory, yet he is none the worse for it, because he sees things in retrospect. He sees those with which he himself was connected, with special clearness. I am now saying something which, if it were said to anyone not connected with Theosophy, would only make him laugh. He could not help laughing, because he could not form any idea of what it means when an esotericist tells him that he no longer has any memory, and yet that he knows quite well what has

happened, because he can see it in the past. The first man would say: 'What you have is in reality a very excellent memory,' for he cannot conceive of the change that has taken place. It is a change in the etheric body that has brought it about.

Then, as a rule, this changing of the memory is connected with something else, viz., we form, we might say, a new opinion about our inner man. For we cannot acquire this retrospective vision without at the same time adopting a certain standpoint as regards our experience. Thus when at a later date a man looks back at something he has done, as in the case described above about the book, for instance, when he sees himself in that position, he will, of course, have to judge for himself whether he was wise or foolish so to occupy himself. With this retrospect there is closely united another experience, viz., a sort of self-criticism. The pupil at this stage cannot do otherwise than define his attitude towards his past. He will reproach himself about some things; he will be glad he has attained others. In short, he cannot do otherwise than judge the past he thus surveys, so that, in fact, he becomes a sterner judge of himself, of his past life. He feels within him the etheric body becoming active, the etheric body which — as may be seen by the retrospect after death — has the whole of his past within it; he feels this etheric body as included in himself, as something that lives in him and defines his value. Indeed, such a change takes place in the etheric body that very often he feels the impulse to make this self-retrospect and observe one thing or another, so as to learn in quite a natural manner to judge of his own worth as a man. While in ordinary life one lives without being aware of the etheric body, in the retrospective view of one's own life it can be perceived, and this gradually rouses in the student an impulse to make greater efforts when he undergoes an esoteric development. The esoteric life makes it necessary for one to pay more attention to one's merits and demerits, errors and imperfections.

But something deeper becomes perceptible, connected with the etheric body, something that could also be perceived formerly, though not so strongly: that is one's temperament. Upon the changing of the etheric body depends the greater sensitivity of the earnest Theosophist or esotericist towards his own temperament. Let us note a special case in which this can be particularly observed, namely, in a person of a melancholic temperament, inclined to melancholy, a person of such a melancholic temperament who has not become an esotericist, nor studied Theosophy, and goes through the world in such a way, that many things make him surly and morose, many things draw forth his all too disapproving criticism,

and he approaches things as a rule in such a manner that they arouse his sympathy and antipathy more strongly than they would perhaps in the case of a phlegmatic person. When a melancholy person of such a disposition, whether of the intense kind inclining to moroseness, turning away from, despising, hating the whole world, or the milder degree of mere sensitiveness to the world's opinion — for there are many grades and shades between these two — when such a person enters upon an esoteric or theosophical development, his temperament becomes essentially the basis from which to perceive his etheric body. He becomes susceptible to the system of forces producing his melancholy and perceives it clearly within him, and, while formerly he merely turned his discontent against the external impressions received from the world, he now begins to turn this discontent against himself. It is very necessary that in an esoteric development self-knowledge should be carefully exercised, and that the student inclined to melancholy should exercise this introspection, which enables him to take this change quietly and calmly. For while formerly the world was very often odious to him, he now becomes odious to himself; he begins to criticise himself, so that obviously he is dissatisfied with himself. We can only judge these things rightly, my dear friends, when we look at what is called temperament in the right way. A melancholy person is such simply because in him the melancholy temperament is accentuated; for fundamentally every human being has all four temperaments in his soul. In certain things a melancholy person is also phlegmatic, in others he is sanguine, in others again choleric; the melancholy temperament only stands out more prominently in him than the phlegmatic, sanguine, and choleric. And a phlegmatic person is not one possessing no other temperament but the phlegmatic, but in him the phlegmatic temperament is more prominent, and the other temperaments remain more in the background of his soul. It is the same with the other temperaments.

Now, just as the change in the etheric body of the decidedly melancholy person takes the form of turning his melancholy against himself, as it were, so do changes and new sensations appear with respect to the other temperamental qualities. But, through wise self-knowledge, esoteric development can bring about a distinct feeling that the mischief occasioned by the predominating temperament can be repaired by bringing about changes in the other temperaments also, changes which will, as it were, balance the principal change in the predominating temperament. It is only necessary to recognise how the changes in the other temperaments appear.

Let us suppose that a phlegmatic person becomes an esotericist — it will be difficult for him, but let us suppose that he can be brought to be a really good esotericist. The phlegmatic person who receives strong impressions is sometimes powerless against them; so that often the phlegmatic temperament, if not yet too much corroded by materialism, is in no sense a wholly bad preliminary condition for an esoteric development; only it must appear in a nobler form than its usual distorted manifestation. When such a phlegmatic person becomes an esotericist, the phlegmatic temperament then changes in a peculiar manner. The phlegmatic person then has a very strong inclination to observe himself very carefully, and for this reason the phlegmatic temperament to which this process gives the least pain is not a bad preliminary condition for an esoteric development when such can be entered upon, because it is practically adapted to a certain calm self-observation. What the phlegmatic person perceives within him does not disturb him as it does the melancholic person, and, therefore, when he makes self-observations, they as a rule go even deeper than those of the melancholic person, who is positively kept back by his wrath against himself. Therefore, a phlegmatic person is, as it were, the best pupil for serious theosophical development.

Now, as already stated, every man has within him all the temperaments, and in the case of a melancholy person the melancholic temperament predominates. He has also within him, for example, the phlegmatic temperament. In the melancholy person we can always find aspects which prove him to be a phlegmatic individual towards certain things. Now, if the melancholy person becomes an esotericist, while, on the one hand, he will certainly set to work severely on himself, so that self-reproaches are bound to come, if one is able to guide him in any way, his attention should be turned to the things with respect to which he was previously phlegmatic. His interest must be aroused in things for which he previously had none. If this can be accomplished, then the evils produced through his melancholy are to a certain extent paralysed.

The characteristic of the sanguine person in external life is that he likes to hurry from one impression to another, unwilling to keep to one impression. Such a one becomes a peculiar esotericist. He changes in a very peculiar way through the alteration of his etheric body: the moment he tries to acquire esotericism, or another tries to impart it to him, he becomes phlegmatic towards his own inner being, so that under certain circumstances the sanguine person is at first the least promising — as regards his temperament — for an esoteric development. When the sanguine person comes to esotericism or theosophical life — as he very

frequently does, for he is interested in all sorts of things, and so, among other things, in Theosophy or esotericism, though his interest may not be serious or permanent — he must acquire a sort of self-observation; but he does this with great indifference, he does not care to look into himself. He is interested in this or that in himself, but his interest is not very deep. He discovers all sorts of interesting qualities within himself; but he is at once satisfied with that, and he speaks enthusiastically of this or that interesting quality, but he has soon forgotten the whole matter again — even what he had observed in himself. And those who approach esotericism from a momentary interest and soon leave it again are chiefly the sanguine natures. In the next lecture we shall try to illustrate what I am now explaining in words by a drawing of the etheric body on the blackboard; we shall then sketch, in addition, the changes in the etheric body through theosophical or esoteric development.

It is different, again, in the case of the choleric temperament. It is almost impossible, or, at any rate, very seldom possible, to make a choleric an esotericist; if the choleric temperament is especially prominent in him as personality, it is characteristic that he rejects all esotericism, he does not wish to have anything to do with it. Still, it may happen through the karmic conditions of his life that a choleric person may be brought to esotericism; but it will be difficult for him to make changes in his etheric body, for the etheric body of the choleric proves to be particularly dense, and can only be influenced with difficulty. In the melancholy individual the etheric body is like an india-rubber ball (this is a trivial comparison, but it will convey what I wish to say) from which the air has escaped: when one presses a dent made in it, it remains for some time; in the choleric, the etheric body is like an india-rubber ball well inflated, filled with air. An attempt to make a dent in it not only produces no permanent effect, but is perceptibly resisted. The etheric body of the choleric is not at all yielding, but knotty and hard. Hence the choleric himself has a difficult task to change his etheric body. He can do nothing with himself. Therefore, from the outset he rejects esoteric development, which is to change him; he cannot lay hold of himself, as it were. But when the choleric realises the seriousness of life, or similar things, or when there is a little melancholic ring in his temperament, then by means of this melancholy he can be led so to develop the choleric note in his human organism that he now works with all the intensity of his force on his resisting etheric body. And if he then succeeds in producing changes in his etheric body he rouses within him a very special quality; through his esoteric development he becomes more capable than other people of presenting external facts in an orderly and

profound manner in their causative or historical connection. And one who is capable of judging a well-written history — which is not, as a rule, written by esotericists — a history which really depicts the facts, will always find the beginning, the unconscious, instinctive beginning of that which the choleric esotericist could do as an historian, as a narrator or describer. Men like Tacitus, for instance, were at the beginning of such an instinctive, esoteric development; hence the wonderful, incomparable descriptions given by Tacitus. As an esotericist, who reads Tacitus, one knows that this unique kind of history-writing depends upon the very special working of a choleric temperament into the etheric body. This appears especially in writers who have undergone an esoteric development. Even though the outer world may not accept it, this is the case with Homer. Homer owed his vivid glorious power of delineation to the choleric temperament working into his etheric body. And many other things could be pointed out in this realm which in external life would prove, or at least verify the fact, that when he undergoes an esoteric development the choleric renders himself specially capable of clearly representing the world in its reality, in its causative connections. When the choleric undergoes an esoteric development, his works, even in their external structure, one might say, bear the character of truth and reality. Thus we see that in the changes of the etheric body the life of man is very clearly expressed; the form it has hitherto taken is more perceptible than is otherwise the case in the present incarnation. In esoteric development temperaments become more strongly perceptible, and it is specially important in true self-knowledge to take this observation of temperaments into account. We shall speak further on these matters in the next lecture.



Lecture 4

23 March 1913, The Hague

The more the etheric body of the student alters under influence of his esoteric development, the more does he obtain what may be called a feeling for time. By this feeling for time is to be understood a feeling for the experiences of the consecutive order of facts and events, in time. In ordinary life a man does not usually possess this distinct feeling for time. Now, I have already given a hint of how this feeling for time is aroused, even through the alteration in the physical body, in that through an esoteric or theosophical development the student grows more sensitive with respect to summer and winter; but through the alteration in the etheric body the perception of the external progress of events becomes much more alive and sensitive. And the student who for some time has earnestly tried to bring his soul forward will perceive a distinct difference between the various seasons of the year; indeed, even between part of the seasons; he will gradually learn to feel inwardly a great difference between summer and winter, between spring, summer, and autumn, and he will also feel other shorter divisions of them in the course of the year. Time in its progress becomes in a sense living. He gradually notices that differentiated life can be perceived in the course of time. Just as in the physical body, the various organs are differentiated, just as they become more alive inwardly and more independent of one another, so do the various parts of the forward march of time become to a certain extent more independent of each other. This is connected with the fact that with the development of his own etheric body the student experiences the life in the outer ether which surrounds us everywhere. We are surrounded not only by air, but also by ether; and this ether lives a real life in time. The surrounding ether is, in a certain sense, a sort of living being, and lives with consecutive differences, just as a man's life is different at different ages. The student learns to feel the progressive life of the outer ether. He thus acquires more and more feeling for what the life of the life-ether outside is when spring comes or when summer approaches, when summer has reached its zenith, when summer declines, when autumn is approaching, and when it is actually there. He learns to feel in harmony with this external course, he notices a distinct difference between the life of summer-spring, summer-autumn, and the true winter life.

This difference becomes more and more distinctly perceptible, so at length he can actually say: in its ether the earth lives an independent life, and, inasmuch as a man lives in time, he is actually immersed in and forms part of the alternating life of the ether. At midsummer the student most clearly feels that he with his etheric body is, to a certain extent, thrown back upon himself, and that he and the earth then live separate lives, so that the earth then affects him but little, inwardly; his attention is then, as we have said, directed to himself, as it were, and he gradually forms an idea of what the occultist means when he says: the summer is really the sleeping time of the earth. We here come to a matter which, on account of the external maya by which mankind is continually surrounded, is quite wrongly estimated. In the external life, which is affected by maya, people like to compare spring to the morning, summer to midday, and autumn to evening. This comparison is inaccurate. If we really wish to compare the external course of the earth with something in ourselves, we must compare spring, summer, and autumn in their consecutive order with the sleeping-time of the earth, and autumn, and winter, and spring in their consecutive order with the waking period of the earth. And when we speak of a Spirit of the Earth, we must conceive that in that half of the globe where summer reigns the Spirit of the Earth is during that time in the same condition, so to speak, as we human beings are during our sleeping state. Of course, it is different in the case of the earth: man alternates absolutely between waking and sleeping; this is not so with the earth, where waking and sleeping pass, as it were, from one half of the globe to the other; fundamentally the Spirit of the Earth never actually sleeps, but when waking activity is dormant in one hemisphere, it is then transferred to the other half. But we need not pay much attention to this just now. We will consider the experience man has in common with the earth. Only one hemisphere really comes into consideration here. We have to conceive that during summer the Spirit of the Earth separates in a certain way from its physical body, which in that sense is the earth itself, and that as regards its physical earthly body, this Spirit of the Earth lives the same life in summer as a human being lives during sleep, in relation to his physical body. During the time of sleep the physical body and the etheric body lie on the bed; they live a purely vegetative life.

To occult vision it appears that in the sleeping human body something is unfolded like a delicate vegetation, comparable to a sprouting forth of purely vegetable life, and that the forces which during the waking state become exhausted are again replenished by this vegetative life; so that while a man is asleep he really has his summer-time. And if he were to

look at the life of his sleeping physical body when with his astral body and his Ego he is outside the physical body, he would see this sleeping life of the physical body budding and sprouting, just like the plant-life on the earth in spring and summer. He would observe in his physical body during sleep a vegetative summer life budding and sprouting.

But as the part of the earth that we inhabit has its sleeping time during summer, man himself with his etheric body is then to a certain extent thrown more on his own resources, and the consequence of this is that in his esoteric development the student — if he has acquired the capacity of being able to perceive this — can perceive his own etheric body better and more clearly during summer than during winter. He perceives the independence of his etheric body, as it were, and, in our age above all, the independence of the etheric part of the head, that etheric part underlying the brain. It is a very peculiar sensation when through feeling the life of the ether of the earth in summer — the student gradually begins to acquire a sort of inner feeling for that particular part of the human etheric body underlying its most important part, that is the head, and to feel this inner experience as different in spring, different in summer and again different towards autumn. The distinctions in this inner experience are so clearly felt that, just as in the case of the physical body, we speak of a differentiation of its parts, so now we may really speak of varied lives we live through in the course of summer, clearly distinct from one another. The life that unfolds inwardly in spring is different from that which unfolds inwardly in summer, and that in autumn is again different. In speaking of the etheric body, we must in reality make a division, which we shall make to-day; we must, as it were, divide off a particular etheric part, which underlies the head.

It is this which I will sketch with a few strokes. If we imagine a human being diagrammatically (in rough outline) we may think that this etheric body of which I have just spoken can be so perceived — upwards less and less perceptible losing itself in indefiniteness — that it is coincident with time. And we may even learn gradually to feel quite clearly that in this part of our etheric body certain beings were active, creative, replacing one another, as it were, in the various seasons passed through from spring to autumn; it can be observed that the seasons have worked upon this brain-portion of our etheric body, so that our etheric brain is in certain respects a complicated organ. It has been fitted together, as it were, by different Spiritual beings who develop their powers in consecutive periods of time. We now obtain an idea of a very important teaching, and gradually we learn to perceive the truth of this teaching, a teaching cultivated especially

in the Zarathustrian schools. This held that the etheric part of the human brain was gradually created from out the Spiritual cosmos by Spiritual beings called the Amshaspands. These Amshaspands worked in such a way that they ruled, as it were, during summer: and indeed they still rule to-day, in succession, the first ruling in early spring, the second in spring, etc., up to the sixth and seventh. Seven — or relatively speaking, six — such Spiritual beings work consecutively in time; and these are the creative Spirits who — precisely by working consecutively, so that when one has finished his activity the next sets to work — construct a principle as complicated as the etheric body, and especially the human brain. Thus into our brain six or seven Spiritual beings are consecutively at work, and the physical brain of man can only be understood when we are able to say: 'There works a Spirit who can be specially felt in spring: he sends forth his forces which are principally etheric forces; then in later spring comes a second Spirit who in turn sends forth his forces.' (See drawing.)

The etheric forces of this second Spirit then stream into the same space. The third Spirit in turn sends in his etheric forces, and thus is this etheric part of the human brain developed; the Spirits who follow one another in consecutive periods send their etheric forces into the same space.

Now we must clearly understand that we can only feel certain connections of that which in our brain is related to these Spirits who to-day develop their etheric forces outside us; for Occultism teaches us that what I have just described had taken place during the ancient Moon period; so that we must not think that perhaps these Spirits who as we may say — rule the summer, are still at work to-day and are perhaps formative powers. The rudiments which were really rayed in by these Spirits during the ancient Moon period man brought over with him into his earthly existence; but as he thus bears them within his own etheric body, he can even to-day, when these Spiritual beings no longer have a direct influence on the inner etheric body of our brain, still trace his relationship to them, and this he feels in summer. In early spring the first of these Spirits can be felt, who to-day has a different task outside in the ether; but the student feels that from him comes that which he bears within him, and has received in the ancient Moon period; he becomes conscious of the relationship.

This is the stupendous discovery the pupil can make in the course of his esoteric development; that as time goes on he experiences within himself something like an image of active Spiritual Beings, who to-day have quite a different task from what they had in the past when they were amongst the

Spirits working together creatively on our own being. During the development of the earth the physical brain appeared as the image, the impression of what had developed as a kind of etheric archetype even during the ancient Moon period, through these Spiritual cosmic influences. I have depicted this part of our etheric body as being open above, because this is what it is really felt to be. It is so felt that as soon as the pupil perceives it within himself, he has the feeling: 'Thou open'st thyself to the Spiritual worlds; thou art in connection with Spiritual worlds that are always above thee.'

There is another feeling that is gradually developed in esoteric life regarding this part of the etheric body. It is usually not at all easy to discuss these matters, but I hope that if I try to express them clearly we shall be able to understand them. When a student begins to feel his etheric body, he actually feels himself floating in the stream of time. But as regards this etheric part of the head the student feels in a sense as though he were taking time with him, as if he not only floats in flowing time, but takes it with him. It is in fact the case that we carry with us a great deal belonging to an earlier age in this etheric part of the head, for instance, we carry the ancient Moon period within it; for the most essential part of it arose during the ancient Moon period, and in the etheric body of the brain we carry with us the stream of the ancient Moon-time. And when a student begins to feel this, it is like a remembrance of the time on the ancient Moon. One who forms an idea of the inner experiences which were spoken of in the last lecture as the experiences of temperament, can also understand when it is said that the occultist who thus learns to feel the inner nature of the etheric body of the head, when he specially concentrates upon this etheric part, he always feels this concentration to be connected with a melancholy frame of mind which comes over him; he feels in his esoteric development as if a melancholy mood were poured into his head: from which mood there gradually develops in his inner feeling the understanding of the things presented to our friends in the occult description of the ancient Moon.

Esoteric development must, of course, go much further if one would really describe all the various conditions on the Moon; but from this you will see the rise of what may lead to such a description. You see that in the student himself there appears something that may be described as the melancholy of his head, and within this frame of mind gradually emerges something like a vision of memory into a primeval past, into the ancient Moon period. And it would be desirable if from descriptions such as have just been given, you were to judge how esoteric development really

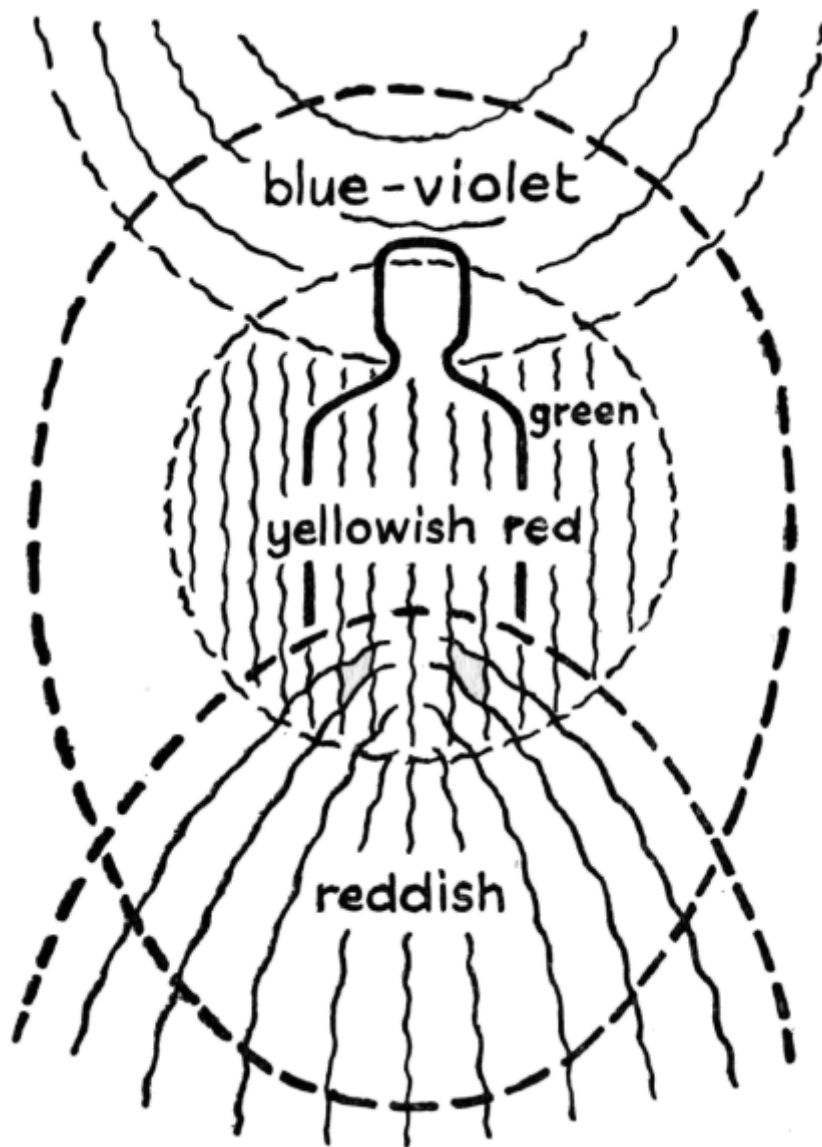
proceeds, how beginning from some particular experience, the student first learns to recognise this experience (in this case as a remembrance of a primeval past, which he has carried along the stream of time with him into the present), and learns to unroll again, as it were, that which has once been lived through. Judge from this that the occultist is truly not speaking of visionary fancies when he sets forth that construction of the universe which goes back to the ancient periods of Moon, Sun and Saturn, but that if the hearer will only wait patiently, he will be able — through the analysis of the discovery of these things — to gain an idea of how it is possible gradually to live into those great, mighty cosmic pictures which truly belong to a far-distant past, but can be called forth again from the life of the present; we need only reach the point of development at which we can experience and then unfold the past phenomena of time which are involved, wrapped up within us.

The part of the etheric body which belongs to the middle part of the human being is experienced in a different way. Proceeding outwardly feeling ceases; inwardly it is perceived approximately in such a way that it may be said: The portion in the middle, which has a sort of oval shape, is felt separated from the rest. If we were to separate this middle portion of the etheric body as a particular experience we should have to say: He who through his esoteric development comes also to experience in himself the differentiated life of this middle portion of man, has the feeling that essentially in this part of his etheric body he floats exactly with the stream of time. And in this part of the etheric body is clearly felt the living in harmony with the etheric life of the earth which has become differentiated in the sequence of time.

A student whose esoteric development has made yet further progress feels in this particular part that in early spring other Spirits work upon him than those of midsummer or autumn. It is a sort of living in harmony with these, as though actually floating along in their company. This part of his etheric body is thereby separated from the other, and, if we are able to go into such matters the feeling we have in this middle portion of the etheric body alternates between the phlegmatic and sanguine moods. It takes on the greatest variety of shades between these two. For example, this part of the etheric body feels itself accompanying the stream of time in spring — in the physical body this is expressed quite differently — and towards autumn it feels more as though it were resisting and repulsing the stream of time.

The third part of our etheric body is felt to fade away below into the indefinite, and though expanding widely, to disappear into the earth. These are the three parts of the etheric body which can, as disconnected one from the other, now be felt; this represents the inner sensation, the inner feeling of the etheric body; it would not present itself in this way to the seer if he were to observe the etheric body of another human being, for this is an inner experience of the etheric body. This experience again is materially modified by the existence of a fourth part of the etheric body, clearly outlined as a sort of oval, which really includes the human being within it. From the various feelings experienced as regards this part of the etheric body, a feeling is gradually acquired, an inner impression of the etheric body, as of an external form.

And then the etheric body appears as though of various hues, and in this part an impression arises of being in a sort of bluish or blue-violet aura. This part which corresponds to the head, is bluish, or violet-blue according to the nature of the person, but gradually fades away below to a greenish colour. The middle portion is a distinctly yellow-red — when one perceives the colour — and the lower part shades from distinctly reddish to deep-red, but rays out and often extends far.



Now the forces working in these four parts differ distinctly so that the inner sensations they produce are not very definite; but on looking at this outermost aura clairvoyantly from outside, the forces in it appear to compress the upper part; and looking at it from outside the impression is given that the etheric part of the head is exactly of the same form, only a little larger. This applies also to the middle part. The further we go down, the less is this the case. But through the forces working one upon another, seen from without the impression is that the etheric body is a sort of foundation-form of the physical body, but projecting for a certain space beyond it. In the lower part the feeling of the similarity of the physical body and etheric body is gradually lost.

Thus you bear in mind that the inner experience of the etheric body is different in character from the etheric body manifested outwardly to the observation of the seer. This must be borne clearly in mind. When later in esoteric development you learn to regard the mood, according to the fundamental temperaments founded in the etheric body and described in the last lecture, it will appear that with respect to the lowest part of the etheric body the feeling there is perceived to be of a choleric nature. Thus the several temperaments are to be distinguished in the various parts of our etheric bodies. The upper part of the etheric body is of a melancholy nature, the middle part alternates between phlegmatic and sanguine, and the lower has a choleric tone. And I beg you definitely to notice that this description applies to the etheric body. Not to consider this carefully, brings easily a fall into error if these matters are taken externally. But the student who takes this carefully into consideration will be greatly struck by the agreement of what has been adduced with certain phenomena of life. Let us for a moment study a choleric person — it is highly interesting so to do.

According to what has just been said, in the case of the choleric person the lower part of the etheric body would be conspicuous; it would predominate over the other parts. Thereby the person is shown to be choleric. The other parts are also developed, of course; but the lower part would be particularly prominent. Now when the lower part of the etheric body, as etheric body, is particularly developed and has its strong forces there, something else is always evident, that is, the physical body receives short measure in these parts, it manifests a certain lack of development in the parts which underlie this portion of the etheric body. The result of this in pronounced choleric cases, those, for example, who are true to type, is that the anatomic state of certain organs which correspond to this part of the etheric body comes off badly. Please read about the anatomic condition of Napoleon, and you will be struck by the proof it presents of what I am telling you. Only when we begin to study these hidden sides of human nature shall we really learn to comprehend it.

You might now ask the question: How does what was said in the last lecture agree with what has been said to-day? It agrees perfectly. We then spoke of the four temperaments; these are predetermined by the forces of the etheric body. And, in fact, the life of the etheric body is related to time in the same way that the division into members, the differentiation, is related to space. The physical body becomes more keenly alive in space, differentiating its several members as it were; the etheric body becomes more alive, as its parts differentiate themselves in time; that is, as the time-life in its consecutive order is sympathetically experienced in its

independent parts and members. The fundamental characteristic of the melancholic person is that he always carries within him something he has experienced in time, a past. He who is able to understand the etheric body of the melancholic finds that it always has within it the after-vibrations of what it experienced in bygone times. I do not now mean what was here referred to in the case of the human brain, which relates to primeval times, but to what is usually called melancholy; the etheric life of the head is particularly stirred at some definite time, in youth, let us say; and then having been thus stirred, it is so strongly influenced, that in late life the melancholic still carries with him in his etheric body the vibrations which were imprinted in his youth, while with the non-melancholic these vibrations soon cease. In the case of either a phlegmatic or sanguine person, there is a sort of floating with time; but in the phlegmatic person there is, as it were, a perfectly uniform floating with the stream of time, while the sanguine person oscillates between a quicker or slower inner experience with respect to the externally flowing stream of time. On the other hand, the choleric person resists — and that is the peculiarity — the approaching time which flows to us, as it were, from the future. The choleric person in a sense repulses time, and quickly rids himself of the vibrations which time calls forth in his etheric body. Hence the melancholic person carries within him the greatest number of after-vibrations of past experiences, the choleric person the least. If you take the somewhat grotesque illustration of the well-inflated ball, which was compared with the etheric body of the choleric, you may also use that illustration here. The ball is only with difficulty impressed by the consecutive events; it repulses them, and therefore does not allow the events which come in the stream of time to leave strong vibrations within it. Hence the choleric does not carry them for long within him. The melancholic person who allows the events to work very deeply into his etheric body, has for a long time to bear the vibrations which he carries with him into the future from the past.

In order to understand the etheric body and the physical body, it is well to conceive that the physical body is pre-eminently a space-body, and the etheric body pre-eminently a time-being. We do not at all understand the etheric body if we consider it only as a space-being. And such a drawing as that before you is really only a sort of pictorial representation in space of the life of the etheric body, flowing in time and having its existence in time. As the life of the etheric body itself runs its course in time and is a time-life, for this reason we also feel time with our etheric body, that is, we experience the external stream of events in time.

When a man goes through an occult development, he also experiences another stream of events in time. In ordinary life this stream of events is scarcely perceived; but it is soon perceived as the soul develops higher. That is, the course of the day. For in a certain way the Spirits of the yearly course also work with lesser forces in the course of the day. It is the same sun that conditions the course of the year and that of the day! He who has gone through an esoteric development will soon find that there is such a relationship between his etheric body and what goes on in the external ether that his attitude towards the Spirits of the morning, the Spirits of mid-day and those of evening is different in each case. The Spirits of the morning so affect us that we feel stimulated in our etheric body to an activity which inclines more to the intellect, to the reason, which can think over what has been experienced, which can work more with the judgment upon what has been observed and still remains in the memory. As mid-day approaches, these powers of judgment gradually decline; a man then feels impulses of the will more active inwardly. Even though towards mid-day the student begins to be less capable of work as regards his external forces than he was in the morning, yet inwardly the forces of his will are more active. And towards evening there come the productive forces which are connected more with fancy. Thus the Spiritual beings who send their forces into the conditions of the life-ether of the earth differ as regards the duties they have to perform.

We may feel convinced that the more we overcome the materialistic sentiments belonging to our age, the more we shall realise that we must learn to take into account the adapting of the etheric body to the sequence of time. There will come a time when it will be considered curious that in school a subject should be studied in the morning which makes special claims on the powers of the imagination. In the future this will be considered just as strange as it would be to-day if anyone should put on a fur coat in August and a thin coat in mid-winter. It is true, we are still a long way off this to-day; but it will come sooner than people really think. There will come a day when it will be the usual custom (there will again be a difference between summer and winter), a time will come when people will see that it is foolish to organise school-hours otherwise than to arrange for several hours' work in the morning, leaving several hours free in the middle of the day, and then devoting several hours again to work in the evening. Perhaps this may not be considered practical according to our present division of time: but it will be some day when attention is paid to the requirements of human nature. The morning hours will be devoted to mathematics, the evening hours to poetry. We are now living in an age

when — by reason of the materialistic view which is now at its height — the understanding of these things is completely overwhelmed; so that at the present time that which one day when the whole nature of man is borne in mind, must appear to be the most reasonable thing, now seems to be most foolish.

Another result will be that during winter we shall through esoteric development feel more and more that we are not so shut up in ourselves, in our inner etheric body, as we are during the summer, but that we come more into connection with the direct Spirit of the Earth. The difference is so felt that during the summer we say: 'We are now living with the Spirits who have worked upon us from primeval times, whose work we bear within us, whilst the direct Spirit of the Earth is farther from us.' In winter the inner vibrations, which from ancient times we have carried with us, especially in the head, will become more silent; we shall feel ourselves connected with the Spirit of the Earth; we shall learn to understand that the Spirit of the Earth is awake in winter. As in summer He sleeps, so in winter He awakens. During summer the Spirit of the Earth sees the budding and sprouting plant-life come forth, in the same way that the sleeping man sees the vegetative forces shoot forth in his own body. During the winter they withdraw, just as, when man is awake, these vegetative forces in the human body withdraw. In winter the Spirit of the Earth is awake; the earth is united, as it were, with the waking Spirit, just as a human being during his waking period is united with his waking Spirit. The consequence is — that when through his esoteric life the student becomes sensitive to it — he learns to feel that in summer he must think, he must work out his thoughts, but not his inspirations. These come from what is within, from the independent etheric body. In winter one is, however, more easily inspired with thoughts than in summer, so that human thought in winter works more as an inspiration than in summer. In a particular sense human thought flows so easily in winter that it comes of itself, in a certain way. Of course, these conditions are variously combined. They may take a quite individual form in certain people, so that if a person is more inclined to think thoughts tending towards the super-sensible, this may be reversed. Through the fact that during summer it is easier to produce these thoughts of the super-sensible, exactly the reverse may come about. But as regards the experience of the etheric body, what I have just said holds good.

This particular living in sympathy with the external etheric principle becomes more perceptible the more the student progresses in his esoteric development. And if he wishes to develop his etheric body in the right

manner, he must gradually — in the same way that he had first to suppress the sensible perception — shut off his thoughts also; he must especially shut off his abstract thinking and gradually pass over to the concrete, picture-like thinking; from thinking he must pass over to thought, and then he must cease to think at all. But when he presents an empty consciousness, and allows all thought to cease, in the manner described in the second part of my book, *An Outline Of Occult Science*, he feels the thought that lives within him disappearing, and what he has previously by his efforts produced as his thinking melt away; and in its place he feels himself wonderfully animated by thoughts that stream into him as though from unknown worlds for his special benefit. It is a transition in the life of the human soul which may be described by saying — I beg you not to misunderstand the expression — that the pupil ceases to be clever and begins to grow wise. A very definite idea may be connected with this. Cleverness, which is inwardly acquired through the power of judgment, ability — an earthly possession — disappears. The student's inner attitude is such that he does not value it particularly highly, for he gradually feels shine within him a God-given wisdom! I beg you not to misunderstand the expression; for this experience enables one to use the expression without arrogance, to use it in all humility and modesty. With respect to the God-given wisdom, the student constantly becomes more and more humble. We can really only be proud and arrogant about self-attained cleverness, and so-called ability, but when one passes through this experience one gradually feels as though this wisdom, this God-given wisdom, streams into one's etheric body and fills it. This is a very important experience to have, for it affects the student in a peculiar manner; he then feels life going away, floating away on the stream of time. And the stream of wisdom is something that comes towards him, something which — as he swims on with time — pours into him like an advancing stream; and he really feels this influx — this is pictorially described — as streams, but streams flowing against the course of time, which come in through the head and pour themselves into the body and are caught up by it.

What I have just described gradually develops into a very definite experience. The student no longer feels himself in space; for he learns to feel the etheric body, which is a time-being; he learns to move forward in time, and continually to meet, as it were, the Spiritual Beings who come toward him from the other side of the cosmos, who come toward him from the future and bestow upon him wisdom. The feeling of receiving this wisdom can only be attained when the esoteric or occult development has been so directed that one has unfolded a feeling which the soul brings to

bear in a special manner upon all future events; when one has developed composure with respect to what the future may bring us, that is, what constant experience brings us. If we still approach what experience brings us with strong sympathy and antipathy, if we have not yet learned to take Karma earnestly; that is, if we have not learned to accept what Karma brings and bear it patiently, then we are not yet •;able to have that special perceptivity for the wisdom that streams towards us; for only from the experience that is calmly undergone does there differentiate within our being the shining, inflowing stream of wisdom. This perceptivity betokens a very definite point in our esoteric experience, the point to which we come, and which we can really only attain when in devoted thankfulness and tranquillity we receive each experience that comes to us. The changing of our etheric body which takes place in a true esoteric development enables us to do this, for among other requirements for development it is also expected that we should acquire tranquillity, and a true understanding of our Karma, so that we do not through sympathy and antipathy attract what is to come, or resist what concerns us, but learn to bear our Karma as a steady stream of experience. This learning to bear our Karma forms part of our esoteric development, and it is this which makes it possible for us so to transform our etheric body that it gradually learns more and more to perceive the outer etheric life surrounding it.



Lecture 5

24 March 1913, The Hague

This course of lectures should rightly be considered as an explanation of certain experiences passed through by the student as changes produced in him by his esoteric development, or, shall we say, Theosophy; so that what is described is really to be looked upon as something that can actually be experienced during development. Naturally, only outstanding experiences, typical experiences, as it were, can be explained; but from the description of these characteristic experiences we may gain an idea of many other things we have to notice in the course of development.

In the last lecture we spoke principally of the fact that the student acquires a great sensitivity with respect to what goes on in the external life-ether, or in the ether as a whole. These experiences are connected with many other things, and one which we should particularly notice is the experience we have with respect to our power of judgment. As human beings, we are so placed in the world that in a certain way we judge the things that come before us, we form ideas about things; we consider one thing to be right, another wrong. A person's capacity for judging depends upon what is known as shrewdness, cleverness, discernment. This shrewdness, this cleverness, this discernment, is in course of his development gradually placed in a different light. This was briefly indicated in the last lecture. The student finds more and more that for the actual affairs of the higher, spiritual life, this shrewdness or cleverness is not of the slightest value, although he must bring as much of it as possible at his starting point on the physical plane if he wishes to enter upon the path to the higher worlds. And thus he comes inevitably into a position which may easily seem unendurable to the utilitarian; for while of necessity he needs something at first for his higher development, yet when he has acquired the needful quality it loses its value. To a certain extent the student must do everything possible to develop a sound power of judgment here on the physical plane, one that weighs the facts carefully; but having done so he must quite clearly understand that during his sojourn in the higher worlds this power of judgment has not the same value as it possesses here below on the physical plane. If the student wishes his higher senses to be sound he must proceed from a healthy power of judgment; but for the higher vision healthy judgment must be transformed into healthy vision.

But however highly we may develop, as long as we have to live on the physical plane we are still human beings of this plane, and on this physical plane we have the task of developing our power of judgment in a healthy way. Therefore we must take care to learn betimes not to mix the life in the higher worlds with that of the physical plane. One who wishes to make direct use on the physical plane of what he experiences in the higher worlds will easily become a visionary, an incompetent man. We must accustom ourselves to be able to live clearly in the higher worlds, and then, when we pass out of that condition, to hold again as firmly as possible to what is suitable for the physical plane. We must carefully and conscientiously maintain the twofold attitude demanded by the twofold nature of the spiritual and physical life. We accustom ourselves to the right attitude towards the world in this respect by accustoming ourselves not to bring what belongs to the higher worlds into the everyday course of life; to bring into everyday affairs as little as possible of that which may easily tempt us to say, for instance, when something in a person is unsympathetic to us, that we cannot bear his aura. In ordinary life, when speaking of this or that as unsympathetic, it is better to keep to the ordinary terms; it is better in this respect to remain like one's fellows on the physical plane, and to be as sparing as possible in ordinary life of expressions which only have their true application when used for the higher life. We ought carefully to refrain from mixing into daily life words, ideas, conceptions, belonging to the higher life. This may perhaps seem a sort of pedantic requirement to anyone who, from a certain enthusiasm for the spiritual life, shall we say, finds it necessary to permeate his whole being with it. And yet, that which in an ordinary way in ordinary life may perhaps seem pedantic, is an important principle of training for the higher worlds. Therefore, even if it should seem more natural to describe the ordinary life in words belonging to the higher life, let us translate them into the language most fitted for the physical plane. It must be emphasised again and again that these things are not without consequence, but are full of significance and possess active power. This being admitted, we may also speak without prejudice of the fact that, as regards the life in the higher worlds, the ordinary power of judgment ceases to be of use, and we learn to feel, to a certain extent, that the sort of cleverness we had before is now at an end. And here again the student notices — this is an experience which grows more and more frequent — he notices his dependence upon the etheric life of the world, that is, upon time. How often do we find in our particular age that people, even quite young people, approach everything in the world upon which judgment can be passed, and think that when they have acquired a certain power of judgment they can

pronounce opinion about everything in existence, and speculate on everything possible. In esoteric development the belief that one can speculate on all things is torn out of the soul by the roots; for we then notice that our opinions are capable of growth and, above all, that they need to mature.

The student learns to recognise that if he wishes to arrive at an opinion with which he is himself able to agree, he must live for some while with certain ideas which he has acquired, so that his own etheric body can come to an understanding with them. He learns that he must wait before he can arrive at a certain opinion. Only then does he realise the great significance of the words: 'Let what is in the soul nature.' He really becomes more and more modest. But this 'becoming modest' is a very special matter, because it is not always possible to hold the balance between being obliged to form an opinion and being able to wait for maturity to have an opinion upon a subject, though delusion about these things is possible to a high degree, and because there is really nothing but life itself which can explain these things. A philosopher may dispute with a person who has reached a certain degree of esoteric development concerning some cosmic mystery, or cosmic law; if the philosopher can only form philosophic opinion he will believe himself necessarily in the right concerning the matter, and we can understand that he must have this belief; but the other person will know quite well that the question cannot be decided by the capacity for judgment possessed by the philosopher. For he knows that in former times he also used the conceptions upon which the philosopher bases his opinion, but allowed them to mature within him, which process made it possible for him to have an opinion on the subject; he knows that he has lived with it, thereby making himself ripe enough to form the opinion which he now pronounces at a higher stage of maturity. But an understanding between these two persons is really out of the question, and in many cases cannot be brought about directly; it can only come to pass when in the philosopher there arises a feeling of the necessity of allowing certain things to mature in his soul before he permits himself to give an opinion about them. Opinions, views must be battled for, must be won by effort — this the student recognises more and more. He acquires a profound, intense feeling of this, because he gains the inner feeling of time which is essentially connected with the development of the etheric body. Indeed, he gradually notices a certain opposition arise in his soul between the way he formerly judged and the way he now judges after having attained a certain maturity in this particular matter; and he notices that the opinion he formed in the past and the opinion he now holds

confront each other like two powers, and he then notices in himself a certain inner mobility of the temporal within him; he notices that the earlier must be overcome by the later. This is the dawn in the consciousness of a certain feeling for time, which arises from the presence of inner conflicts, coming into existence through a certain opposition between the later and the earlier. It is absolutely necessary to acquire this inner feeling, this inner perception of time, for we must remember that we can only learn to experience the etheric when we acquire an inner idea of time. This develops into our always having the feeling that the earlier originates in ourselves, in our judgment, in our knowledge; but that the later flows into us, as it were, streams towards us, is vouchsafed to us. More and more clearly comes the feeling of what was described in the last lecture, viz., that the cleverness which springs from oneself must be separated from the wisdom which is acquired by surrender to the stream flowing towards one from the future. To feel ourselves being filled by thoughts, in contradistinction to our former experiences of consciously forming the thoughts ourselves — this shows progress. When the student learns more and more to feel that he no longer forms thoughts, but that the thoughts think themselves in him — when he has this feeling it is a sign that his etheric body is gradually developing the necessary inner feeling of time. All that went before will have the attribute of being something formed egotistically; all that is attained by maturing will have the characteristic of burning up and consuming what the student has made for himself. Thus the gradual change in his inner being results in a very remarkable experience; he becomes increasingly conscious that his own thinking, his own thought processes must be suppressed because they are of little value, compared with his devotion to the thoughts which stream to him from the cosmos. The individual life loses, as it were, one of its parts — that is extremely important — it loses the part we usually call personal-thinking, and there only remains personal-feeling and personal-willing. But these too undergo a change at the same time as the thinking. The student no longer produces his thoughts, but they think themselves within his soul. With the feeling that the thoughts have their own inner power through which they think themselves, comes a certain merging of feeling and will. Feeling, we might say, becomes more and more active, and the will becomes more and more allied to feeling. Feeling and will become more closely related to each other than they were before on the physical plane. No impulse of the will can be formed without accompanying development of feeling. Many of the student's deeds produce within him a bitter feeling, others produce an uplifting feeling. As regards his will, he feels at the same time that his own will-impulses must be adjusted in conformity with his

feelings. He gradually finds that feelings which are there merely for the sake of enjoyment give rise to a kind of reproach; but feelings which are so perceived that he says: 'The human soul must furnish the field of work for such feelings, they must be experienced inwardly, otherwise they would not exist in the universe' — such feelings he gradually finds more justifiable than the others. An example shall be given at once, a characteristic example, in order that what is meant may be made quite clear; it is not intended to decry anything, but only to express the essential nature of this difference. Someone may find his pleasure in having good meals. When he experiences this pleasure, something happens within him — this is indisputable. But it does not make much difference in the universe, in the cosmos, when an individual experiences this pleasure in a good meal; it is not of much consequence to the general life of the world. But if someone takes up St. John's Gospel and reads but three lines of it, that is of immense consequence to the whole universe; for if among all the souls on earth none were to read St. John's Gospel, the whole mission of the earth could not be fulfilled; from our taking part in such activities there stream forth spiritually the forces which ever add new life to the earth in place of that which dies within it. We must distinguish a difference in experience between ordinary egotistic feeling and that in which we are but providing the field for experience of a feeling necessary for the existence of the world. Under certain circumstances a man may do very little externally, but when in his developed soul, for no personal pleasure, he is aware that through his feeling the opportunity is given for the existence of a feeling important to the universal existence; then he is doing an enormous amount.

Strange as it may seem, the following may also be said: There was once a Greek philosopher named Plato. He wrote many books. As long as a person only lives with his soul on the physical plane, he reads these books for his own instruction. Such outer instruction has its significance for the physical plane, and it is very good to make use of every means of instruction on the physical plane, for otherwise we remain stupid. The things achieved on the physical plane are there for the purpose of our instruction. But when a soul has developed esoterically, he then takes Plato, shall we say, and reads him again for a different reason; that is, because Plato and his works only have a meaning in the earthly existence if what he has written is also experienced in other souls; and the student then reads not only to instruct himself, but because something is accomplished thereby.

Something must be added to our feeling, enabling us to recognise a difference between egotistic feeling, which leans more towards enjoyment, and selfless feeling, which presents itself to us as an inner spiritual duty. This may extend even into external life and the external conception of life; and here we come to speak on a point which shines, it might be said, out of individual into social experience.

When a person acquainted with the secrets of esotericism observes what goes on in the world — how so many people waste their spare time instead of ennobling their feelings with what comes into the earthly existence from spiritual creations — he might weep over the stupidity which ignores all that in human life flows through human feeling and sentiment. And in this connection it should be noticed that when these experiences begin a certain more delicate egoism appears in human nature. In the following lectures we shall hear how this finer egoism is assumed for the purpose of overcoming itself; but at first it merely appears as a finer egoism, and during our theosophical development we shall find that a sort of higher thirst for enjoyment appears, a thirst for the enjoyment of spiritual things. And, grotesque as it may sound, it is nevertheless true that a man who is undergoing an esoteric development may at a certain stage declare, even though he may not allow this consciousness to grow into pride and vanity, that all that lies before him on the earth in the way of spiritual creations must be enjoyed by him; it is there for his enjoyment — so it belongs to him. And gradually he develops a certain urge towards such spiritual enjoyments. In this respect esotericism will not cause any mischief in the world, for we may be quite sure that when such a desire for the spiritual creations of humanity appears it will not be a drawback.

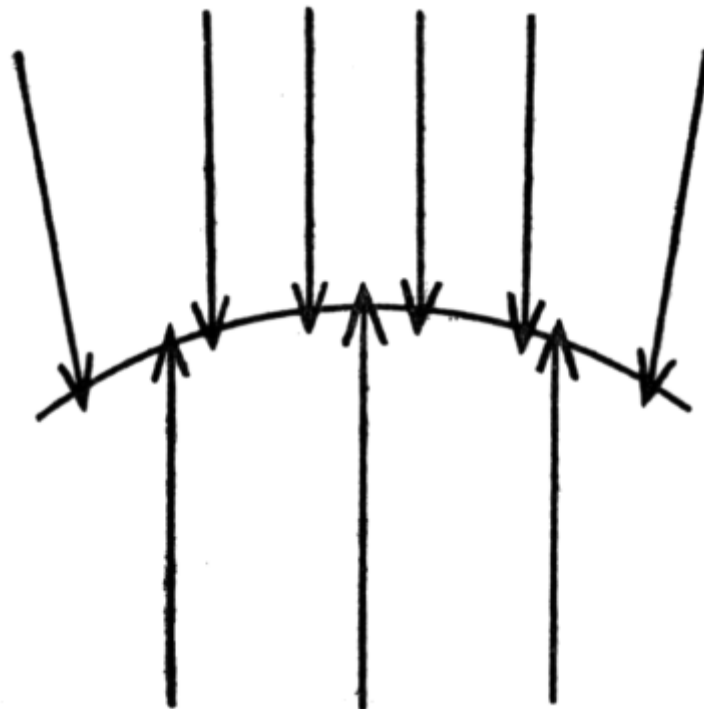
As a result of this something else appears. Gradually the student feels in a sense the awakening of his own etheric body, by becoming aware that feeling his own thinking is of less value, and by feeling the inflow of thought from the cosmos, interwoven as it is with the Divine. He feels more and more how will and feeling arise from himself; he begins to feel egoism only in his will and feeling, while he perceives the gifts of the wisdom, which he feels streaming through, as connecting him with the whole cosmos.

This experience is connected with another. He begins to feel inner activity of feeling and will, interwoven with inner sympathy and antipathy. A more subtle and delicate feeling tells him that when he himself does this or that it is a disgrace, for he has within him a certain amount of wisdom. Of something else he may feel that it is right to do it, according to his amount

of wisdom. An experience of self-control appearing in feeling comes about naturally. We are overcome with feelings of bitterness when we feel a will arising from within, impelling us to do something or other which does not seem to be right, in view of the wisdom in which we have now learned to share. This bitter feeling is most clearly perceived with respect to the things we have said; and it is well for one who is developing theosophically not to pass by inattentively without noticing how the whole of the inner life of feeling may be refined in this respect. While in the case of a person in exoteric life, when he has uttered certain words, when he has said something or other, that is the end of the matter; in the case of a person who has undergone a theosophical development there comes a clear after-feeling regarding what he has said; he feels something like an inner shame when he has expressed what is not right in a moral or intellectual sense; and something like a sort of thankfulness — not satisfaction with himself — when he has been able to express something to which the wisdom he has attained can give assent. And if he feels — and for this, too, he acquires a delicate sensitiveness — that something like an inner self-satisfaction, a self-complaisance with himself arises when he has said something that is right, that is a sign that he still possesses too much vanity, which is no good in his development. He learns to distinguish between the feeling of satisfaction which follows when he has said something with which he can agree, and the self-complaisance which is worthless. He should try not to allow this latter feeling to arise, but only to develop the feeling of shame when he has said anything untrue or non-moral, and when he has succeeded in saying something suitable to the occasion, to develop a feeling of gratitude for the wisdom he now has part in, and to which he does not lay claim as his own, but receives as a gift from the universe.

Little by little the student feels in this way with respect to his own thinking. As has already been said, he must remain a man on the physical plane; and while not attaching too much value to the self-formed thoughts, he must still form them; but this self-thinking itself now alters, so much that he holds it under the self-control we have just described. Regarding a thought, of which he may say: 'I have thought that and it is in keeping with the Wisdom' — regarding this thought he develops a feeling of gratitude towards the Wisdom. A thought which arises as a wrong, ugly, non-moral thought leads to a certain inner feeling of shame, and the student feels: 'Can I really still be like this? Is it possible that I have still sufficient egotism to think this, in the face of the Wisdom that has entered into me?' It is extremely important for him to feel this kind of self-control in his inner being. The peculiarity of this self-control is that it never comes

through the critical intellect, but always appears in feeling, in perception. Let us pay great attention to this, my dear friends: A man who is only clever, who only possesses the judgment of the outer life, who is critical, can never arrive at what we are now speaking of; for this must appear as feeling. When he has acquired this feeling — when it arises as if from his own inner being — he identifies himself with this feeling either of shame or thankfulness, and feels that his own self is connected with this feeling. And if I were to make a diagram of what is thus experienced, it is as though one felt wisdom streaming in from above, coming towards one from above, streaming into one's head in front and then filling one from above downwards. On the other hand, a student feels that, as though coming from his own body, there streams towards that wisdom a feeling of shame, so that he identifies himself with this feeling, and addresses the wisdom as something given from outside; and feels within himself a region wherein this feeling, which is now the ego, meets the instreaming wisdom bestowed.



The pupil can inwardly experience the region where these two meet. To feel this meeting, proves a right inner experience of the etheric world; he experiences the thoughts pressing in from the external etheric world — for it is the wisdom streaming towards him from the external etheric world

that presses in and is perceived by means of the two feelings — that is the rightly-perceived etheric world. And when he perceives it thus he ascends to the higher Beings which only descend as far as to an etheric body and not to a physical human body. On the other hand, he may experience this etheric world wrongly, in a certain sense. Rightly, the etheric world is experienced between thinking and feeling, in the manner just described. The experience is purely an inner process in the soul. The elementary or etheric world may be experienced wrongly, if it is experienced on the boundary between breathing and our own etheric body. If the student performs breathing exercises too soon, or in an incorrect way, he gradually becomes a witness of his own breathing-process. With the breathing-process of which he is then aware (the act of breathing being usually unnoticed), he may acquire a breathing which perceives itself. And this feeling may be associated with a certain perception of the etheric world. By means of all kinds of breathing-exercises a person may gain the power of observing certain etheric processes which really are in the external world, but which belong to the lowest external psychic processes, and which, if experienced too soon, can never give the right idea of the true spiritual world.

Of course, from a certain point in the esoteric practice a regulated breathing-process may also begin; but this must be properly directed. It then comes about that we perceive the etheric world, as has been described, on the border between thinking and feeling, and what we thus learn to recognise is only strengthened by our also coming to know the grosser etheric processes which take place on the border between the etheric world and our breathing-processes. For the matter is as follows: — There is a world of genuine higher Spirituality, this we attain through the inter-action which takes place — as we have described — between wisdom and feeling, there we come to the deeds accomplished in the etheric world by the beings belonging to the higher hierarchies. But there are a great number of all sorts of good and bad and hostile and horrible and dangerous elementary beings, which, if we become acquainted at the wrong time, obtrude themselves upon us as if they really were a valuable spiritual world, while they are nothing more, in a certain sense, than the lowest dregs of the beings of the Spiritual world. He who wishes to penetrate into the Spiritual world must indeed become acquainted with these beings, but it is not well to become acquainted with them at the beginning. For the peculiarity is this: that if a person becomes acquainted with these beings at first, without traversing the difficult path of his own inner experience, he grows fond of them, has astonishing partiality for

them; and it may then occur that a man who thus raises himself into the spiritual world in a wrong way, especially through such physical training as may be called a changing of the breathing-processes, will describe certain things pertaining to this spiritual world, as they appear to him. He describes them in such a way that many people may think them extremely beautiful, while to the occultist who perceives them in the inward experience, they may be horrible and loathsome. Such things are quite possible in the experience of the spiritual world.

We need not here speak of other processes which a person may undertake as a training, and through which he may enter evil worlds, because in Occultism it is the custom not to speak of that which one comes to know as the dross of the spiritual world. It is not necessary that we should enter spiritually into that world; hence it is not the practice to speak of the methods which go still lower than the breathing processes. Even the breathing-process, when it is not done in the right way, really leads to the dross-beings, which we must indeed come to know, but not at first, as they then make us enamoured of them, which ought not to be. We shall only obtain a true, objective standpoint regarding their value when we have penetrated into the spiritual world from the other side.

If the student now begins in this way to feel streaming out of himself, as it were, responsive feelings towards wisdom, the feeling of shame, and the feeling of thankfulness; if these responsive feelings spring up, as it were, from his own organism, then he thereby becomes first acquainted in the most elementary way with something of which he must learn more in the course of his further occult development. In the last lecture we pointed out that in the course of our gradual experience of the etheric we become aware of what is active in the etheric part of our brain, the Amshaspands, referred to in the teaching of Zarathustra. As regards our ideas we may also say: There we learn at first to form an idea of the active archangel beings and what they have to do in us. Through what is here stored up, through what here arises within us as the feeling of thankfulness or shame, which feeling has a personal character because it comes forth from ourselves — through this we gain the first elementary true conception of what are called the Archai or Primal forces; for we experience in the first most elementary way in the manner described what the Primal forces bring about in us. While the student — when he begins to experience in the etheric — first experiences the Archangels in his head in a shadowy way, one might say, in their activities, in their etheric working, he experiences in that with which the wisdom comes in contact in him, and which reacts to it, the Primal forces permeated with something like will, not entirely of its

nature, but the Primal forces which have entered into him and work in the human personality. When he learns to feel in this way, he gradually obtains an idea of what the occultist means when he says: On that primeval embodiment of our earth, Ancient Saturn, dwelt the Primal Forces or the Spirits of Personality at their human stage, so to speak. At that time these Primal Forces or Spirits of Personality were human. They have now developed further, and in so doing they have attained the capacity of working from the super-sensible world. And how do they manifest at the present time, in our earth-period, this power which they have acquired through the progress of their evolution as far as the earth? They have attained the capacity of being able to work from the super-sensible upon our own bodily nature, and so to work on our sheath, that they produce forces in our etheric body manifesting in the manner described. They have placed these forces in us, and if we feel to-day we are so organised that we can develop within ourselves the above-mentioned feelings of gratitude and shame as an inner natural process (and this can become our own experience), we must admit: that this can become an inward experience, that our etheric body should pulsate in this way, and respond in this manner to the Wisdom — to this end have the Primal forces poured forces into it. In the same way man himself in future incarnations of our earth will attain to the ability to imprint capacities such as these into a corresponding covering in other beings, who will be below him; he will imprint them into their inner being. What man is to know regarding the higher worlds will gradually be gained by inner experience, by our ascending, by our passing over from physical to etheric experience.

Let us try to make these matters still clearer. On ancient Saturn — as you know — heat was the densest physical condition, as it were, the only physical condition which had been reached by the middle of the Saturn period. And you may read in my book, *An Outline Of Occult Science*, the Saturn activities in the physical were currents of heat and cold. We may also speak of these currents of heat and cold from the psychic, soul-aspect, and say: Heat flowed in streams, but this heat was the flowing gratitude of the Spirits of Personality; or this flowing heat which moved in a different direction was the flowing feeling of shame of the Spirits of Personality. What we must gradually acquire is the capacity of connecting the physical with the moral activity; for the further we go into the higher worlds the more closely are these two things connected — the physical occurrence, which then ceases to be physical, and the moral, which then flows through the world with the power of the laws of nature.

All that has just been described as something which appears in inner experience through the altered etheric body, brings about something else in the human soul. This human soul gradually begins to feel discomfort in being this individual man at all, this single, personal human being. It is important for us to learn to notice this; and it is well to make a rule of noticing it. The less interest one has developed previously to this stage of esoteric development in what concerns humanity in general, in what is common to humanity, the more disquieting does one find this on pressing forward. A person having developed no interest in mankind in general, and yet wishing to undergo an esoteric development, would feel himself more and more as a burden. For example, a person to whom it is possible to go through the world without sympathy and fellow-feeling with what another may suffer and enjoy, who cannot well enter into the souls of others, nor transpose himself into the souls of other human beings, such a person when he progresses in esoteric development, feels himself to be a kind of burden. If in spite of remaining unmoved by human sorrow and human joy he undergoes a theosophical development, the student drags himself about with him as a heavy weight; and we may be quite sure his theosophical development will merely remain external, an intellectual affair only, that such a person is merely taking up theosophy like learning a cookery-book or some external science, unless he feels that he is a mere weight, if in spite of his development, he cannot develop a heart that truly feels with all human sorrow and all human gladness. Hence it is very good if, during a theosophical, occult development, we extend our human interests; and really nothing is worse during this esoteric progress than not to try to gain an understanding of every kind of human feeling and human sensation and human life. Of course, this does not postulate the principle — this must be emphasised again and again — that we should pass over all the wrong that is done in the world without criticism, for that would be an injustice towards the world; but it postulates something else; whereas before esoteric development we may have felt a certain pleasure in finding fault with some human failing, this pleasure in finding fault with other people entirely ceases in the course of esoteric development. Who does not know in external life people who like to deliver very pertinent criticisms of other people's faults? Not that the pertinence of judgment over human faults has to cease, not that under all circumstances, such an act as was committed, let us say, by Erasmus of Rotterdam when he wrote his book, *The Praise of Folly*, should be condoned; no, it may be quite justifiable to be stern against the wrongs done in the world; but in the case of one who undergoes an esoteric development every word of blame he utters or sets in motion pains him, and prepares more and more pain for him. And the

sorrow at being obliged to find fault is something which can also act as a barometer of the esoteric development. The more we are still able to feel pleasure when we are obliged to find fault or when we find the world ludicrous, the less we are really ready to progress; and we must gradually gain a sort of feeling that there is, developing more and more within us, a life which makes us see these follies and errors in the world with eyes, of which one is critical, and the other filled with tears, one dry and the other wet. This inner dividing into parts, this becoming more independent, as it were, of that which was previously intermingled, also forms part of the change undergone by the human etheric body.



Lecture 6

25 March 1913, The Hague

We have now considered the changes in the physical body and etheric body of the student, in so far as they are experienced by him in the course of his endeavour towards development. If we wished to express the fundamental character of these changes we might say that in the course of his development he is more and more conscious inwardly of his physical body and etheric body. With regard to his physical body, we have emphasised that he feels the several organs becoming more and more independent the more he progresses — they become to a certain extent more independent of each other. We might say that the physical body as such feels as though it had more life within; and as to the etheric body, we emphasised that not only does it feel more alive, but grows altogether more sensitive, and permeated by a sort of consciousness; for it begins to sympathise with the course of outer events in a delicate manner. We pointed out that in his esoteric development the student grows more sensitive to the course of spring, summer, autumn and winter; this becomes very pronounced, so that the successive facts of time are more distinct from one another than is the case in the ordinary course of life; they become separate and differentiate themselves. Thus we may say that the student begins to experience sympathetically the processes in the external ether. This is the first beginning of his really becoming free from his corporeality. He becomes more and more independent of his own corporeality as he really begins to experience what goes on around him. He will experience spring, summer, autumn and winter within himself, as it were; but through this living in the outer he ceases to live in his own corporeality.

Now, in the last lecture we laid stress on the close association of all this with a gradual sensitiveness to one's own corporeality. As we become more independent of it, we gradually perceive it to be a sort of calamity; we notice that all that relates merely to our own corporeality becomes a sort of reproach. A very great deal is attained towards a higher development when we begin, in conceptions and feelings such as were described in the last lecture, to be no longer quite at one with our own human personality; and when we experience this to a greater and greater extent, a very great deal has been gained towards the higher spiritual experience.

In this lecture I will endeavour, by making a leap as it were, to strengthen the further progress of our observations — which we so far have followed more from within — by first trying to describe the standpoint of the human being, when with his astral body and his ego he has already become independent of his physical body and etheric body. We will speak of the intermediate conditions in the following lectures, but in order to make this, to a certain extent, easier to understand, I will put forward the hypothesis that 'while in the middle of sleep' we experience the moment when we become clairvoyant outside our body, and can look back at our physical and etheric bodies.

So far we have only taken a few steps towards this condition, we have reached the point of coming forth from ourselves to a certain extent, and have thus learned to experience such matters as the seasons of the year and the times of the day; we will now consider the conditions which would come about if, on the one hand, we had the physical body and etheric body, and on the other, we had lifted out the ego and astral body as occurs in sleep; and we will suppose that we could look back at the physical body and etheric body we had left behind. What we look back at then would appear to us in a very different light from that of conscious, ordinary life. For ordinary life, by means of our everyday observation, or by means of external physical science, we look at our material body, and see in it, with a certain justice in a physical sense, the crown of the earthly creation. We so divide this earthly creation that we speak of a mineral kingdom, a vegetable kingdom, an animal kingdom, and the human kingdom; and we see all the sundry qualities which have been spread over the various groups of animals, united, as it were, in this physical crown of creation, the human body. We shall see that external physical observation is, in a way, justified in this view, and the present lecture should not give rise to the thought that what may be seen in looking back at the physical and etheric body, if we suddenly became clairvoyant during sleep, can enable us to come to any final conclusion as to the physical body. It is only a moment of clairvoyant looking back, as it were, firmly retained. Such a moment may give rise to the following: We look back and first of all we see, so to say, our etheric body, which appears something like an articulated cloudy structure, a misty form showing various currents which we will describe more clearly later — a marvellously constructed form, which is in continual motion, never at rest or still in any part; and then we look at what is embedded in this etheric body, that is, our physical body. Now, remember we have been told that our own thinking must be laid aside. So we do not form our own thoughts about what we see there. First and foremost it is a

fundamental requirement for this clairvoyant vision that we should let ourselves be entirely inspired, as it were, by the cosmic thoughts which flow into us. So we contemplate what we see there; but this works above all upon our feeling; it affects our feeling and will. As regards our thought, when we have really attained the detachment referred to, we seem to have lost our own thinking. Thus, with the feeling which we still retain, we look back upon what is there embedded in the misty structure, in the ever-moving misty structure of our etheric body, that is: our physical instrument. We first have a general impression. This general impression is such that what we thus see imbues us with infinite sadness, with terrible sadness. And it must be said, my dear friends, that this feeling of the soul, this dreadful sadness, does not depend at all upon the nature of the particular human being experiencing it, for it is quite universal. There is no man when he looks back in the manner described at his physical body, as it lies embedded in his etheric body, who would not be filled through and through with an immeasurable sadness.

All that I am now describing is expressed primarily in the feelings, not in thought. Immeasurable sadness, a feeling of great melancholy, overcomes when we look up to the cosmic thoughts which flow into us. These thoughts, which are not our own, but creative thoughts, weaving and working through the world, throwing light on this structure of our physical body, by the way in which they illuminate it, tell us what it really is that we see there. They convey to us that all we see is the last decadent product of an absolute splendour long passed by. Through what these thoughts say to us we receive the impression that what we see there as our physical body is something which was once mighty and glorious, now dried and shrivelled; a former glory once widely displayed, appears to us as a tiny shrivelled structure. That which is embedded in our etheric body appears as a last remembrance of long-past glory hardened into the physical. We look at the various physical organs which now belong to our digestive system, to the circulation of our blood and our breathing apparatus; we look at them from outside, seeing them spiritually — and behold, they so appear to us that we say: All we have before us in the physical body is the shrivelled, dried-up product of once-existing living beings, living beings with a glorious environment, now shrivelled, and withered. And the life possessed by the lungs, the heart, the liver and other organs to-day is only the last decadent life of a primevally powerful inner life. In this clairvoyant vision the organs gradually assume the form they once possessed. Just as a thought which we can only distantly remember in quite a hazy manner, grows into what it once was, if we take the trouble to draw it forth from

memory, so does that which we bear within us, as the lungs, for example, and it appears as the lost remembrance of a primeval splendour and glory. We feel that it goes back again like a present thought to a distant memory, which then develops into what it formerly was. In our vision the lungs develop into the imaginative picture of that which was once known to the occultist as a recognised symbol, which he still knows to-day, as a symbol of the human form — into the imaginative picture of the Eagle. And we have the feeling that these lungs were at one time a being, not to be compared with the Eagle of the present-day animal world; for this, too, represents, though from another side, the decadent products of a formerly mighty being, which occultism designates as the Eagle. The occultist comes, as though in cosmic remembrance, to the Eagle which was at one time there. If we look back upon the heart, we feel in a similar manner that this, too, appears as a dried-up and shrivelled product, something reminding us of a long-past glory; and we feel as though that led back into primeval times, a far-distant past, to a being which the occultist designates the Lion. Then the organs of the lower part of the body appear as a memory of what in occultism is called the Bull, an ancient primeval being once alive in glorious surroundings, now dried up and shrivelled in the course of evolution, and appearing to-day as the organs of the lower part of the body.





Thus might I sketch what once existed, and what we still see when we observe these bodily organs, clairvoyantly, from outside. They are only roughly sketched; the Bull below, the Lion in the middle, and the Eagle above. Thus do we look upon something which once lived as three glorious, living beings in a primeval past. I will now draw these somewhat smaller, and only sketch them in diagram. (Diagram 2.)

Round these principal organs we can also see the others as they formerly were in a primeval past; and what appears in this way to clairvoyant vision may be compared to almost all the forms in the earthly animal kingdom.

If we once more turn our gaze back to the physical body embedded in the etheric body, looking at what anatomy calls the nervous-system, this also appears as a shrivelled, dried-up product. The nervous system, which at the present time is embedded in the physical body, appears to the retrospective clairvoyant vision as a number of wonderful plant-like beings, embedded in the etheric body, beings intertwined in various ways in and through the other beings known by animal names, so that we see plant-like entities passing through them in every direction. The whole of the nervous system resolves itself into a number of primeval plant-like entities, so that we actually see something like a mighty, outspreading plant, within which dwell the animal beings of which we have just spoken.

As already said, I am relating what is seen by the clairvoyant vision, which has been described as being exercised in a condition similar to sleep; that is, when we look from outside at the physical body embedded in the etheric body. When the student sees all this before him, he then says (that is, he is able to say this because, to a certain extent, the cosmic thoughts give this information, and interpret what he has before him), he says to himself: 'All that I, as a human being, have within me is the withered and shrivelled remnant of what now appears before me clairvoyantly as though in cosmic remembrance.' Now, it is important that the pupil should exercise continual self-control, and continual self-knowledge, while developing to this point. Self-knowledge enables him at this point to become aware of and to feel the following: 'I am outside my physical body. That which appeared to me as my physical body embedded in the etheric body has transformed itself in my vision into what has just been described. What I behold does not now exist; it had to exist in a primeval past in order that my physical body which is there below might be able to come into being. In order that this shrivelled product might be formed, what I now see before me with clairvoyant vision had to exist at one time.' The physical body makes this sad impression because we recognise in it the last withered product of the former glory, now appearing to the clairvoyant vision. I pray you, do not misunderstand what I am about to say; I am describing facts, and you will soon see how these facts, unravelled, constantly honour the wise guides of the world; we have only to learn the facts, and in the following lectures I will make clear what is in question. If introspection has been carried to this degree of development, the student then becomes aware that in the astral body in which he now is, outside the physical body and etheric body, he cannot do otherwise than recognise himself as an absolute egotist, as a being who knows nothing but himself, and he learns to recognise that there is reason enough to be sad. For the impulse now arises to know why this has come about, why all this has shrivelled up. And, now the question comes: who is to blame for this shrivelling together? Who has made the form which I see clairvoyantly before me, this wonderful plant-being with the animal-like, perfect structure within it — who has made this into the present shrivelled product, the physical body? There now sounds forth from oneself as an inner inspiration: 'You yourself have brought it to this, you yourself! And the fact that you have become what you now are, you owe to the circumstance that you have possessed the power to impregnate all this glory with your own being. Your being has trickled like poison into this ancient glory, and it has reduced this ancient glory to what it now is!' Thus it is we ourselves who brought this about, and the possibility of being a self such as we are,

we owe to the circumstance that we ourselves sowed the seed of death in all this glory, and so impregnated it that it shrivelled up. Just as you may have a mighty tree growing in its glory and nourishing the various animals living upon it, and you pierce it so that from a certain spot it dries up, withers and shrivels to insignificance and with it die all the beings nourished by it, so the shrivelling of the human physical body is clairvoyantly unfolded before you. This is the awful impression produced by this moment of clairvoyant vision.

More and more the student is impelled in his astral body to understand how this came about. At this moment there actually appears to him among the archetypal animal beings, which he here perceives ... Lucifer at the back of the garden, as it were, twisting in and out. I have drawn it in diagram — Lucifer in a wondrously beautiful form, actually — Lucifer! Here, for the first time, through clairvoyant observation, he makes the acquaintance of Lucifer, and now he knows that this is what happened to the forces, now shrivelled in the physical human body, at the time when Lucifer appeared within this whole being which is now presented to him clairvoyantly.



And the student now knows that he was present in that far-distant past when all this, that appears to his clairvoyant vision, was a reality; he knows that he then vividly felt himself to belong to all this; he was within it, this was his kingdom, and within this kingdom Lucifer drew him to himself. Man united himself with Lucifer, with the result that the beings of the higher Hierarchies pressed from the back in currents of force which might be sketched in these lines, and pressed out the human being who united himself with Lucifer in these parts towards the front, as is visible to

clairvoyant observation. In this part openings were formed; and, in the shrinking up, these openings have developed into our present sense organs. Through these openings the human being who previously lived in this part was pressed out, because he united himself with Lucifer. And because he was pushed out, he now lives in the world outside this structure, and this structure shrank together and is now his physical body.

Now imagine — in order to have a diagrammatical idea — the physical body of to-day growing larger and larger, all the organs becoming larger, all the organs of digestion, circulation and breathing developing as though into mighty, animal-like, living beings in growing larger, and the nervous system becoming plant-like beings, and the human being ruling in this mighty structure. On the one hand now appears Lucifer, and because the human being is attracted by Lucifer, beings belonging to the higher Hierarchies press from the back and press the human being out. By reason of the pushing out of the human being, the whole structure gradually shrinks into the small compass of the human body of to-day, and the human being, with his consciousness, with his whole day consciousness, is outside his body. The result is that man no longer knows, as he did before, what is within his body, only that which is outside. He has been chased out through the openings which are now the senses; to-day he is in the sense-world, and that in which he lived in the primeval past has shrivelled up and forms his inward parts.

I have now given you an idea of how, through clairvoyant observation, the student arrives at what is called Paradise. In fact, this was the conception of Paradise to which the students in the mystery-schools were led. 'Where was Paradise?' people ask. Paradise formed part of a world which is no longer present in the sense-world to-day. Paradise has shrunk together, yet multiplied; for Paradise has left behind the physical inward parts of the human body as its last relics; the human being himself has, however, been driven out of it, he no longer lives in these inward parts. He can only learn to know them by means of clairvoyance, as we have seen. A man knows of the objects outside him, he knows of what is before his eyes and about his ears. Previously he knew of what was within; but this within was grandiose, it was Paradise. Try now to form an idea of how man, through having become a being who spreads his consciousness over the external sense-world, actually compressed the world in which he dwelt before he entered the sense-world, into the withered or shrivelled-up product of the interior parts of his body.

Then the beings who first drove man out and then continued to work, made use of Ahriman and other spirits, whose activity they turned into good, forming the limbs, hands, feet, and countenance; these they formed, and thus made it possible for man to use this shrivelled-up Paradise by means of his hands and feet and that which passes through his sense organs into the inner parts of his body.

Thus before our spiritual vision we have seen, enlarged to gigantic proportions, the physical human body, which in its present condition represents the shrivelled-up product of the former Paradise. When we consider this, we may obtain some slight idea of how clairvoyance really progresses. We have seen how the student at first becomes more and more sensitive with respect to his physical body and etheric body. And now, by making a sort of leap forward over an abyss, we have seen what sort of impressions come when from outside the pupil looks back at his physical body embedded in the etheric body. I have said that the etheric body is itself in continual motion; when we look back into it from outside we see nothing really stationary in it, nothing is at rest, everything is in continual motion. Something is continually taking place; and the more we learn through spiritual training to observe what happens, the more does the tableau of these events enlarge, as it were, and everything becomes full of meaning. Just as, in a certain way, the physical body becomes the true Garden of Paradise, so also what goes on in the etheric body becomes significant processes.

We might now make the attempt to describe in a general way what facts and processes are to be observed when we look at the etheric body, and turn our attention away from the physical body. Now, we could really only see the physical body clairvoyantly in the way I have described, if we were suddenly awakened clairvoyantly from the very deepest sleep. Then would the physical body expand into the structure described. But the etheric body can, in a certain sense, be more easily seen; it may indeed be seen if we try in a certain way to seize the moment of going to sleep, so that we do not pass over at once into unconsciousness, but remain conscious for a time after having, with the astral body and the ego, left the physical body and etheric body. We then look principally at the etheric body, and see the moving realities in the etheric body in the form of very vivid dreams. We then see ourselves divided, as by a deep abyss, from what goes on in the etheric body; but we now see everything not as happening in space, but as events in time. When we are outside our etheric body we have to perceive these experiences of movement in the etheric body, as though we had slipped back into it again with our consciousness.

Thus we must feel as though we were separated from our etheric body by an abyss filled, as it were, with ether, with universal cosmic ether; as if we stood on the further shore of the etheric body, and there various processes took place. And as, in this case, all these processes take place in time, we feel like a wanderer returning to our own etheric body. In reality, we are going further and further from it, but in our clairvoyant consciousness we approach it. And in approaching this etheric body of ours we feel ourselves approaching something which thrusts us back. We come, as it were, to a spiritual rock. Then it is as if we were allowed to pass into something. At first we are outside, and then it is as though we were let into something, it seems as though we had first been outside and now were inside, but not in the manner in which we had been within it during the day. Everything depends upon being outside with the astral body and ego, and only looking in; that is to say, we are only inside the etheric body with our consciousness. And now we can see what is going on within it.

In a certain way, everything changes just as the physical body is transferred into Paradise; but that which goes on within the etheric body is in a still more interior connection with the everyday processes in man. Let us consider what sleep really signifies, what this 'being outside the physical body and etheric body' means. For we have assumed that the clairvoyant power is exercised at this moment through the person's suddenly becoming clairvoyant during sleep, or remaining consciously clairvoyant on falling asleep. Let us consider what sleep is! That which permeates the physical and etheric body with consciousness is now outside; within the body only vegetative processes take place — everything is done to restore the forces used up during the day. And we perceive all this, we perceive how the forces of the physical, particularly those of the brain, are renewed; but we do not see the brain as the anatomist does — we see how the man of the physical world, of whom we make use for our consciousness during our waking condition, we see how this man, who has indeed been forsaken by us, but who clearly shows that he is our instrument, lies enchanted in a castle, as it were. Symbolised by the brain lying within the skull, our human nature on the earth appears as a being under enchantment living in a castle. We see this humanity of ours as a being imprisoned and enclosed by stone walls. The symbol of this, the shrunken symbol, as it were, is our skull. We see it externally as a little skull. But when we look at the etheric forces which lie at its foundation, the earthly man actually appears to us as if he were within the skull, and imprisoned in this castle. And then from the other parts of the organism there stream up the forces which support this human being who is really within the skull as if in a mighty castle; the

forces stream upwards; first the force which comes from that in the organism which is the outspread instrument of the human astral body; there streams up all that makes the human being ardent and mighty through his nerve fibres. All this streams together in the earthly brain-man; this appears as a mighty sword which the human being has forged on the earth.

Then stream up the forces of the blood. These, as we gradually learn to feel and recognise, appear as that which really wounds the brain-man lying in the enchanted castle of the skull. The forces which in the etheric body stream up to the earthly human being lying in the enchanted castle of the brain are like the bloody lance. And then we arrive at a unique perception. This is, that we are able to observe all that may stream up to the noblest parts of the brain. Before this we have not the slightest idea of it.

Thus you see that from a different standpoint I have come back again to what I have already touched upon in these lectures. No matter how much animal food a human being may eat, it is all useless for a certain part of his brain, it is merely ballast. Other organs may be nourished thereby, but in the brain there is something from which the etheric body at once thrusts back all that comes from the animal kingdom. Indeed, the etheric body even thrusts back from one part of the brain, from one small, vital part of the brain, all that comes from the plant kingdom, and allows only the mineral extract to be of value; there this mineral extract is brought into contact with the purest of what comes through the sense organs. The purest of light, the purest sound, the purest heat, here come in touch with the purest products of the mineral kingdom; for the most vital part of the human brain is nourished by the union of the purest sense impressions with the purest mineral products. The etheric body separates from this noblest part of the human brain all that comes from the plant or animal kingdoms. But all the things that the human being takes in as his food pass up also; for the brain also has less noble parts. These are nourished by all that streams up, by which the whole organism is nourished. Only the noblest part of the brain must be nourished by the most beautiful union of the sense perceptions and the highest part of the purified mineral extract. We now learn to recognise a wonderful cosmic connection between man and the whole of the rest of the cosmos. We can now see, as it were, a part of man wherein we perceive how human thought, by means of the instrument of the nervous system which serves the astral body, prepares the sword for human strength on earth; therein we become acquainted with all that is mingled with the blood, and to a certain extent contributes to the killing of the most precious thing in the brain. And this noblest thing

in the brain is ever sustained by the union of the most delicate sense perceptions with the purest products of the mineral kingdom. And then, during sleep, when thought is not making use of the brain, there stream to the brain the products which have been formed lower down in the inner parts from the plant and animal kingdoms.

Thus, when we penetrate into our own etheric body, it is as though we had reached an abyss, and across it we could see what goes on in the etheric body; and all this appears in mighty pictures representing the processes of the spiritual man during sleep. The ego and astral body — the spiritual man — descends into the castle, which is formed of that which is only seen symbolically in the skull. Here the human being lies sleeping, wounded by the blood, the man of whom we see that thoughts are his strength — that which must be capable of nourishment by all that comes from the kingdom of nature, that which in its purest parts must be served by the finest, this we have described. All this symbolically represented resulted in the Legend of the Holy Grail. And the Legend of the Holy Grail tells us of that miraculous food which is prepared from the finest activities of the sense impressions and the finest activities of the mineral extracts, whose purpose it is to nourish the noblest part of man all through the life he spends on earth; for it would be killed by anything else. This heavenly food is what is contained in the Holy Grail. And that which otherwise takes place, that which presses up from the other kingdoms, we find clearly represented if we go back to the original Grail legend, where a meal is described at which a hind is first set on the table. The penetrating up into the brain where for ever floats the Grail, that is, the vessel for the purest food of the human hero who lies in the castle of the brain, and who is killed by everything else — all this is represented. The best presentation of this is not that by Wolfram, but it is best represented in an external exoteric way (because almost everyone can recognise, when his attention has been drawn to it, that this legend of the Grail is an occult experience which every human being can experience anew every night), it is best represented, in spite of the profanation which has even crept in there, by Chrestien de Troyes. He put what he wished to say in an exoteric form, but this exoteric form hinted at what he wished to convey, for he refers to his teacher and friend who lived in Alsace, who gave him the esoteric knowledge which he put into exoteric form. This took place in an age when it was necessary to do this, on account of the transition indicated in my book, 'The Spiritual Guidance of Humanity.' The Grail legend was made exoteric in 1180, shortly before the transition.

In the outer world these things still appear fantastic ideas, because the only reality recognised by the man of the present day is that which is outside him. Man recognises himself as the crown of creation in a much higher sense, when he sees his physical body in its original, sublime grandeur; and when he sees his etheric body working inwardly upon his physical body to reawaken into life that which has been injured and killed by the sting which I have spoken of as coming from the blood. The etheric body works upon that in order at once, so far as is possible to reawaken it to life; it maintains it throughout its period of human life, although, when born, it is already doomed to death. This the etheric body does by casting out of a small portion of the human organisation all that comes from the animal and vegetable kingdoms, keeping only the purest mineral extract, and bringing that in contact with the purest impressions from the external world of the senses. If this is really felt deeply enough, it enables us to see this noblest part in the human organism as the multiplied Holy Grail. I wished to-day to show by these two indications how typical imaginations appear, and how, to the true clairvoyance, the vision of the physical body gradually passes over into imaginations. And these two, the Paradise-Imagination and the Grail-Imagination, belong to the most sublime imaginations it is possible to experience — at least in this Earth-period.



Lecture 7

26 March 1913, The Hague

In the last lecture I referred to two legends, that of Paradise and that of the Holy Grail. I tried to show that these two legends represent occult imaginations which may really be experienced at a certain moment. When the pupil is independent of his physical body and etheric body — as he is unconsciously during deep sleep, and with clairvoyance consciously perceives his physical body, he experiences the legend of Paradise; when his perceptions are aroused by his etheric body, the legend of the Grail presents itself. We must now point out that such legends were given as stories or as religious legends, and so popularised in a definite period. The original source of these legends, which meet us in the form of romance or of religious writings in the external history of the development of mankind, is in the Mysteries, where their contents were established only by means of clairvoyant observations. In the composition of such legends it is especially necessary that the very greatest care should be taken that both subject matter and tone should suit the period and the people to which the legends are given.

In the previous lectures of this course we have explained how through his theosophical occult development the student undergoes certain changes in his physical and etheric body. We shall have now to consider the astral body and the self more closely, and then return briefly to the physical and etheric body. We have seen that when, in order to progress further through receiving the possessions of spiritual wisdom and truth, the student undertakes this self-development, he produces by this means changes in the various parts, of his spiritual and physical organisation. Now, from the information that has been given from the akashic records of various periods of evolution, we know that in the course of the ordinary historical evolution of man these various parts of human nature also undergo a change, naturally, as it were; we know that in the ancient Indian age, the first age of civilisation after the great Atlantean catastrophe, the processes of the human etheric body were conspicuous; we know that afterwards, during the ancient Persian age of civilisation, the change in the human astral body came into prominence, and during the Egyptian-Chaldean age changes took place in the human sentient-soul, and during the Graeco-Latin age there were changes in the human intellectual- or mind-soul. In

our times the changes in the human consciousness-soul are more conspicuous. Now, when a legend is given in some particular age — let us say, in the age in which the intellectual-soul undergoes a special change, when the facts in this soul are of special importance — it is important that it should be given in such a way that special attention should be paid to that particular age, and that in the Mysteries from which the legend proceeds it should be agreed that the legend must be so presented that the changes which are going on in the human intellectual- or mind-soul during that age should be protected against any harmful influences incidental to the legend, and specially adapted to its favourable influences.

Thus there can be no question of following his own inner impulse alone, when a person belonging to a Mystery school has the duty laid upon him of imparting such a legend to the world, for he must follow the dictates of the age in which he lives. If we turn our observations in this direction, we shall better understand the changes that take place, more particularly in the human astral body, when a person undergoes an esoteric development.

In the case of an esotericist, or one who seriously undertakes a theosophical development, who makes Theosophy part of his life, his astral body lives a separate life; in the case of an ordinary human being it is not so free, not so independent. The astral body of a student going through development becomes detached and independent to some extent. It does not pass unconsciously into a sort of sleep, but becomes independent, and detached, going through in a different way what a human being usually does in sleep. It thereby enters the condition suited to it. In an ordinary man who lives in the exoteric world, this astral body is connected with the other bodies, and each exercises its special influence upon it. The individually pronounced quality of this human principle does not then come into notice. But when this astral body is torn out its special peculiarities assert themselves. And what are the peculiarities of the astral body? Now, my dear friends, I have often referred to this quality — perhaps, to the disgust of many who are sitting here. The quality peculiar to the human astral body on earth is egotism. When the astral body, apart from the influences which come from the other principles of human nature, asserts, its own peculiar quality, this is seen to be egotism, or the effort to live exclusively in itself and for itself. This belongs to the astral body. It would be wrong, it would be an imperfection in the astral body as such, if it could not permeate itself with the force of egotism, if it could not say to itself, 'Fundamentally I will attain everything through myself alone, I will do all that I do for myself, I will devote every care to myself alone.' That is the correct feeling for the astral body. If we bear this in mind we shall

understand that esoteric training may produce certain dangers in this direction. Through esoteric development, for instance, because this esoteric development must necessarily make the astral body somewhat free, those persons who take up a kind of Theosophy that is not very serious, without paying attention to all that true Theosophy wishes to give, will in the course of it specially call forth this quality of the astral body, which is egotism. It can be observed in many theosophical and occult societies that while selflessness, universal human love, is preached as a moral principle and repeated again and again, yet through the natural separation of the astral body egotism flourishes. Moreover, to an observer of souls it seems quite justifiable, and yet at the same time suspicious, when universal human love is made into a much-talked of axiom — observe that I do not say it becomes a principle, but that it is always being spoken of; for under certain conditions of the soul-life a person prefers most frequently to speak of what he least possesses, of what he notices that he most lacks, and we can often observe that fundamental truths are most emphasised by those who are most in want of them.

Universal human love ought without this to become something in the development of humanity which completely rules the soul, something which lives in the soul as self-evident, and concerning which the feeling arises: 'I ought not to mention it so often in vain, I ought not to have it so often on my lips in a superfluous manner.' Just as a well-known commandment says: Thou shalt not take the Name of God in vain ... so might the following be a commandment to a true and noble humanity: you ought not to utter so often in vain the requirement of the universal human love which is to become the fundamental feature of your souls, for if silence is in many cases a much better means of developing a quality than speech, it is particularly the case in this matter; quietly cultivating it in the heart, and not talking about it, is a far, far better means of developing universal brotherly love than continually speaking about it. Now the advocacy of this exoteric principle has primarily nothing to do with what has been described as the fundamental quality of the astral body: egotism; the endeavour to exist in itself, of itself and through itself.

The question now is: How, then, is it possible to see this in a right light, this quality — let us calmly use the expression — of the astral body which seems so horrible to us, viz., that it wishes to be an absolute egotist? Let us set to work, beginning from the simple facts of life. There are cases even in ordinary life in which egotism expands, and where we must, to a certain degree, look upon this expansion of egotism as a necessary adaptation in life. For example, consider the characteristic of much mother-

love, and try to understand how in this case egotism extends from the mother to the child. We may say that the further we penetrate among less developed peoples, and observe what we might call the lion-like way in which the mothers stand up for their children, the more we notice that the mother considers any attack upon her child as an attack upon herself. Her self is extended to the child; and it is a fact that the mother would not feel an attack upon a part of herself more than upon her child. For what she feels in herself she carries over to her child and we cannot find anything better for the regulation of the world than that egotism should be extended in this way from one being to others, and that one being should reckon itself as forming part of another, as it were, and on this account should extend its egotism over this other. Thus we see that egotism ceases to have a dark side when a being expands itself, when the being transfers its feeling and thinking into another, and considers it as belonging to itself. Through extending her egotism to her child, a mother also claims it as her possession: she counts it as part of herself; she does just as the astral body does, saying: All that is connected with me lives through me, to me, with me, etc.

We may see something similar even in more trivial cases than mother-love. Let us suppose that a man has a house, a farm, and land which he cultivates; let us suppose this man loves his house, his farm, his land and his work-people as his own body; he looks upon the matter in such a way that they are to him an extension of his own body, and loves his house, farm, land and people — as a woman may, under certain circumstances, love her gown, as forming part of her own body. In this case the being of the man expands in a certain sense to what is around him. Now, if his care expands in this way to his possessions and his servants, so that he watches over them and resists any attack upon them as he would an attack on his own body, we must then say that the fact of this environment being permeated with his egotism is extremely beneficial. Under certain circumstances, what is called love may, however, be very self-seeking. Observation of life will show how often what is called love is self-seeking. But an egotism extended beyond the person may also be very selfless, that is, it may protect, cherish and take care of what belongs to it.

By such examples as these, my dear friends, we ought to learn that life cannot be parcelled out according to ideas. We talk of egotism and altruism, and we can make very beautiful systems with such ideas as egotism and altruism. But facts tear such systems to pieces; for when egotism so extends its interests to what is around it that it considers this as part of itself, and thus cherishes and takes care of it, it then becomes

selflessness; and when altruism becomes such that it only wishes to make the whole world happy according to its own ideas, when it wishes to impress its thoughts and feelings on the whole world with all its might, and wishes to adopt the axiom, 'If you will not be my brother, I will break your head,' then even altruism may become very self-seeking. The reality which lives in forces and in facts cannot be enclosed in ideas, and a great part of that which runs counter to human progress lies in the fact that in immature heads and immature minds there arises again and again the belief that the reality can in some way be bottled up in ideas.

The astral body may be described as an egotist. The consequence of this is that the development which liberates the astral body must reckon with the fact that the interests of man must expand, become wider and wider. Indeed, if our astral body is to liberate itself from the other principles of human nature in the right manner, its interest must include the whole of the earth and earth-humanity. In fact, the interests of humanity upon the earth must become our interests; our interests must cease to be connected in any way with what is merely personal; all that concerns mankind, not only in our own times, but all that has concerned mankind at any time in the whole of its earthly development, must arouse our deepest interests; we must reach the point of considering as an extension of what belongs to us, not only what belongs to our family by blood, not only what is connected with us such as house and farm and land, but we must make everything connected with the development of the earth our own affair.

When in our astral body we are interested in all the affairs of the earth, when all the affairs of the earth become our own, we may give way to the sense of selfhood in our astral body. This, however, is necessary, that the interests of mankind on earth should be our interests. Consider from this point of view the two legends I spoke of in the last lecture. When they were given to humanity at a certain stage, they were given from the point of view that the human being should be raised from any individual interest to the universal interests of the earth. The legend of Paradise leads the pupil directly to the starting point of our earthly evolution, when man had not yet entered upon his first incarnation, or when he is just beginning it, where Lucifer approaches him, when he still stands at the beginning of his whole development and can actually take all human interests into his own breast. The very deepest problem of education and training is contained in the story of Paradise, that story which uplifts one to the standpoint of all humanity, and imprints in every human breast an interest which can also speak in each. When the pictures of the legend of Paradise, as we have tried to comprehend them, press into the human soul, they act in such a

way that the astral body is penetrated through and through by them; and under the influence of this human being whose horizon is expanded over the whole earth, the astral body may also make its own interest all that now enters its sphere. It has now arrived at being able to consider the interests of the earth as its own. Try, my dear friends, to consider seriously and earnestly what a universal, educative force is contained in such a legend, and what a spiritual impulse lies there.

It is the same with the legend of the Grail. While the Paradise legend is given to the humanity of the earth, inasmuch as it directs this humanity to the origin, the starting-point of its earthly development, while the Paradise legend, as given, uplifts us to the horizon of the whole development of humanity, the legend of the Grail is given that it may sink into the innermost depths of the astral body, into its most vital interests, just because, if only left to itself, this astral body becomes an egotist which only considers the interests that are its very own.

As regards the interests of the astral body, we can really only err in two directions. One is the direction towards Amfortas, and the other, before Amfortas is fully redeemed, leads towards Perceval. Between these two lies the true development of man, in so far as his astral body is concerned. This astral body strives to develop the forces of egotism within itself. But if it brings personal interests into this egotism it becomes corroded, and while it ought to extend over the whole earth, it will shrivel up into the individual personality. This may not be. For if it occurs, then through the activity of the personality, which expresses its ego in the blood, the whole human personality is wounded — one errs on the Amfortas side. The fundamental error of Amfortas consists in his carrying into the sphere in which the astral body ought to have gained the right to be an egotist, that which still remains in him as personal desires and wishes. The moment we take personal interests into the sphere where the astral body ought to separate itself from personal interest it is harmful, we become like the wounded Amfortas.

But the other error can also lead to harm, and only fails to do so when the being who suffers this harm is filled with the innocence of Perceval. Perceval repeatedly sees the Holy Grail pass. To a certain extent he commits a wrong. Each time the Holy Grail is carried past it is on his lips to ask for whom this food is really intended; but he does not ask; and at length the meal is over without his having asked. And so, after this meal he has to withdraw, without having the opportunity of making good what he had omitted to do. It is really just as though a man, not yet fully mature,

were to become clairvoyant for a moment during the night, when he would be separated as if by an abyss from what is contained in the castle of his body, and were then to glance for a moment into it; and as if then without having obtained the appropriate knowledge, that is, without having asked the question, everything were again to be closed to him; for then, even though he wakened, he would not be able to enter this castle again. What did Perceval really neglect to do?

We have heard what the Holy Grail contains. It contains that by which the physical instrument of man on earth must be nourished: the extract, the pure mineral extract, which is obtained from all foods and which unites in the purest part of the human brain with the purest sense-impressions, impressions which come into us through our senses. Now, to whom is this food to be handed? It is really to be handed — as appears to us when from the exoteric poetic story we enter into the esoteric presentation of it in the Mysteries — it is really to be handed to the human being who has obtained the understanding of what makes man mature enough gradually to raise Himself consciously to that which this Holy Grail is. Through what do we gain the faculty to raise ourselves consciously to that which is the Holy Grail?

In the story it is very clearly indicated for whom the Holy Grail is really intended. And when we go into the Mystery presentation of the legend of the Grail we find in addition something very special. In the original legend of the Grail the ruler of the castle is a Fisher King, a king ruling over fisher folk. There was Another Who also walked among fisher folk, but He did not wish to be the king of these fishermen, rather something else; He scorned to rule over them as a king, but He brought them something more than did the king who ruled over them — this One was Christ Jesus.

Thus we are shown that the error of the Fisher King, who in the original legend is Amfortas, was a turning aside. He is not altogether worthy to receive health really through the Grail; because he wishes to rule his fisher folk by means of power. He does not allow the spirit alone to rule among this fisher folk.

At first Perceval is not sufficiently awake inwardly to ask in a self-conscious way: What is the purpose of the Grail? What does it demand? In the case of the Fisher King it required him to kill out his personal interest and cause it to expand to the interest in all humanity shown by Christ Jesus. In the case of Perceval it was necessary that he should raise his interest above the mere innocent vision to the inner understanding of what

in every man is the same, what comes to the whole of humanity, the gift of the Holy Grail. Thus in a wonderful way between Perceval and Amfortas, the original Fisher King, floats the ideal of the Mystery of Golgotha, and at an important part of the legend it is delicately indicated that on the one hand the Fisher King has taken too much personality into the sphere of the astral body, and on the other stands Perceval, who has carried thither too little general interest in the world, who is still too [unsophisticated, who does not feel sufficient interest in the world. It is the immense educative value of the Grail legend that it could so work into the souls of the students of the Holy Grail that they had before them something like a balance: in the one scale that which was in Amfortas, and in the other that which was in Perceval; and they then knew that the balance was to be established. If the astral body follows its own innate interests, it will uplift itself to that horizon of universal humanity which is gained when the statement becomes a truth: 'Where two are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them, no matter where in the development of the earth these two may be found.' (Matthew 18, 20.)

At this point, my dear friends, I beg you not to take a part for the whole, but to take this lecture and the next together; for they may cause misunderstanding. But it is absolutely necessary that the human astral body should in its development be uplifted to the horizon of humanity in a very special way, so that the interest, common to all humanity, becomes its own, so that it feels wronged, hurt, sad within itself, when humanity is harmed in any way. To this end it is necessary that when, through his esoteric development, the student gradually succeeds in making his astral body free and independent from the other principles of his human nature, he should then arm and protect himself against any influences of other astral bodies; for when the astral body is free it is no longer protected by the physical body and etheric body, which are a strong castle, as it were, for the astral. It is free, it becomes permeable, and the forces in other astral bodies can very easily work into it. Astral bodies stronger than itself can influence it, should it be unarmed with its own forces. It would be fatal if someone were to attain the free management of his astral body, and yet were as innocent as regards its conditions as Perceval was at the beginning. That will not do; for then all sorts of influences proceeding from other astral bodies would be able to have a corresponding effect on his.

Now, what we have just mentioned also applies to a certain extent to the external exoteric world. Humanity upon the earth lives under certain religious systems. These religious systems have their cults and rituals. These rituals surround a member of a cult with imaginations obtained from

the higher worlds by the help of the astral body. The moment such a religious community admits a man to its membership he is in the midst of imaginations which, while he is influenced by the ritual, liberate his astral body. In any religious ritual the astral body becomes, to a certain extent, free, at any rate for brief moments. The more powerful the ritual, the more does it suppress the influence of the etheric body and the physical body; the more it works by means of methods that liberate the astral body, the more is the astral body, during the ceremony, enticed out of the etheric body and physical body. For this reason also — though it might seem as if I am speaking in ridicule, which I am not — for this reason there is no place so dangerous to sleep in as a church, because in sleep the astral body separates from the etheric body and physical body, and because what goes on in the ritual insinuates itself into the astral body; for it is brought down from the higher worlds by the help of astral bodies. Thus to go to sleep in church, which in some places is strongly attractive to people, is something that really should be avoided. This applies more to churches which have a ritual; it does not apply so much to those religious communities which, through the ideas of modern times, have relinquished a certain ritual or limit themselves to a minimum of ritual. We are not now speaking of these things from any preference or otherwise for one creed or another, but purely according to the standard of objective facts. When, therefore, a person has emancipated his astral body from the other principles of his human nature, the impulses and forces obtained by the help of astral bodies may easily influence him. In this respect it is also possible that a person who has arrived at the free use of his astral body, if he is stronger than another whose astral body is to some extent emancipated, may obtain a very great influence over the latter. It is then absolutely like a transference of the forces of the astral body of the stronger personality to that of the weaker. And if we then clairvoyantly observe the weaker personality, he is really seen to bear within his astral body the pictures and imaginations of the stronger astral personality. You see how necessary it is that ethics should be in the ascendant where occultism is to be cultivated; for naturally egotism cannot be cultivated without really striving to emancipate the astral body from the other principles of human nature; but the most destructive thing in the field of occultism is for the stronger personalities to strive in any way for power to further their personal interests and personal intentions. Only those personalities who absolutely renounce all personal influence are really entitled to work in the domain of occultism, and the greatest ideal of the occultist who is to attain anything legitimate is not to wish to attain anything whatever by means of his own personality, but to put aside as far as possible all consideration of personal

sympathy or antipathy. Therefore, whoever possesses sympathy or antipathy for one thing or another, and yet wishes to work as an occultist, must carefully relegate these sympathies and antipathies to his own private sphere, and only allow them to prevail there; in any case he may not cultivate and cherish any of these personal sympathies and antipathies in the domain in which an occult movement is to flourish. And, paradoxical as it may sound, we may say: To the occult teacher his own teaching is a matter of no concern; in fact, the matter of least concern of all to him is the teaching which he can really only give by means of his own talents and temperament. Teaching will only have a meaning when as such it contains nothing in any way really personal, but simply what can be of help to souls. Therefore, no occult teacher will at any time give any of his knowledge to his own age if he is aware that this part of his knowledge is useless to it, and could only be useful to a different age. All this comes into consideration when we are speaking of the peculiar nature of the astral body under the influence of occult development. During the preparation for our age and its progressive development a further complication arises. For what is our own age? It is the age of the development of the consciousness-soul. Nothing is so closely connected with the egotism which accentuates the narrow, personal interests as the consciousness-soul. Hence, in no other age is there such a temptation to confuse the most personal interests with those that belong to mankind in general. This age has gradually to gather the interests of humanity into the human ego, as it were; into that very part of the human ego which is the consciousness-soul. Towards the dawn of our age we see human interests being concentrated into the ego, the acme of the sense of selfhood. In this respect it is extremely instructive seriously to consider whether, for example, what Saint Augustine wrote in his 'Confessions' would ever have been possible in ancient Greece. It would have been absolutely out of the question.

The whole nature of the Greek was such that his inner being was in a certain harmony with his outer nature, so that external interests were at the same time inner interests, and inner interests extended into outer ones. Consider the whole Greek culture. It was of such a nature that everywhere a certain harmony between the human inner being and the outer must be taken for granted. We can only understand Greek art and tragedy, Greek historians and philosophers, when we know that among the Greeks that which pertained to the soul was poured into the outer culture, and as a matter of course showed its union with the inner. Let us compare this with the Confessions of Saint Augustine. Everything lives for himself;

he searches, digs and investigates into his own being. If we look for the entirely personal, individual note in the writings of Saint Augustine we can find it in them all. Although Augustine lived long before our age, yet he prepared for it; his was the spirit in whose records we find the first dawn, long before the rising of the sun, the first dawn of the age apportioned to the consciousness-soul. This can be perceived in every line written by him, and every line of his can be distinguished by a delicate perception from all that was possible in ancient Greece.

Now, when we know that Augustine was advancing to meet the age when the sense of selfhood — the occupation of man with his own inner being even within the physical body — is as a sort of character of this age, we can understand that one who, like Augustine, has more extended interests as well, and observes the whole of the development of mankind, will truly shudder when a human being comes to him who gives him the idea that, on attaining a certain height, the astral body must naturally develop a sort of selfishness. Purely, nobly and grandly Augustine attacks self-centredness.

We might say that he attacks it selflessly. But he came into the age when humanity had separated itself from the general interests of the outer world. Recollect that in the third post-Atlantean age every Egyptian directed his gaze to the stars, where he read human destiny, how the soul was connected with interests common to humanity. Naturally this could only be attained when the human being was still capable, in the ancient elementary clairvoyance, of keeping his astral body separate from the physical body; therefore, Augustine could not but shudder when in contact with a person who reminded him, as it were, that with higher development comes selfishness. He can comprehend this, he feels it, his instinct tells him that he is living towards the age of egoism. When, therefore, a person confronts him who represents the higher development beyond that in the physical body, he feels: we are moving in the direction of egotism. At the same time he cannot comprehend that this person is bringing with him an interest common to the whole of humanity. Try to obtain a perception of how Augustine, according to his own confession, confronts the Manichaean Bishop, Faustinus — for it is he whom I have described. When he met with Faustinus, Augustine had the experience of a man facing the age of egoism in a noble way, wishing to protect it against egotism by the inner power alone, and who must turn away from such a man as the Manichaean Bishop, Faustinus. He turned away from him because, to him, Faustinus represented something in which he ought not to take part; for he conceals something within him which could not be understood at all in exoteric life

in such an age. Thus the Manichaeen Bishop, Faustinus, confronts the Church Father, Augustine; Augustine, who is facing the age of the consciousness-soul, meets with a human being who preserves his connection with the spiritual world as it can be preserved in an occult movement, and who thereby also preserves the fundamental quality of the astral body, at which Augustine shudders and, from his standpoint, justly.

Let us pass on a few centuries. We then meet at the University of Paris with a man who is but little known in literature; for what he has written gives no idea of his personality; what he has written seems pedantic. But personally he must have worked in a magnificent way; personally he seems to have worked principally in such a way that he brought into his circle something like a renewal of the Greek conception of the world. He was the personification of the Renaissance. He died in 1518, working until the time of his death at the Paris University. This personality was related to the Greek world — though much more on the exoteric side — in the same way as the Manichaeen Bishop Faustinus was related to the Manichees, who above all else had received, among many other things in their traditions, all the great and good aspects of the third post-Atlantean, the Egyptian-Chaldean age. Thus there was this Manichaeen Bishop Faustinus, who came in touch with Augustine, and who, through what he was, had preserved the occult foundations of the third post-Atlantean age. In 1518 there died in Paris a man who had carried over, though exoterically, certain aspects of the foundation of the fourth post-Atlantean age. This caused him to impress those who worked around him in traditional Christianity as weird, sinister. The monks looked upon him as their deadly enemy; yet he made a great impression upon Erasmus of Rotterdam when the latter was in Paris. But it seemed to Erasmus as if his external environment were ill-suited to the individuality which really lived within this remarkable soul; and when Erasmus had departed and gone to England, he wrote to this man, who in the meantime had become his friend, that he wished his friend could free himself from his gouty physical body and fly through the air to England, for there he would find in the external environment a much better soil for what he felt in his soul. The fact that the personality who worked at that time could give rise to Greek feeling and sensation in such an evident manner, we see with special clearness if we bear in mind the relationship between the refined and sensitive Erasmus and this personality. Thus, just at the very beginning of the age of selfhood, one might say, lived this personality who died in Paris in 1518. He lived as an enemy of those who wished to adapt the life of human souls to the age of selfhood, and who shuddered, as it were, at a soul who could work in such

a way because he wished to conjure up another age, when man was, so to say, closer to the selfhood of the astral body — the Greek age. This personality who was called Faustus Andrelinus affected Erasmus very sympathetically.

In the sixteenth century, in central Europe, we meet with another personality, who is represented as being a sort of travelling minstrel, regarding whom we are told that he deviated from the traditional theology. This personality no longer wished to call himself a theologian, calling himself a man of the world and a doctor; he placed his Bible on the shelf for a time, and engaged in the study of nature. Now the study of nature, in the age when the transition took place from all that was ancient to all that is modern, was also such that it brought to man the astral selfhood, just as did Manichaeism and the ancient thought of Greece. Thus what stood at that time on the border between ancient alchemy and modern chemistry, between ancient astrology and modern astronomy, etc., brought the astral selfhood home to man. This peculiar flickering and shimmering of natural science between the ancient and modern standpoints brought home to man — when he laid his Bible for a time on the shelf — such an astral activity that it necessitated coming to an understanding with egotism. No wonder that those shuddered at it, who with their traditions wished to adjust themselves to the age of selfhood in which the consciousness-soul had already fully dawned; and there arose in Central Europe the legend of the third Faust, John Faust, also called George Faust, an actual historical personality. And the sixteenth century welded together all the horror of the egotism of the astral body by combining the three Faustus, the Faust of Augustine, that of Erasmus, and the Faust of Central Europe, into one — into that figure depicted in popular books in Central Europe, which also became the Faust of Marlowe. Out of a complete reversal of this character Goethe created his Faust, clearly showing us that it is possible not to shudder at the bearer of that which brings home to us the essence of the astral, but to understand him better, so that to us he may be evidence of a development which will call forth from us the words, 'We can redeem him.' Whole ages have occupied themselves with the question of the egoistic nature of the astral body, and in legendary stories and, indeed, even in history echoes the horror of man at its nature, and the human longing to solve the problem of this astral body in the right manner, in a manner corresponding to the wise guidance of the world, and to the esoteric development of the individual human soul.

Lecture 8

27 March 1913, The Hague

As we approach the processes in the astral body and in the Self of man as experienced in occult development, it becomes more and more difficult to describe them. For the experience in these parts of human nature is far removed from the experience of everyday life. In the ordinary life of the soul we usually experience life in the astral body as the flowing and ebbing of desires, emotions, impulses, passions, etc.; and we also feel as our inward life that which is expressed collectively in the ego. But what is thus experienced is really nothing but the reflection, the mirroring of the self and the astral body in the etheric body and the physical body; it is no conscious experience of the astral body and the self. We cannot through what we experience in the ordinary life of the soul obtain a true idea of the actual experience in the higher worlds in our astral body and self; therefore, when we describe these things, we must have recourse to a kind of representation suited to these higher worlds, we must have recourse to imaginations: and these imaginations are really actually experienced. But one must not imagine that the beholding of the clairvoyant imaginations is the only thing that we experience; in a sense it is not even the principal thing; the principal thing is what we then experience inwardly through it; the processes and inward tests which the soul goes through when it confronts these imaginations.

And this is particularly the case with such an important and powerful imagination as that which has been described as the Paradise-Imagination. One who really experiences this Paradise-Imagination, who can have it before him as a conquest in higher experience, feels himself standing in the middle of an inner surging of the soul, he feels himself laid hold of by an inner soul-wave, and he feels that he himself might err in the two different directions described in the last lecture; he feels himself attracted, vividly attracted by all the passions and emotions which continue to work from the personal life he had previously led on the physical plane; for the personal interests which we have gradually acquired on the physical plane work with ever-increasing strength as numberless magnetic forces of attraction. But, on the other hand, he feels something else. The nearer he comes, the more clearly he sees this Paradise-Imagination, the more power have these forces which draw him down to personal interests. What they

bring about in him is that they blot out the Paradise-Imagination more and more, or perhaps it would be better to say that they prevent it from appearing properly; he is as though benumbed: the personal interests, emotions, feelings, sensations, etc., which we drag about with us, are so many hundreds and hundreds of magnetic forces which are so many causes of stupefaction. When the student tries to progress so far in his self-training that he observes his astral body more and more truthfully (for the Paradise-Imagination is experienced outside the physical body and etheric body, that is, in the astral body and Ego), when he has grasped the true nature and character of the astral body, he knows that it is the Egotist. And he alone is in the right position at this point, which he has reached through self-training, if he does not allow his egotistical interests to become personal to his nature and to draw him with numberless forces, but can make the interests of the whole of humanity and the world more and more his own. At this stage of occult development a counter-balance against the egotism of the astral body is felt, something which is the more evident, the more the egotistic forces bestir themselves in the now liberated astral body. There is an ever-increasing feeling of solitude, icy solitude. This icy solitude is also part of what is experienced in the inward surging of the soul. It is this icy solitude which cures one of allowing egotism to have the upper hand, and the student has trained himself correctly if at this point in his occult development he can feel the impulse to be everything through himself and for himself, and can at the same time also feel the frosty solitude approaching him.

It is just as important to have this feeling as to approach gradually to the Paradise-Imagination. And when these two forces, that of the egotism which expands to world-interests and the frosty solitude, work together, the student then draws nearer and nearer to the Paradise-Imagination. And when this latter appears in all its vividness, when it is actually there, the time has also arrived for experiencing the meeting with the Guardian of the Threshold in the entirely right way. It is difficult to give a single description of the Guardian of the Threshold — I have done so on different occasions in our theosophical considerations. It is not so much our task to-day to describe the Guardian of the Threshold as to describe the inward experiences in the sheaths of man and in the human self. If the student draws closer to the Paradise-Imagination; that is to say, if it becomes more and more vivid, and he meets the Guardian of the Threshold, he then feels the full force of the magnetic forces just described, and as he confronts the Guardian of the Threshold he feels — and this is a dreadful sensation — he feels as though chained or rooted to the spot. For all the magnetic forces

which draw him down to what is personal now exercise their strongest influence; and only if he progressed to the point at which the frosty solitude has become so instructive that he is really able to make the world's interests his own, does he pass the Guardian of the Threshold; and then only does he feel himself united with the Paradise-Imagination, and become one with it. He then feels himself within it. The experience is like a coming into a right relationship with the world-interests, so that he can confess: 'Now only may I allow my own interests to assert themselves, for they have become the interests of the world.'

But if he does not pass, if he has not yet acquired sufficient universal interests, his personal interests then draw him back and there comes about what in Occultism is described as: not passing the Guardian of the Threshold. These personal interests obscure the Paradise-Imagination; he may obtain separate parts of it, as it were, indistinct impressions, but not perfect ones, and one is dragged back, as it were, into the personal life. It may then happen that he has thereby received the power to have a certain degree of clairvoyant experience; but these are then really maya-experiences; they may be quite misleading, for they are entirely permeated and clouded by personal interests.

Only through such an experience is the student able fully to comprehend — for it now becomes a serious matter to him, as it were — that personal interests must pass into world-interests if he really wishes to see accurately in the Spiritual world. It is actually the case that before attaining this stage he cannot thoroughly believe this, for the personal interests are against it; but now having reached this point he sees it.

We have now reached a very hazardous place in the description of occult conditions; yet the endeavour shall be made to describe the next steps also, as they appear from the experience of occultists, and in the way in which they must be given, reckoning with the fact that our hearers are trying, in a sense, to make these things a possession of their own souls, and to work upon them further; for things such as these cannot be expressed in dry abstract ideas; we must try to portray what appears to clairvoyant vision. Now, this clairvoyant vision should by no means be understood as something that can be rigidly and diagrammatically depicted; but what I shall describe is again a typical experience, like that of the Paradise-experience, and we must really have this experience in order to recognise afterwards what knowledge and occult vision really are. Until this experience comes we can have no real idea, I mean no experienced

idea, of occult vision; but still, when such a thing is described, we can understand it, if we bring sound human understanding to bear upon it. It must now be described, as far as is possible, from vision itself.

I will suppose that the student has passed the Guardian of the Threshold and the union with the Paradise-Imagination is accomplished; that he feels within it, as if this Paradise-Imagination had now become his own greater astral sheath. He still distinctly feels his own astral body about him, and knows that it is connected with his Self, but at the same time he knows that this astral body extends its interests to all that concerns the objects and beings of the Paradise-Imagination. When the student knows his union with the Paradise-Imagination is accomplished, he may then have somewhat the following impression: he will perceive his own astral body as belonging to him, and when he has felt sufficiently what has just been described as icy solitude, this feeling becomes a power within him, and it will preserve him from gazing at nothing but himself after his accomplishment of his union with the Paradise-Imagination. He will thereby create for himself, as it were, the organ by which he may behold other beings. His occult vision will first fall on another being, a being who will make a special impression upon him, because it will appear just like himself. He himself feels that he is in his Self and astral body; the other being also at first appears to him with a Self and an astral body. This is because the qualities and powers which the pupil brings with him to such a moment enables him to see just such a being, which presents itself as if in a self and an astral body. The student will now have the following experience — produced by the frosty solitude which he has learned to bear.

The forces of his astral body will be seen endeavouring to flow outwards. If I were to represent this in diagram, I should have to draw it in this manner; but, as I have said, it is only very diagrammatically expressed. I draw the Self something like the nucleus of a comet, and the astral body like the comet's tail spreading out above.



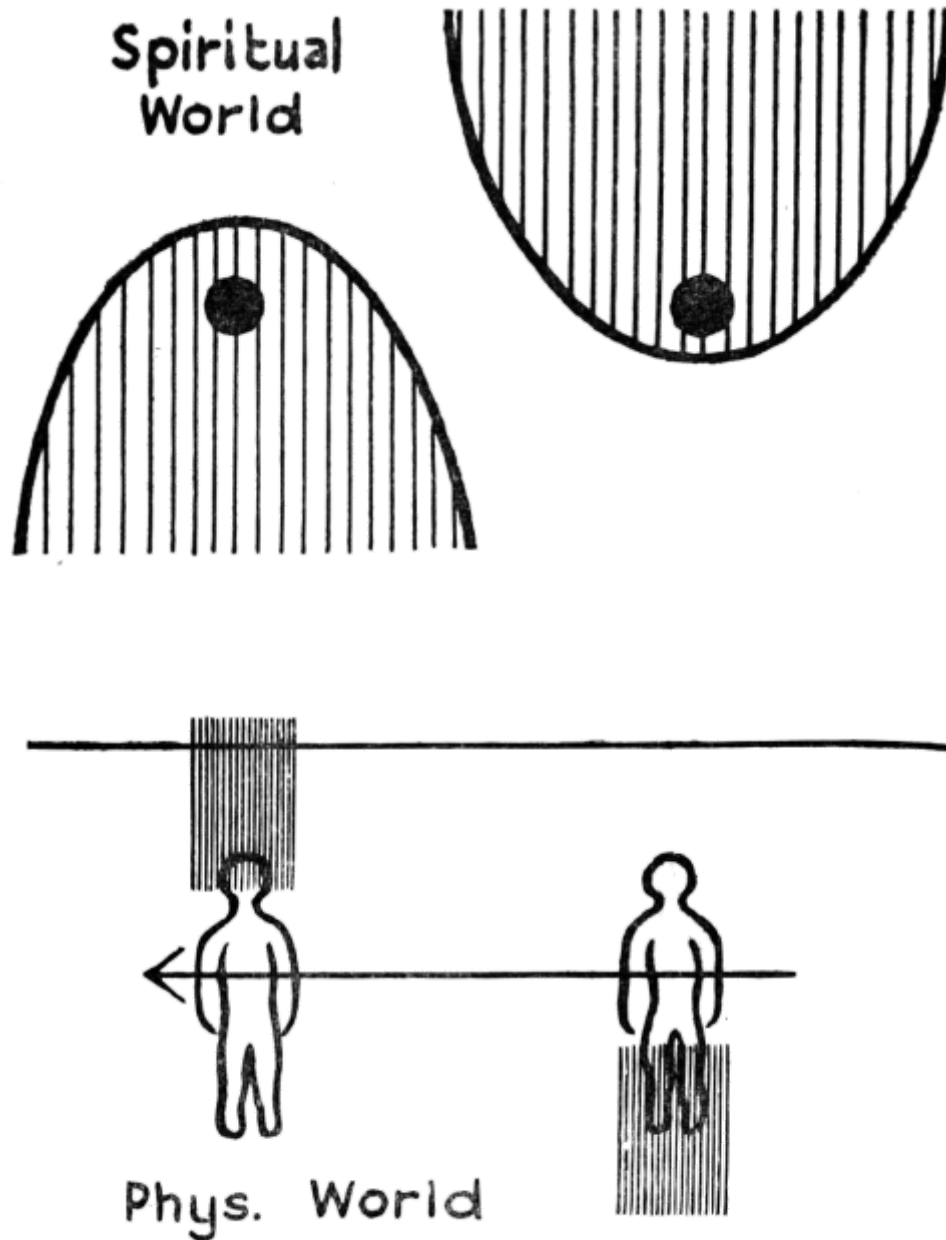
But that is only a diagram; for the student really sees a being, he sees himself as a being, and this vision is much more complex than the vision of one's own being as physical man. He also sees within his own self the other being to which he looks across. As already said, this is a typical experience. His vision simply falls upon such a being, but he feels that this being is not in such a sphere of frosty solitude as he is himself, and therefore its astral body is seen as though directed downwards. It is extremely important to experience this, to feel oneself as if in an astral body which opens upwards, develops its rays of force upwards, wishes to stream upwards, and yet to see the other being as a Self whose astral body develops its forces downwards.



With this typical experience there now comes into the self-consciousness something like the following: 'I am of lower degree, of less value than this other being. What is valuable in the other being is that it can open its astral body downwards, it can, as it were, pour its forces downwards.' And the student's impression is that of having left the physical world. The forces which proceed downwards from the astral body of the other go to the physical world, and work there as forces of blessing; in short, he has the impression that he is confronting a being that may send down to the earth, as a Spiritual rain of blessing, that which it has acquired in the Spiritual world; whereas he himself cannot direct his astral body downwards, it insists on going upwards. He has a feeling that he is of less value, because he cannot direct his astral body downwards. Further, he has a feeling that this consciousness arising thus within him must lead to a Spiritual act. A Spiritual decision matures. This Spiritual decision is to take his loneliness to this second being and warm his coldness with his warmth; he unites himself with this other being. Now, for a moment he has the impression that his own consciousness is being blotted out, as though he had brought about a sort of killing of his own being, a sort of consuming of his own being as though by fire. Then flashes into the self-consciousness, which had previously felt itself blotted out, something which he now first learns to know: Inspiration. He feels himself inspired. It is like a conversation, a typical conversation, now held with a being whom he has only learned to know because it allows him to share in its inspiration. If a student is really capable of understanding what this being sends in as his inspiring voice, he might translate what it says in somewhat the following

words: 'Because thou hast found the way to the other and hast united thyself with his beneficial rain of sacrifice, thou may'st return to the earth with him, within him, and I will make thee his guardian on the earth.' And the student has the feeling that something of infinite importance has been taken into his soul through being able to hear these words of inspiration. In the Spiritual there is a being that is more precious than oneself, and that is allowed to pour its astral being downwards in blessing. Through the impression of being able to unite with this being, and being its guardian when he descends, the student first learns to understand how, as physical human beings who tread the earth, we are really related through our physical and etheric coverings to that which is impregnated as higher powers in the Self and the astral body. In our physical and etheric coverings we are guardians of that which is to develop further and further to higher spheres. Only in this inner experience, when he feels his external being as the guardian of the inner being, does a man really have a true understanding of the relation of the external being to the inner being of man.

Now, when the student has passed the Guardian of the Threshold, the experience which I have just described does not stand alone, but is followed by another. I have described the purely clairvoyant and inspired experience the student may have when, outside the physical body and etheric body, he arrives at union with the Paradise-Imagination, and then obtains the inspiration which first gives an idea of the inter-relationship between the sheaths. But when he has passed the Guardian of the Threshold a second impression is added to the first one; the vision opens past the Guardian of the Threshold down into the physical world. I draw a line to represent the boundary between the higher Spiritual worlds and the physical world; above it is the realm of the Spiritual worlds and below that of the physical.



He now sees down into the physical world, as it were, and there appears another picture, a picture of himself standing below as man. The student observes his own astral body; but this astral body which now appears as a reflection is directed downwards, it does not try to develop the force to stream towards the Spiritual world; it clings closely, as it were, to the physical plane, it does not raise itself to the heights. He also sees the reflection of the other being, whose astral body streams upwards. He has the feeling that this astral body is streaming into the Spiritual world. He sees himself and he sees the other, and he has the feeling: 'Thou standest

there below once more; in the place of the other being there stands there below a quite different man; he is a better man than thou; his astral body strives upward, it rises upward like smoke. Thy astral body strives towards the earth, it goes like smoke downward.' He has a feeling of the Self which dwells within him as he thus looks down, and the following dreadful impression comes to him: Within thee a resolve is being formed, a dreadful resolve, the resolution to kill the other whom thou feelest to be better than thou. The student knows that this decision does not come entirely from the Self, for his Self is there above. It is another being that speaks out of the one there below; but this being suggests the decision to kill the other. And he again hears the voice which previously inspired him, but now it sounds as a dreadful, avenging voice: 'Where is thy brother?' And from this self bursts forth a voice hostile to the former. Previously the inspiration was as follows: 'Through having united thyself with the beneficent powers of the other being, thou desirest to pour thyself downwards with them, and I will make thee the guardian of the other being.' There now bursts forth from this being that one recognises as oneself the words: 'I will not be my brother's keeper.' First comes the resolve to kill the other, then the protest against the inspiring voice which said: 'Because thou hast wished to unite thy coldness with that warmth I appoint thee to be the guardian of that other;' the protest: 'I will not be his guardian.'

When we have had this imaginative experience, we then know all of which the human soul is capable, and above all we know one thing: that, if perverted, the noblest things in the Spiritual world may become the most dreadful things in the physical world. We know that in the depths of the human soul, through the perversion of the noblest readiness to sacrifice, may arise the wish to kill our companion. From this moment we know what is meant in the Bible by the story of Cain and Abel — but only from this moment — for the story of Cain and Abel is none other than the reproduction of an occult experience, which has just been described. If the writer of the story of Cain and Abel had been able to describe what took place with man before the time of the story of Paradise from other reasons than those displayed in the course of the development of humanity, he would have described the first experience, the upper one (on the diagram). Thus he begins with the story of Paradise, and describes its reflection; for Cain felt in this manner towards Abel before that period in the development of the earth indicated by the story of Paradise, he felt towards him as it has been shown here above. And after the temptation, and after the loss of the vision which is regained in occult vision through the Paradise-Imagination, Cain's readiness to sacrifice had passed into what appears

here below; his readiness to sacrifice had really changed into the wish to kill the other. The cry we read of in the Bible: 'Am I to be my brother's keeper?' is the reverse reflection of the other inspiration: 'I will make thee the guardian of the other here below on the earth.' From this you will be able to see that these typical experiences are certainly important; for they bring about a certain union between what we may be to-day and the interests common to all humanity. But at the same time they show us very clearly by what we experience in them in our pulsing soul-life, that the principal thing is to feel the colossal leap the development of humanity has made from what I described to you as the first, the pre-earthly imagination, as it were, to that which is presented in the story of Cain and Abel as an event in humanity after the expulsion from Paradise, after the expulsion through which the Guardian of the Threshold has become invisible for man. The knowledge of this leap in the development of humanity really first shows us what this earthly man is; for when we really feel through and through what has just been described, we gradually experience that this earthly man, as he now is here upon the earth, is the perversion of what he once was. And we then know with great certainty what we should have become if nothing else had intervened. If we had simply developed in this earthly evolution without anything further, we should have become aware of what this is the reflection on the earth. We were not to know this to begin with. It is really only in our present age that man is allowed to know of what the story of Cain and Abel is the reflection, that it is the reflection of a lofty sacrifice. All that was above, everything before Paradise was concealed, for the Guardian himself hid it from us, when, in other words, man was driven out of Paradise. This could only come about through the physical body and etheric body of man being now so permeated with forces that he does not carry out what appears as the reflection — for he certainly would carry it out if he were to feel all that is in the astral body. The physical body and etheric body so stupefy the human being that his wish to kill his fellow is not actualised. Consider what is said in this simple sentence: In that the good, progressive, divine Spiritual Powers gave man a physical and an etheric body, so that he cannot look back, something like a sort of stupefaction was at the same time poured over the wish for the war of each against all. The desire for this is not roused in the soul, because the physical body and etheric body of man were prepared in such a way that this desire is benumbed. A person cannot see his astral body; therefore this wish, too, remains unknown to him; he does not carry it out.

If we wish really to describe the interaction of the astral body and the self, we must describe things which not only actually remain hidden to human nature, but which must so remain. But what has been brought about through the stunning of this and similar wishes — wishes connected with the annihilation and destruction of human and other communal life on the physical plane? They have become debilitated; the human soul only perceives them in a weakened form; it only feels them to a slight extent. And the dim feeling of those wishes that would be something so terrible if man were to allow them free expression, as they really are — this is really our human earthly knowledge.

I am now giving you for the first time a definition of the nature of human earthly knowledge. It consists of the dim and dulled impulses of destruction. Shiva in his most terrible form, so far stupefied that he cannot freely find expression but is, as it were, made threadbare, compressed into the human world of ideas — this is the maya of the human being, this is the knowledge of man. Thus knowledge had to be so weakened — that is to say, the impulses and inner forces had to be so weakened — that the original terrible impulse — ruled by Ahriman, that Ahriman's power (for originally it is Ahriman who gives rise to this wish) should be so far weakened that he could not express himself through man, who would have thereby made himself permanently a servant of Shiva. The sum total of these forces had to be so weakened that its expression in man only enables him to transpose himself into the being of another with his conceptions and ideas. When we try to force an idea of our own into the being of another, when we try to imbue another with a conception of our own, this conception impressed into the nature of the other is the blunted weapon of Cain which was thrust into Abel. And because this weapon was thus blunted it was made possible for that which was at a bound reversed into its opposite, to pass over into evolution. And thus by a slower evolution, through ever-increasing strengthening of his knowledge, man reaches at last the experience of something he was not permitted to express in the physical world because it there became a destructive impulse; stage by stage he develops first ordinary knowledge, then imaginative knowledge, which enters more into the being of another, then inspirational knowledge, which penetrates still more into the being of another, till in intuitive knowledge he enters it entirely and lives on spiritually in the other being.

Thus we gradually struggle up to the comprehension of what this self really is. As to its innermost nature, the astral body is seen to be the great egotist; the self is more than that — it not only lives for itself, but wishes to

pass over into others as well. And knowledge, such as is acquired on earth, is this dulled passion to enter into another, not merely to expand oneself and all that one is, but further to pass beyond oneself into another. It is egotism intensified and extended beyond itself.

If you bear in mind what the origin of knowledge is, you will then understand that there is always the possibility of misusing it, for if this is a true knowledge in the Self, the moment it goes astray it is misused. Only by progressing, and making this penetration into another more and more spiritual, and the renunciation by the astral body which has expanded to world-interests, of this penetration into another's being, only by leaving his constitution quite untouched and placing his interests higher than our own, can we make ourselves ready for higher knowledge. Moreover, we cannot recognise a being of the hierarchy of the angels, for instance, if we have not reached the stage when the inner being of the angels interests us more than does our own. As long as we have more interest in our own being than in the being of the angels, we cannot recognise them. Thus we must first educate ourselves up to world-interests, and then to interests that go even further, so that another can be more important and of more consequence than oneself. The moment we try to develop further in occult experiences, while yet remaining more precious to ourselves than the other beings we wish to know, that same moment we go astray. At this point, if you follow out this train of thought, you really come to a true conception of black magic; for black magic begins where occult activity is carried into the world without our first being in the position to expand our own interests into world-interests, without being able to value other interests more than our own.

Such things can really only be touched upon, so as to arouse conceptions concerning them; they are too important for more than this. I wished to show how we may gradually come to recognise in its true form, not in its maya, that which dwells within us as astral body and self; for what a man experiences inwardly as his astral body is not the true astral body, but merely the reflection of that in the etheric body. And what a man calls his self is not the true Ego, but a reflection of the Ego in his physical body. A man only experiences reflections of his inner being. If he were to experience the forms of his own inner astral body and Ego before he was sufficiently mature, impulses of destruction would be enkindled within him; he would become an aggressive being; the desire to injure would arise within him. And such things underlie all black magic. Although the paths followed by black magic are many, the effect they aim at is always something like a covenant with Ahriman or Shiva. We can only learn to

recognise the astral body and Ego in their true form if at the same time we acknowledge the necessity of developing them and making them worthy of being what they ought to be. The innermost nature of the astral body is egotism; but it should become our ideal to be permitted to be an egotist because the interests of the world have become our own. It must be our ideal to be allowed to enter into another being because we do not intend to seek our own interests, but we find the other being more important than ourselves. Self-education must go so far that we feel this upper picture in all its occult-moral significance; that we so gradually transform this picture which is our self, that we can no longer be warmed by our own emotions, impulses, desires and passions, but that with living our life in the astral body we enter the frosty solitude; we then thereby open ourselves to the warmth, to the warm interest which streams forth from the other worlds, and wish to unite ourselves with the beneficent forces proceeding from this other being. This is at the same time the starting-point for a gradual raising of our self to the higher Hierarchies in their true form. We do not attain to the Beings of the higher Hierarchies if we are not in a position worthily to confront the Imagination and Inspiration which has been described, and to bear seeing its opposite picture; that is, the possibilities in the depths of human nature when it was cast down from the Spiritual into the physical world. If we refuse to look upon the twofold picture of Cain and Abel below — our own self, and the representative of our Higher Self — the mediator between our self and the higher Hierarchies — we cannot ascend. But when we are able to cultivate within our self the feeling indicated here, we then experience our Self, and this provides the entrance to the higher orders of the Hierarchies.



Lecture 9

28 March 1913, The Hague

From a poet who died some years ago. On one occasion, in the second half of the '80s of last century, he said to me that he was very anxious about the future of humanity. I admit that his expression of anxiety was somewhat of a paradox, but he was very much in earnest in his anxiety as to the tendency he wished to point out by his paradox; indeed, this anxiety inclined him to a certain pessimism. It seemed to him that the development of humanity in the future would be such that man would principally develop his head more and more, and that, compared with his head, all the other parts of a man would be stunted. He was very much in earnest over this idea, and he expressed this in paradox by saying that he was afraid the reasoning intellectual nature of man would get the upper hand to such an extent that the head would become like a great globe, and that men would then roll on earth as balls. The anxiety was very real to the man, for he reflected that we are living in the age of intellectualism, of the development of the intellectual powers which are expressed in the head, and that these reasoning powers would increase more and more, and that mankind was moving towards an unenviable future. Now that, of course, is a very paradoxical statement, and we might say also, in a certain sense, that even the anxiety which gave rise to his pessimism is also paradoxical. But the human intellect has a tendency to deteriorate, to draw conclusions when some or other observation has been made, and this is a case in point. This may be amply noticed in the realm of the theosophical movement as well as in the external, exoteric life. In external, exoteric life we do not have to look very far before we notice that the observations made by man at various times have always given rise to a great number of theories. How many hypotheses have been abandoned as worthless in the course of the evolution of humanity! In the theosophical-occult field it can also be observed that someone who has undergone occult training, and has thus acquired some clairvoyant power, may recount something from true clairvoyant observation, and then come the theorists who invent all sorts of schemes and theories, and so the matter develops. Very often the observation is quite an insignificant one, but the schemes and theories built upon it include whole worlds. That is always the danger; the intellect has this tendency. We have this tendency in a fairly passable sense in the well-known book, 'Esoteric Buddhism' by Sinnett. This book is based upon a

number of genuine occult facts; these are in the middle of the book, and relate to the middle of the development of the earth. But upon these facts he built up a scheme of Rounds and Races, and this only rolls and turns, as it were, upon itself, always more or less in the same way. They are inferences, theories, made from the few genuine data to be found in the book. And this was the case also with my poet. In the background he had a sort of unconscious, instinctive imagination which told him something true; we might say, there is half an ounce of truth, and from this he made a hundred-weight, or many hundred-weight. We often find cases such as this in the world. Now, what is the truth of the matter? The truth is this, that in our age man's head is undergoing a certain evolution, the formation of the head, the whole structure of the head will undergo change in the future. If we direct our attention to a very far-distant period in the earth's evolution, we have to imagine that, for example, the formation of the human forehead, nose, and jaws will have undergone essential changes, and that, in a certain sense, all the rest which the human being bears as his earthly organism will have retrograded; but, of course, never, during the earth period, will the relation of the developing head to the rest of the body be that of a rolling globe. This must only be taken literally to a very, very limited extent. On the other hand, in ancient epochs of development on the earth, before the middle of the Atlantean epoch, the rest of the human organism was capable of change; it was engaged in a sort of development. Apart from the head, the human organism has changed comparatively little — and again I say comparatively little — since the middle of the Atlantean epoch; on the other hand, prior to that time the remainder of the human organism underwent great changes. From this you will be able to draw the inference — which will now be correct, because it is nothing but an actual observation clothed in words — that the further we go back into the Atlantean and Lemurian epochs the more essentially different man looked, even to his own observation. In the ancient Lemurian epoch, man looked quite different from what he now recognises as himself at the present day.

The appearance man would have presented to himself in the latter portion of the Lemurian epoch is apparent to him again, in a certain way, when he gradually approaches the clairvoyant impression leading to what we have described as the Paradise-Imagination. I have, indeed, told you — and it is true — that this Paradise-Imagination corresponds to a complete delineation of the human being, the physical human body, so to say, as the Paradise itself. Man separated — as it were — he divided; the present corporeal nature appeared outspread in the manner described; but at that

time, the actual time to which we look back clairvoyantly, and we have the Paradise Legend before us, a mighty leap forward was made. And through this movement — which may also be observed by means of clairvoyance — what might be called the outspread human being was drawn together relatively rapidly into that which then became the starting-point of man for the development which followed. Directly after the time corresponding to the Paradise-Imagination, the form of man was, however, quite unlike what has developed out of it to-day. And, fundamentally, all that surrounded man in the kingdoms of nature was also quite unlike his present surroundings.

I have already mentioned in the previous lectures of this course that the pupil might attain to this Paradise-Imagination if he were suddenly to become clairvoyant for a moment during sleep, and to look back, as it were, at his physical body and etheric body, stimulated to this Imagination by these. On the whole, it may be said that a great deal of esoteric development is necessary before attaining to this Paradise-Imagination. The student must have gained many victories in order to transform his own personal interests into those common to humanity and the world. There then comes, when from the very deepest sleep — for there are degrees of sleep — he passes to a less deep sleep, and in this less deep sleep becomes clairvoyant — there comes what later in earthly evolution became reality: The condition of man in the ancient Lemurian epoch after he had made the great leap forward.

Thus we say that it is possible to see this primeval period of the earth through separation in the self and astral body from the physical body and etheric body, looking back at them. Now, as the order of nature comes to our aid — for in the night we are outside our physical body — we can make use of this arrangement of nature, and so regulate the training that, as if awaking out of sleep, but not returning to the physical body — as if awaking in a different state of consciousness — we see the physical body. From this you will be able to gather that the vision we have just spoken of provides the only true possibility of learning to know how man was formed in the primeval past.

In the far-distant future will come a time when we shall be able to say: How extraordinary were those people of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries! They believed themselves able to discover the origin of man by means of the external investigation of nature; they thought they could draw conclusions regarding the ancestry of man from the observation of the animals surrounding them on the physical plane. However, through the

true development of human knowledge, it becomes evident that we can only arrive at a true idea of the origin of man upon the earth, and of his ancient form, by means of clairvoyant observation, and that we can never obtain insight into what man was like in the Lemurian epoch, for example, except through clairvoyant observation, through the retrospective vision stimulated by the impressions of one's own physical body and etheric body. But then it will be seen — this will be admitted in that future time — that man was never like any of the animal forms about him in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries; for the forms which man had in that time, and which manifest themselves to his clairvoyant consciousness in the way we have described, are different from all the animal forms around man in the nineteenth century. And even the expressions we have made use of — bull, lion, etc. — are only used comparatively. The men of the future will say how very grotesque it is to see the way people in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries traced back their ancestry to ape-like beings; for in the Lemurian epoch there were no apes at all in the form in which they later appeared upon earth; they only originated at a much later period, from degraded and degenerated human forms. Animal beings which may be compared to our present apes can only be found by clairvoyant vision about the middle of the Atlantean epoch of the earth's evolution. The further we go back in the development of humanity, the more we see that to the clairvoyant view, in the vision of our self during sleep in the night, our shape, our form in ancient times is to some extent preserved. And so it comes about that, when a student thus looks at himself, he learns to recognise his physical corporeality in an infinitely more delicate etheric body, one might say, though not in the sense of our present ether. Thus does man appear. His form appears more as a vivid dream-picture than as the form of flesh and blood he now bears. We have to become acquainted with the idea that when the self and astral body are outside the human being they can scarcely see the head; it is quite shadowy; not completely blotted out, but quite shadowy. On the other hand, the rest of the organisation of man is distinct. That is shadowy, too, but its condition is such that the human being does not appear as made of flesh and blood, but one has the distinct impression that he possesses a more powerful organisation. It may appear paradoxical, yet it is true that when a man looks at himself clairvoyantly in sleep he has at certain moments such an appearance — that is, to the self and astral body, his physical body and etheric body present such an appearance — that he is reminded of the form of the Centaur! The upper part, which appears in the Centaur as the human part, bears the human face, but in a very shadowy form; the other part, which is not exactly like any of our present animal forms, but which is

reminiscent of them in certain respects, is more powerful, and the seer says to himself: 'To the spiritual view this is stronger, even denser, than our present form of flesh and blood.' I have already touched upon these matters in a previous course of lectures; but you must understand that all these Imaginations, except the Paradise-Imagination, are fugitive, and can be presented from different aspects. I might also present a somewhat different aspect — and you would see that this only corresponds to a different period of development — and then we should arrive at the form of the Sphinx. The consecutive order of the evolution of man is presented in various aspects, in different views. The mythological pictures, the so-called mythological symbols, contain much more truth than the fantastic intellectual combinations made by present-day science.

Thus, at night the human figure becomes very peculiar. Something else now becomes clear. When we consider with clairvoyant eye this lower part which reminds us of an animal, we become acquainted with something which makes a very definite impression upon us; as I observed in the last lecture, these impressions, these inner experiences, are really the essential thing. The pictures are important, but the inner experiences are still more so. We reach an impression so that we know afterwards: That which really drives me during the day to my personal interests alone, that which inoculates my soul with merely personal interests, is the outcome of what I observe at night as my lower animal part. During the day I do not see it; but it is within me as forces, and these are the forces which draw me down to a certain extent, and lead me astray into personal interests.

Developing this impression more and more brings us to the recognition of the place Lucifer really fills in our evolution. The further we direct our clairvoyant vision back towards the time that corresponds to the Paradise-Imagination, the more beautiful becomes the structure, which is really only reminiscent in a later time of what belongs to the animal — kingdom. And if we go back altogether into what belongs to Paradise, where the animal continuation of man appears as though separated from man himself, and multiplied into — bull, lion, and eagle, we may then say that these forms — which we know in those ancient times by these names — may also in a certain sense be for us symbols of beauty. More and more beautiful become these forms, and, going still further back, to the time of which we spoke in the last lecture, when we represented the impression of the sacrifice, we arrive at the period when Lucifer's true form appears to us in sublime beauty, just as he wished to preserve himself unchanged in the evolution from the ancient Moon to the earth.

From the account I have given in 'Occult Science,' you know that on ancient Moon the astral body was given to man. What we bear within us in our astral body played a great part on the ancient Moon. We have described it as personal selfhood, as egotism. This egotism had to be implanted in man on the ancient Moon, and, as man received his astral body on the ancient Moon, egotism has its seat in the astral body; and, as Lucifer has preserved his Moon-nature, he has brought egotism to the earth as the inner soul-quality of his beauty. Therefore, on the one hand he is the Spirit of Beauty, and on the other the Spirit of Egotism. And what we may call his error is only this: that he has transplanted to the earth something which, as far as man is concerned, if I may use the expression, belonged to the ancient Moon; that is, the permeating and impregnating of himself with egotism. But thereby, as has often been said, was given to man the possibility of becoming a self-contained, free being, which he never would have become if Lucifer had not carried over egotism from the Moon to the Earth.

Thus inner experience teaches us to know Lucifer as the Night Spirit, as it were. And it is part of the change that goes on in our self and our astral body that at night we feel — ourselves in the company of Lucifer.

You may perhaps at first think — if you only think superficially — that it must be disagreeable to a person, when he goes to sleep and becomes clairvoyant, to become aware that — during the night he comes into Lucifer's company. But if you reflect more deeply, you will soon come to the conclusion that it is wiser for us to learn to recognise Lucifer; it is better to know that we are in his company than to think that he is not there, and yet have him invisibly active with his forces within us, as, indeed, is the case during the day. The evil does not consist in Lucifer's being by our side, for we gradually learn to recognise him as the Spirit who brings — us freedom; the evil consists in our not recognising him. But after men had caught sight of him, as it were, when he misled them in the Lemurian epoch, they were not permitted to see him any more; for then, in addition to that original misleading in the Lemurian epoch, there would have been innumerable other smaller misleadings. Therefore, the divine-Spiritual Being who was watching over the progress of mankind had to draw a veil over the vision of the night. Thereby man lost as well all else that he would have seen during sleep. Sleep covers from man with darkness the world in which he is from the time of his going to sleep until he awakens. At the withdrawal of the veil which covers the night with darkness, we should instantly perceive Lucifer by our side. If man were strong enough, this would do no harm; but as at first he could not be strong in the sense required by our earthly

development, this veil had to be drawn during his sleep at night. After the first great misleading, which left in its train the possibility of human freedom, no other misleadings, through the direct vision of Lucifer from the time of his going to sleep until reawakening, were to come to man.

Now, there is an equivalent. We cannot see Lucifer at night if during the day we do not see his comrade, Ahriman. Thus to the student who has progressed as far as this in the development of his self and his astral body, the daily experience which allows him to have the vision of outer objects becomes different from what it is to the ordinary man. He learns to recognise that he sees things in a different light from before the development of his self and his astral body. He first learns to look upon certain impressions, which ordinarily he considered in an abstract manner, as the activities of the Ahrimanic beings. Thus that which comes from outside, which awakens desire in him from outside — not that which comes from within, for that is Luciferic — but that which attracts him in the objects and beings around him, so that he follows this attraction from personal interests; in short, all that entices him to enjoyment from outside he learns to recognise as bearing the impress of Ahriman. We also learn to recognise this in all that rouses fear within us from outside. They are the two poles — enjoyment and fear. Around us are the so-called material world and the so-called Spiritual world; both these in our ordinary waking life are enveloped in illusion. The external world of the senses appears as *maya*, or illusion, for people do not see that whenever they are stimulated to enjoyment by outer objects and beings Ahriman peeps out and calls forth the enjoyment in the soul. But the fact that there is a true Spiritual nature everywhere in matter — which the materialists deny — that produces fear, and when the materialists notice that fear is beginning to appear from the astral depths of their soul, they then stupefy themselves, and think out materialistic theories; for what the poet says is profoundly true, 'People never notice the devil (that is Ahriman), even when he has them by the collar.' To what end are materialistic meetings held? In order to swear allegiance to the devil. This is literally true, only they do not know it. Whenever materialists gather together to-day, to explain in beautiful theories that nothing exists but matter, Ahriman then has them by the collar; and there is no more favourable opportunity for studying the devil to-day than by going to a gathering of materialists or monists. Thus, when a man has undergone a certain development in his astral body and self, Ahriman accompanies him at every step. When we begin to see him, then we can protect ourselves from him; we can see Ahriman spying out in the allurements of enjoyment and in the impressions of fear.

Again, on account of the immaturity of man, it was necessary that Ahriman should be hidden; that is, a veil was drawn over his nature. This was done somewhat differently from in the case of Lucifer; the outer world was plunged into maya for man, giving him the illusion that outside in the world, instead of Ahriman peeping out, there was matter everywhere. Wherever man dreams there is matter, there is, in reality, Ahriman; and the greatest illusion is the materialistic theory of physics about the material atoms, for in reality these are nothing but the forces of Ahriman.

Now, humanity as a whole is developing, evolving, and this evolution advances so that towards our future man will actually develop the powers of pure intellect more and more. This will cause his head to assume a different shape externally. In a certain respect the beginning of this development towards intellectuality was made with the dawn of modern natural science, about the sixteenth century. When intensified, this intellectual development will exercise great influence upon the self and the astral body of man. A time set in when there still remained traditions of the old clairvoyance. These came in contact with one another exactly at the dawn of our modern natural science. It was precisely in the sixteenth century; it was then known that a future would come when, through the higher development of the self and astral body, man would be able really to see Ahriman more and more clearly. Then, because in the early period of intellectual development it struggled against the perception of the Spiritual with all its might, a darkening set in; but in the figure of Mephistopheles, who is none other than Ahriman, at the side of Faust, the sixteenth century was able to point out that, fundamentally, Ahriman will become more and more dangerous in a conscious manner to the future development of humanity; that Mephistopheles will become more and more a sort of tempter of the human race. At that time this could only be demonstrated because man still had a remembrance of the ancient Spiritual figures. But this has now been forgotten by the general body of humanity, though in the future the knowledge will be forced on man that through all his waking life he is accompanied by Ahriman-Mephistopheles. Naturally, this corresponds to the complementary picture that man is living towards a future when, each time he awakes, he will have — at first like a fleeting dream, but later more clearly — the impression: 'Thy companion during the night was Lucifer.' You see from this that through the theosophical-occult development of the self and astral body we may have the fore-knowledge of what will come to humanity in the future, we can dimly sense the companionship of Ahriman and Lucifer. Through a definite law of evolution, Lucifer first came to man during the Lemurian epoch,

then later, as the consequences of the Luciferic influence, came the Ahrimanic. In the future this will be reversed: The Ahrimanic will first be strong, and subsequently the Luciferic influence will be added. In the ever-developing clairvoyant conditions of the human soul, the Ahrimanic influence will work principally in the waking condition, the Luciferic influence principally during sleep, or in all the conditions which are indeed similar to sleep, but in which there is consciousness.

Thus, as Ahriman entered our external sensible life in our waking condition, man first needed a protection against Ahriman during this waking condition. These protective impulses are given in the development of humanity many, many centuries before the danger appears. Although the general body of humanity has not yet developed the full consciousness of Ahriman-Mephistopheles, the protective impulse came at the beginning of our era in the physical appearance of Christ in the earth-development. Christ once appeared in the physical body in the earth-development to make provision that man might be armed, through receiving the Christ-impulse, against the necessary influence which will come from Ahriman-Mephistopheles. The power through which man will be armed later on when the Luciferic influence is there, is an influence which will affect a different consciousness; man will be armed against this by the appearance of Christ in the etheric body, regarding which we have often said that it is drawing near. Just as Christ appeared once in a physical body and thence his impulse has proceeded further, so from this twentieth century onward Christ will be seen in an etheric form, at first by a small number, and then by an ever-increasing number of human beings. Thus we see that the progressive development of man is brought about by a kind of equilibrium; a kind of balancing of the different impulses. What is related in the Gospels as the story of the Temptation, the confronting of Lucifer and Ahriman by Christ, portrayed in different ways in the different Gospels — I have spoken of this on a previous occasion — is a sign that through the Christ-Impulse, through the Mystery of Golgotha, man will be able to find the right way of development in the future. It forms part of a true development of the self and the astral body of man that in this transformed self and astral body he can receive the impressions of the positions occupied by Ahriman, Lucifer, and Christ in the development of humanity, and a correct development of the self and astral body leads to this knowledge of the three impulses which condition the evolution of mankind.

A correct development, however, includes the extension of the sense of self in the astral body to interests common to humanity and the world. And it acts like poison when a man carries his personal aspirations into those

regions of his clairvoyant observation which he ought only to observe when filled with interests common to humanity and the world. He cannot then perceive the truth, but has imaginations which are incorrect, untrue, which are only the reflections of his own personal interests and aspirations. It may sometimes happen that a clairvoyant who is still filled with personal aspirations and interests experiences something like the following. I received a letter in which someone wrote that he had to communicate something that I ought to know. He said that Christ was reborn in a physical body, and his address is somewhere in London, W.; that Mary is reborn in a physical body; her address is that of his niece, in such-and-such a street. Paul is reborn, and was his brother-in-law, and his address was also given. And all those mentioned in the Gospels were reborn among the relatives, and in this letter all their various addresses were given. I could show this letter to anyone: it is a document — grotesque as it may appear — which shows the effect of carrying personal interests into those heights where there should only be the interests of the world and of humanity.

But now we must clearly understand that when someone makes a mistake in abstract intellectual knowledge in general, this kind of error can easily be controlled, it is something that can be done away with comparatively quickly, although, indeed, human knowledge has the frightful origin, which was referred to in the last lecture. As the knowledge of man, which is expressed in our waking daily life, receives such diluted impulses that everyone may develop perfect freedom with respect to them, hence no one need be dazzled by the foolish things thought out by human intellect, and those who allow themselves to be dazzled by these foolish imaginings can be cured in a comparatively short time. But suppose that in this clairvoyant observation a person arrives at incorrect imaginations in the manner we have described; these incorrect imaginings then act as a poison in the soul in a certain way; they poison it by obliterating the healthy human reason and intellectual grasp. Thus they injure one much more deeply than do merely intellectual follies. If, therefore, we try to permeate everything obtained in the fields of occultism with the forms of sound human intellect, we do well. If an Imagination is simply given out, without any attempt to justify it, as we have tried to justify such in this course of lectures (and incorrect imaginations would only be cited as mere imaginations), then this will impose upon the very faculty in others which should bestir itself to reject such imaginations. And it might very well be that, while one who spreads intellectual follies may easily provoke criticism,

one who spreads false imaginations by this means takes away from those who believe in him the power to criticise; that is, he blinds them to the challenge that ought to be given to the imaginations in question.

From this we may gather, my dear friends, how very necessary it is that the moment the knowledge goes beyond what is intended for man in the natural course of evolution, the moment a man uplifts himself to clairvoyant knowledge, how unconditionally necessary it is that his development should move unswervingly towards interests common to humanity and the world. This will always be recognised in true occultism. And to assert the opposite, that there can be sound entry into the Spiritual world, that is, a sound development of the astral body and the self apart from the extension of the human interests to selfless world-interests and interests common to humanity; that is, to make the opposite affirmation to the one made here, could only spring from a disposition that permeates occultism with frivolity. We must bear in mind the serious importance of these things in speaking of the changes which take place in the astral body and the Self of man during his higher Spiritual development.



Lecture 10

29 March 1913, The Hague

We have seen that as the result of serious theosophical training, or esoteric occult development, changes come about in the four principal parts of the human being; and you may have observed that in the descriptions we have given the principal stress has been laid upon the inward change in these four parts of human nature, or the changes which are, to a certain extent, experienced inwardly. But we have to distinguish clearly between this change to be experienced inwardly, and the description of the outer changes manifest to the vision of the seer, which is, of course, quite different. In true esoteric development it is very important to know what takes place within man, and what is in front of him, when he goes through occult development. Interesting, also, although perhaps not so important, is the change outwardly visible to the seer. To sum up in a few words, we might say: that which is perceived inwardly as a sort of 'becoming more mobile' and 'becoming more independent' of the various parts of the physical body, manifests itself to the clairvoyant vision, which does not experience the changes in the physical body from within, but looks upon them from without, in such a manner that the physical body of a person undergoing occult development is seen to split up, to divide, in a certain sense; and because of this splitting-up, clairvoyant-vision feels it to be separating. To clairvoyant vision the physical body of a person who is steadily advancing in occult development is actually seen to grow. And we may say that if at one time we meet a person who is undergoing a true occult development, that which the clairvoyant vision sees at a definite time as the physical body has a definite size; if we meet him again a few years later his physical body has grown; it has become decidedly larger. Thus there is such a thing as the growth of the physical body beyond the normal physical size, but with this is connected the fact that it becomes more shadowy. Thus we notice that as the person develops, his physical body is seen to become larger and larger. It consists, however, of various parts, as it were, and these manifest themselves in what in occult life is called 'Imagination.' The physical body of a person undergoing occult development manifests more and more as a number of imaginations, of pictures which are in a sense inwardly alive and active, and are, or rather become, more and more interesting; for they are not just anything we please. When the person is beginning his development

the pictures are not specially significant; and they are least so when the clairvoyant vision observes the body of a person who has not yet developed in occultism. In this latter case a number of pictures, a number of imaginations are perceived. To clairvoyant vision the physical substance disappears, and in its place appear imaginations: but these are so pressed together that instead of the pleasing inwardly shining aspect of a person engaged in occult development, they manifest as in an opaque substance. Even, however, in the case of a person who is not yet developed they are to be seen, and indeed as parts and each part signifies something in the macrocosm. Essentially one can distinguish twelve parts, each of which is really a picture — a painting of one part of the great cosmos. When all twelve are assembled together, the impression is given that some unknown painter has produced miniature pictures of the macrocosm, twelve in number, and from these has formed the physical human body. Now, when the individual is engaged in occult development, this picture grows larger and larger, and also appears inwardly more and more pleasing, radiant from within. This is because, in the case of an individual not engaged in occult development, the macrocosm is only reflected in its physical aspect; but in the case of one undergoing an occult development the spiritual content more and more manifests itself; the pictures of the spiritual essence of the macrocosm are to be seen. Thus occult development also shows us that a person engaged in an occult development, from being merely a physical microcosm, becomes more and more a spiritual one, that is, he manifests within himself more and more, not merely the pictures of planets and suns, but of entities belonging to the Higher Hierarchies. That is the difference between persons engaged and others not engaged in occult development. The more a person presses forward in occult development the more exalted are the Hierarchies manifesting within him. And thus we learn the structure of the world, as it were, by clairvoyantly observing the physical human body.

The human etheric body of one who is not undergoing occult development manifests the progressive course of the world, that which follows consecutively in time; it shows how planets and suns, even the human civilisations on earth, and the individual human beings alter in the course of their incarnations, and how they appear in consecutive stages of growth. Thus the etheric body may truly be called a narrator; it recounts the story of the growth of the world. While the physical body of man is like a sum-total of pictures painted by an unknown artist, the etheric body proves to be a kind of story-teller who narrates in its own inner happenings the story of the world itself. And the more deeply a person is engaged in

occult development, the wider the range of the stories. The etheric body of a person who has undergone comparatively little occult development manifests to the clairvoyant vision perhaps only a few generations which have preceded him in physical ancestry — for this development is still also shown in the etheric body of man. But the further a person carries his occult development, the more possible it becomes to see in his etheric body the various civilisations of humanity, the various incarnations of this or that individuality; yea, even to ascend to cosmic development and see the share of the Spirits of the Higher Hierarchies in it.

The astral body of man — which to ordinary observation can only be seen, as it were, through its inner reflection, through experiences of thought, will and feeling — becomes more and more an expression of the value of man, with respect to his essential entity in the cosmos. I want you to consider this description, this presentation, as being of very special significance. The astral body of a human being undergoing an occult development becomes more and more the expression of his value in the cosmos. In a previous lecture we showed how we discover that the astral body, in its original nature, is a sort of egotist, and that this has to be overcome in occult development, raising the personal interests to those of the world. Observing the astral body of a person engaged in higher development one can see from it, according to whether it appears dark and dull or has an inner illumination, according to its revelation of itself in shrill dissonances or in harmonious melodious tones, whether the person in question has so conducted his development that he is still entangled in his personal interests, of which we have spoken, or whether he has really made the interests of the world his own. This is what can be seen from the astral body of a human personality engaged in higher development: when the development goes on in a true, occult, ethical manner, we see in him how wonderful man becomes through extending the horizon of his interests from those that are personal to those that are universally human, and into the common aims of the world. The astral body becomes more radiant, shines more and more like a radiant sun, as the human being learns to make the affairs of all humanity and the world his own.

The further the human being progresses in his development, the more the Self manifests the tendency to split up, to divide. It sends out, as it were, the contents of its consciousness, and these make 'messenger paths' in the world. If, for example, a human being wishes to learn to know a being belonging to the Hierarchy of the Angels, it is not sufficient for him to exercise the ordinary forces of perception; if he really wishes to know this being he must be able to transfer his consciousness; that is, he must

be able to separate the forces of his Self and transpose a part of his self-consciousness into the being of the Angel. Whatever sort of being we wish to know, we can only do it by transposing our self-consciousness into this being. It is the impulse of the Self to go out of itself, to transpose itself into the other being and allow that which at first lived only in oneself to enter the life of the other being. At a lower stage in the development of the human being, at the stage of ordinary human existence, this manifests as a certain impulse to remove its consciousness out of itself; this can be seen in the need for sleep. And that which psychically drives man to sleep is exactly the same that in higher development directs the consciousness, not into the unconscious world of sleep, but into the consciousness of the Angels or the Spirits of Form or still Higher Hierarchies. Thus one might be paradoxical by inquiring: What does it imply when a man becomes acquainted with one of the Elohim, one of the Spirits of Form? It means that he has developed so far that he is able to sleep over into the consciousness of the Elohim and to awaken within the Elohim, possessing the consciousness of this Spirit of Form, of this spirit belonging to the Higher Hierarchies. This is recognition of a higher being: consciousness must be resigned as in sleep, but so resigned that by reason of the higher forces awakened within, it reawakens and radiates towards us as the consciousness of the higher being. Thus, an astral body under true occult development becomes like a sun which radiates its world-interests; but when the Self is more highly developed it becomes like the planets which circle round the sun of the astral body, and which, in their circling through the world, meet other beings, and by means of this bring messages from them to the perceptive nature of man. Thus the astral body and the Self of a human being undergoing occult development present the picture of a sun — which is the astral body — surrounded by its planets — that are a number of multiplications of the Self, sent out into other beings in order that the student through that which his multiplied Self rays back to him from these other beings may know their nature.

The feeling we have when becoming acquainted with the inner nature of the members of the Higher Hierarchies (we learn to recognise their external being through the physical body and the etheric body; and to recognise them inwardly through the astral body and the Self, we come into communication, as it were, with these beings who belong to the Higher Hierarchies through the astral body and Self) — the feeling we have is as though we had to make our self in our astral body into a sun and to separate from oneself, a Self capable of active participation in the nature of the Hierarchy of the Angels; another Self which has that gift as regards the

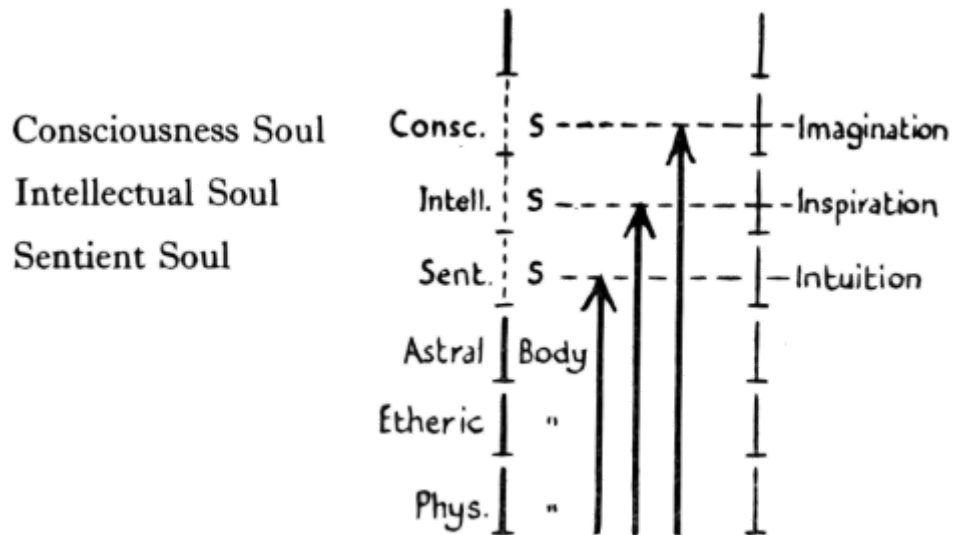
Hierarchy of the Archangels; and yet another Self which has the gift with regard to the Hierarchy of the Spirits of Form. A fourth Self participates in the nature of the Hierarchy of the Spirits of Motion, a fifth in that of the Hierarchy of the Spirits of Wisdom and of Will, a sixth Self or Ego in that of the Hierarchy of the Cherubim, and a seventh in that of the Hierarchy of the Seraphim. It is possible for a person, when he develops the four parts of his being and continues this development to a high stage, actually to attain to the experience we have just described. This is possible; and in addition to this development of his Self in the manner I have just indicated, he can attain to a still higher development of his Self.

For through the separation of seven selves from the eighth Self, this eighth self, which remains behind, undergoes a higher development. Consider the matter in this way: We have the original Self of man, which is given to him before he undergoes occult development. He then undergoes this, and thereby sends forth from himself seven Selves. In order that the Self originally given him may be able to send forth seven Selves he has to exercise an inner force, the result of which is that the Self rises a stage higher. But now I want you to reflect that the process which I have described in its most extreme development, as it were, only comes about gradually. A person undergoing occult development does not, of course, at once become a perfect Sun in — the astral body, surrounded by the planets of his Selves, but he first attains to an imperfect Sun existence, and imperfect developments of his planetary Selves; all this takes place gradually. And, at the same time, the development of the ordinary Self into the Higher Self takes place slowly and gradually. When this development has reached a definite stage, when the Self has reached higher and higher attainment, then gradually comes the power to look back at former incarnations. This is the stage which gives one the power to look back to previous incarnations; it is the development of the Self beyond itself, the attainment of forces beyond itself, which give it at the same time power truly to understand higher Hierarchies. We might say that, to clairvoyant vision, a person, through occult development, with respect to his Self and his astral body, becomes star-like — similar to a starry system.

In the above I have briefly described what is presented to another person who is becoming clairvoyant, whereas in the previous lectures I spoke more of the inward experiences. There is still something important which I have to lay before you, which is to amplify an indication already made. When the student develops his astral body and his Self he attains, as you have heard, to observation of a world, previously empty, now filled with the beings of the Higher Hierarchies, Angels, Archangels, Archai, etc.

The question might now be asked: Do the kingdoms of nature around man also change? Yes; the kingdoms of nature do very materially change. I have already mentioned that, to the vision of a clairvoyant, the physical body, even of an ordinary person, presents the appearance of a number of paintings, and these shine more and more within the more the person progresses. Now, how does the case stand with the animals? When with clairvoyant vision we look at an animal its physical body also changes into Imaginations, and then we know that these animals are not what they appear to be in maya, but are imaginations: that is, they are imaginations, conceived in a consciousness. Who, then, conceives the animals as imaginations? Whose imaginations are they? Animals, also plants in their outward forms — though plants less than animals, and least of all minerals — are imaginations of Ahriman. Our physicists seek for the material laws in the external kingdoms of nature; but the occultist comes more and more to the knowledge that the external kingdoms of nature, as far as they present themselves as material beings, are imaginations of Ahriman. We know, indeed, that behind the animals, for example, are the Group-Souls. The Group-Souls are not imaginations of Ahriman, but the separate individual animals in their external forms are imaginations of Ahriman. Thus, if we take the lion-tribe; the group-soul of this species belongs to the good spiritual beings, as it were, and the war of Ahriman against the good spiritual beings consists in his pressing their group-souls into the separate individual forms of the animals and imprinting upon them his own imaginations. The separate lion-forms, as they move about outwardly in the world, are forced out of the group-souls by Ahriman. Thus the external world which surrounds us also changes gradually into something quite different from its appearance in maya.

Now, in order that you may have something on which you may range as on the steps of a ladder the thoughts which have been opened to us in the course of these lectures, I will give you a sort of diagram.



Here on the left I will represent what we may call the constitution of the ordinary man: Physical body, Etheric body, Astral body, Sentient soul, Intellectual soul, Consciousness soul, Spirit Self, Life Spirit and Spirit Man. We know this as the constitution of man. I will represent this only by lines. The inner being would be the Sentient soul, the next, the Intellectual or Mind soul, the next, the Consciousness soul, the next would be Spirit Self. The higher parts may be left out of account, as we do not need to consider them to-day. This constitution of man so manifests itself externally that the bodily part consists of the three lower principles; that which is experienced in the soul, of the three middle ones; the Spirit Self is not present in man, except as a perspective of the future, as it were. Now, when a person undergoes occult development the first thing to be done is to suppress certain things in the soul itself. We have seen that it is particularly important for the student to be able to lay aside the external sense impressions. It is, indeed, the first requirement of true occult progress that the student should lay aside external sense impressions. Now through this laying aside of external impressions of the senses, that principle of the soul which is chiefly developed under the influence of these impressions, namely, the Consciousness Soul, changes inwardly. It must be clearly understood that the Consciousness Soul is at present undergoing its chief development, because so much value is now attached to the external impressions of the senses. You must not confuse the fact that the Consciousness Soul generally is inwardly strengthened by the impressions received through the senses, with the fact that these sense impressions are transmitted through the Sentient Soul. When we are dealing with occult development we must notice under what sort of influences the

Consciousness Soul is most strengthened, and we find these to be the external sense impressions. When these are laid aside the Consciousness Soul is then suppressed, so that in the one who is undergoing occult development it is the Consciousness Soul which must first of all retire into the background. (Here, on the right, I will draw that which in the occultly developing man corresponds to the several parts of the soul.) We are speaking of that which in ordinary life leads a person to emphasise his 'ego,' which above all leads him to lay stress upon his ego in all sorts of directions. In our age special stress is laid upon this ego or 'I' in the direction of thought. One hears nothing more often said than — this is my standpoint, I think this or that — as though the opinion of this or that person had any significance compared with the truth. It is true that the sum of the three angles of a triangle is 180 degrees, and it is immaterial how a person regards it. It is true that the Hierarchies, counting from man upwards, are divided into three times three, and it is quite immaterial how this truth is regarded. Insistence upon the ego retires into the background, and in its place the Consciousness Soul, which previously served principally for the development of the ego, is gradually filled with what we call 'Imaginations.' We may simply say that when a person develops his Consciousness Soul is changed into the Imaginative Soul.

We also know from what has been said in the previous lectures that thinking itself, which is developed principally in the Intellectual or Mind Soul, must also be changed. We have heard that thinking must more and more give up developing its own thoughts, that it must more and more suppress personal thinking; the human personality suppressing its own thought. When the student is able to suppress that which in his ordinary life he has made of his Intellectual or Mind Soul, then in the place of that which exists in him as ordinary thinking, as reason, and also as the ordinary mental life on the physical plane, comes Inspiration. The Intellectual or Mind Soul changes into the Inspirational or Inspired Soul. The inspired works of culture have been received in the transformed Intellectual Soul as Inspiration.

The sentient soul is chiefly laid aside by overcoming the astral body, by making the world-interests one's own, and thereby rising more and more above personal feelings; the sentient soul thereby changes; and all the inner impulses, »•; inner passions and emotions, change into Intuitions; and in the place of the Sentient Soul appears the Intuition Soul. So that here on the right (see diagram above) we may sketch the developed human being, of whom we say: He consists of astral body, etheric body and physical body but inwardly of the Intuitional Soul, the Inspirational

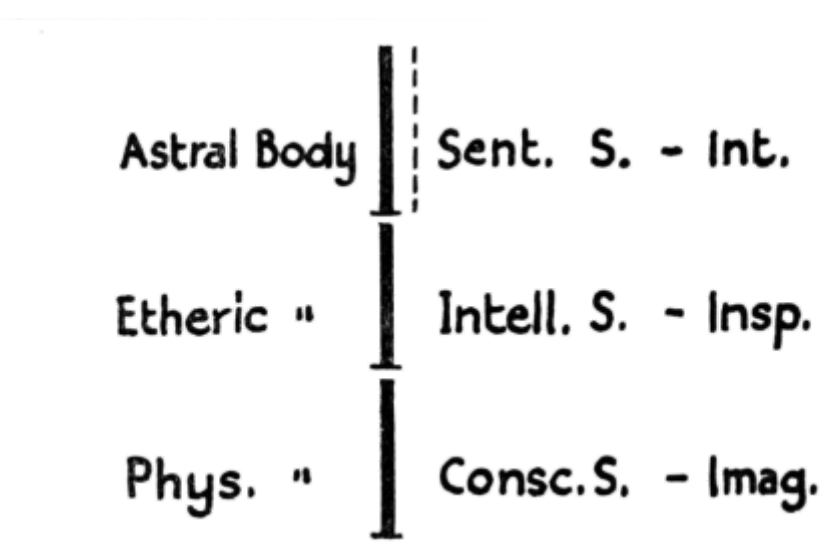
Soul, and the Imaginative Soul which then changes into Spirit Self. And now from this diagram, which reflects truly the facts of occult observation, you may gather from the results of these lectures how a person influences his occult development by the degree of his moral development. For what is a person who is still absolutely filled with personal emotions and passions, and who acts under the impressions of what we might call human instincts? Such a person still lives entirely in his Sentient Soul; he does not moderate his instincts by means of intellectual ideas, or by means of the development of his consciousness; he has only developed, as it were, as far as the Sentient Soul here, if I might now indicate the moral development in the middle (small arrow in diagram). Thus we may have the case of a person who has only developed as far as the Sentient Soul; that is to say, he is ruled entirely by his personal passions, impulses, etc. Now let us suppose that such a person were forced on by occult development. The consequence would be the transformation of his Sentient Soul into his Intuitional Soul, and he would have certain intuitions; these intuitions would, however, represent nothing but the transformations of his own personal impulses, passions and instincts.

A man who in his moral development has progressed to the Intellectual Soul, that is, one who has acquired pure conceptions, more general universal ideas, whose inner feelings include feelings of interest in the whole world, such a one will at least transmute his Intellectual or Mind Soul into the Inspirational Soul, and he can arrive at certain inspirations, although his clairvoyant power may not be always quite pure as yet. But it is only when a person has really penetrated with his ego as far as the Consciousness Soul that he arrives at the transformation of his Consciousness Soul into Imaginative Soul, and the rest follows as a self-evident consequence, because he has passed through the other stages. Hence in our age, in order to arrive at true clairvoyance, the student must be given the task of so working at his moral development that he shall first take away from his impulses, passions, etc., all that is personal, and raise himself to the standpoint of making the interests common to the whole world his own. Then the endeavour must be made to teach him really to comprehend himself as 'I;' but he must feel this in the Consciousness Soul. Then the Sentient Soul, the Intellectual Soul and the Consciousness Soul may be transformed into the Souls of Intuition, Inspiration and Imagination without any danger. When we consider the ordinary consciousness on the physical plane the Sentient Soul is the richest Soul. For what a number of instincts and impulses does not such a human Soul conceal, however low its stage! Of what impulses and passions is not such a human soul capable!

The human soul is somewhat poorer as regards the contents of intellect and its more cultivated feelings, poorest of all as Consciousness Soul, shrivelled up to the consciousness of the self, as though to one point. One might say that the figure which represents the human soul in its natural condition on the physical plane would be a sort of pyramid (see diagram below). In the lower part, at the base, the sum total of impulse, desires and passions; at the top, at the summit, the point of consciousness. A reversed pyramid represents the developed soul of the true clairvoyant, a pyramid having its base above, that is, all possible kinds of imaginations which can be formed, which express all that can reflect for us the contents of the cosmos; here below as the point, that which results as the higher individual consciousness of man.



This diagram is a standard, to a certain extent, in another sense. In the new edition of my book Theosophy I have said that the Sentient Soul is, as it were, the provisionally transformed astral body, so that we may sum up thus: Below is the physical body, then the etheric body, then the astral body. The astral body on its way to transformation is the Sentient Soul on the physical plane; the etheric body so proceeding is the Intellectual or Mind Soul, and the physical body the Consciousness Soul.



Thus in our present cycle of humanity we have the Consciousness Soul localised in the physical body; that is to say, it makes use of the physical instrument. The Intellectual Soul is in the etheric body; that is, it makes use of the etheric movements. The Sentient Soul, containing the impulses, desires and passions, makes use of the forces localised in the astral body. The Soul of Intellect or Mind, which contains the forces of inner feeling, of sympathy, makes use of the etheric body; the Consciousness Soul uses the brain of the physical body.

As in this sense the Sentient Soul is transformed into the Intuitional Soul, we must also correspondingly imagine that the Intuitional Soul uses the astral body of man as its instrument. The Inspirational Soul is the transformed Intellectual or Mind Soul; its instrument is the etheric body of man. And the Imaginative Soul, the transformed Consciousness Soul, has as its instrument the physical body of man. And now, if you compare what I have presented here in diagram with what I have said previously, you will become aware that in this diagram you have a memory picture. I mentioned that to clairvoyant vision the physical body is transformed into imaginations, which are pictures of the macrocosm. In this diagram you see that the Imaginative Soul fills up the physical body. The Imaginative Soul actually enters into the physical body and permeates it, so that when a developed human being is observed by clairvoyant consciousness, the parts of the physical body are seen to be permeated with higher and higher imaginations, according to the degree of his development; these are impressed into the physical body by the inner being of this personality. In an ordinary individual there are a number of imaginations imprinted in the various principles of his body by higher spiritual beings; in a more highly developed man there appear in the various parts of his physical body, in addition to the imaginations originally there, others which he imprints into the parts of his body from his own inner being, so that the organs in the physical body of a developed human being become richer and richer.

In this diagram I wished to give you a sort of précis which sums up what I have described at length in these lectures. I specially draw your attention to this: that this diagram may always remind you that the Sentient Soul, the Intellectual or Mind Soul and the Consciousness Soul are reversed, so that the Consciousness Soul does not become the Intuitional Soul but the Imaginative Soul; and the Sentient Soul does not become the Imaginative Soul but the Intuitional Soul. In this you have a sketch of what could be given in the course of these lectures under the title of: The changes in the

human sheaths and the human self in the course of a seriously conducted theosophical development, or an esoteric occult development — which, indeed, fundamentally may coincide.

You will have observed that we began with the tiny, almost imperceptible, changes in the physical body, which the student who is developing at first perceives but faintly: the various parts of the physical body become more and more inwardly living, while usually only the whole physical body of man appears to us as a living thing. We then saw how certain changes take place, presenting the mighty facts of the inner life, changes in the astral body and the Self providing those mighty imaginations through which we may feel ourselves transposed to the beginning of our earthly human development; yet even further back, for they lead to the Imaginations of Paradise, and of Cain and Abel. You have seen how, in fact, there arises as a reality in the physical body a sort of force which enables it to divide, as it were — but still it holds together; it does not give way, because here, in our present cycle of humanity, occult training may not go so far as to lead to the injury of the physical body — still there is, however, a degree of occult development which leads to the possibility that the physical body and the etheric body may draw to themselves inwardly destructive forces; and this danger is always present when a person meets the Guardian of the Threshold. This meeting with the Guardian of the Threshold is not possible without being confronted by the danger of implanting destructive forces in the physical and etheric bodies; but every true occult development provides the remedies at the same time, and these remedies are given in that which you find described in my book, *Occult Science*, as the six auxiliary occult exercises: Concentration of thought; that is, strenuous exertion of thought, the concentrated gathering together of thoughts; the development of a certain Initiative of Will; a certain Equilibrium of joy and sorrow, a certain Positivity in relation to the world, a certain Impartiality. The student who endeavours to develop these qualities in his soul parallel with his occult development, on the one hand certainly produces in himself a sort of effort to break the physical and etheric bodies to pieces, that is, under the influence of occult development to take in the seed of death; but to the same extent that this develops it is annulled, so that it is never really active when a person develops the qualities mentioned, or when through his moral development he already possesses the qualities equivalent to these six. It has been my endeavour to give you more than a mere description of what occult development is, namely, to rouse in your hearts a feeling of what it is, and what manifold changes it produces in a human being. You may have been able to divine

and feel that a person has to meet much that is terrible and also much that is dangerous when he goes through occult development; but side by side with much that, even in this theoretical manner of considering the matter may have produced a certain amount of dread, we must always call to mind the thought which dispels all dread, can take away all fear of danger, simply arousing enthusiasm and strength of will within our souls — the thought that by developing ourselves further we are thus working actively at one part of the evolution willed by the Gods. A man who knows how to grasp this thought in all its greatness, and take into himself its stimulus and feel it with enthusiasm, and who forms this thought in such a manner that it presents evolution, or occult development in its most beautiful sense, as his duty, he is one who feels the beginning of that which, side by side with all danger, all fighting, all entanglements, all hindrances, is connected with all development, namely, the approach towards the beatitude of the spiritual worlds. For when he feels this thought of the enthusiasm-producing power of the ideal of development he may already begin to feel the bliss of development; but this means to recognise the development, the occult progress as a necessity. The future of such spiritual, esoteric movements as ours will be that the spiritual development of human souls will be regarded more and more as a necessity, and that the exclusion of spiritual development and the adoption of a hostile attitude towards it will signify a union with the earthly dross, which is cast out through its own weight, a union with what has fallen away from the God-willed evolution of the universe.



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