

The Lectures of Rudolf Steiner

The Wrong and Right Use of Esoteric Knowledge

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Dornach, 18th November, 1917

You will remember our considering various views and statements associated nowadays with the psycho-analysts. [*See Psycho-Analysis in the Light of Anthroposophy (published in U.S.A.).*] The essential point was to bring out clearly the fact that the idea of the unconscious which prevails in psychoanalysis is unfounded. As long as this idea — a purely negative idea — persists, we are bound to say that psychoanalysis is approaching with inadequate means of knowledge a phenomenon of quite special importance for our time. And because the psycho-analysts are trying to explore the mind and soul and — as we have seen — to study their implications for social life, we must say that their way of approach is far more significant than anything academic studies have to offer in the same field. On the other hand, because psycho-analysis is trying, through pedagogy and therapeutics, and soon, probably, through social and political ideas, to carry its influence deeply into human living, so the dangers bound up with such an approach must always be taken very seriously.

Now the question arises: What really is it that these modern researchers cannot reach and do not want to reach? They recognise that a soul-element exists outside consciousness; they search for it outside consciousness; but they cannot bring themselves to the point of recognising the spirit itself. The spirit can never be grasped through the idea of the unconscious, for unconscious spirit is like a man without a head. I have indeed called your attention to the fact that there are people, victims of certain hysterical conditions, who when they walk about in the streets see people only as bodies, minus their heads. That is a definite malady. So among present-day researchers there are some who believe they can discern the entire spirit, but as they suppose it to be unconscious, they show that they are under the delusion that an unconscious spirit, a spirit without consciousness, would be found by anyone who crosses the threshold — whether in the right sense, as described on the ground of spiritual-scientific research, or because of the kind of abnormal malady that comes to the attention of the psycho-analysts.

When we cross the threshold of consciousness, we always come into a realm of spirit; whether it is a subconscious or a super-conscious realm makes no difference. We always enter a realm where the spirit is in some sense conscious, where it displays a consciousness of some kind. We have to find out the conditions under which a given form of consciousness prevails; we must even gain through Spiritual Science the possibility of recognising which kind of consciousness a particular spirituality has.

I have told you of the case of the lady who leaves a party, runs in front of a cab-horse, is restrained from jumping into the river and taken back to the house she had just left, so that she is again under the same roof as the host, with whom she is subconsciously in love. In such a case it

should not be said that the spirit which is outside the lady's consciousness, the spirit which urges and directs her, is an unconscious part of the soul: it is highly conscious. The consciousness of this demonic spirit (which led the lady back to her unlawful lover) is even much cleverer than is the lady in her upper storey — I should say, her consciousness. And these spirits, which are encountered whenever the threshold of consciousness is crossed in one way or another, and are active and potent there, are not unconscious; they are very effectively conscious for the purpose of their own activities. The phrase, "unconscious spirit," as used by the psycho-analysts, makes no sense: I could just as well say, if I wished to speak merely from my own point of view, that the whole distinguished company seated here are my unconscious, supposing I knew nothing of them. Just as little can one describe as "unconscious spirits" those spiritual beings who are all around us, and who may lay hold of a personality, as in the case I told you about a week ago. They are not unconscious; they are outside the range of our normal consciousness, but they are fully conscious on their own account.

It is extraordinarily important — precisely in connection with the task of Spiritual Science in our time — to be aware of this, for knowledge of the spiritual realm that lies beyond the threshold, which means a knowledge of real, conscious individualities, is not simply a discovery of present-day Spiritual Science; it is in fact a primordial knowledge. In earlier times it came through old, atavistic clairvoyance. To-day it has to be attained gradually, by other methods. But knowledge of these spiritual beings, who live outside our consciousness under conditions different from ours, but have an enduring relationship with human beings and can lay hold of a person's thinking, feeling and willing — this knowledge has always been there. And within certain brotherhoods, who always looked on this knowledge as their secret property, it was treated as highly esoteric. Why was this so? To discuss this question fully would take us too far just now, but it must be said that particular brotherhoods were honestly convinced that the great majority of people were not ripe for this knowledge. And indeed this was true up to a certain point. But many other brotherhoods, called those of the left, tried to keep this knowledge for themselves, because when it is possessed by a small group, it gives them power over others who do not have it. And so endeavours were always made by certain groups to assure them power over others. Thus it could come about that a certain kind of knowledge was regarded as an esoteric possession, but was in fact utilised in order to gain power over one thing or another.

In this present time it is particularly necessary to be really clear about these things. For you know that since 1879 mankind has been living in a very special spiritual situation. Quite particularly powerful spirits of darkness were then cast down from the spiritual world into the human realm, and those persons who in a wrongful way keep the secrets connected with this event in the possession of their small groups are able to bring about everything possible by this means. Now I will first of all show you how certain secrets which concern present-day developments can be wrongfully made use of. You must then take care to bring what I am going to say to-day, rather on historical lines, into close connection with what I shall be adding to-morrow.

As you all know, attention has often been called within our movement to the fact that this century should bring human evolution into a special relationship with the Christ, in the sense that during this century — and even during the first half of it — the event indicated in my first Mystery Play is to come about: the Christ will appear to an increasing number of people as a Being truly and immediately present in the etheric realm.

Now we know that we are living in the age of materialism, and that since the middle of the nineteenth century this materialism has reached its peak. But in reality opposites always occur together. Precisely the high-point of materialism is necessarily accompanied by that inward development which makes it possible for the Christ to be really seen in the etheric realm. You can understand that a disclosure of this secret, concerning the etheric manifestation of Christ and the

resulting new relationship of the Christ to human evolution, gives rise to resentment and ill-will among those members of certain brotherhoods who wished to make use of this event, the appearance of the etheric Christ, for their own purposes and did not want it to become the common property of mankind. There are brotherhoods — and brotherhoods always influence public opinion by disseminating this or that in such a way that it will disturb people as little as possible — who put out the idea that the time of materialism will soon be over, or indeed that it is already at an end. The poor, pitiable "clever people," who to-day are promoting through so many gatherings and books and societies the idea that materialism is finished and that something of the spirit is now within reach, but without ever being able to offer people more than the word "spirit" and little phrases of a similar kind — these people are all more or less in the service of those who have an interest in declaring what is not true: that materialism is in ruins. That is far from true: on the contrary, a materialistic outlook makes progress and prospers best when people are taught that they are no longer materialists. The materialistic outlook is fast making headway and will continue to advance for some four or five hundred years.

The essential thing, as has often been emphasised here, is to be clearly conscious of the facts. Mankind will begin to recover when, through work in the life of the spirit, people come to know and to see in its true light the fact that the fifth post-Atlantean epoch is intended to create a materialistic state of being out of the general stream of human evolution. But all the more, then, must a spiritual state of being be set in opposition to this materialism. What people in our epoch must learn is the need to wage a fully conscious fight against the evil that is making its way into human evolution. Just as in the fourth epoch the struggle was to come to terms with birth and death, so now we have to come to terms with evil. Therefore the point is to grasp spiritual teaching with full consciousness, not to throw sand in the eyes of our contemporaries, as though the devil of materialism were not there. Those who handle these matters in an unrightful way know as well as I do about the event of the Christ-appearance, but they deal with it differently. And to understand this, we must pay attention to the following.

Now that we are living in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, it is quite wrong to say, as many people are comfortably fond of saying: "During this life between birth and death, the best thing is to give oneself over to living; whether after death we enter a spiritual world will be revealed soon enough — we can wait for that. Here and now we will enjoy our life, as though only a material world exists; if we do pass beyond death into a spiritual world, then we shall know whether a spiritual world is there!" That is about as clever as if someone were to take an oath and say: "As truly as there is a God in Heaven, I am an atheist!" Yet there are many people who take the line: "After death we shall know what things are like there. Until then, there is no need to occupy oneself with any kind of spiritual knowledge."

This way of thinking has been very tempting always, in all epochs, but in our epoch it is particularly disastrous, because the temptation to indulge in it comes very close to people owing to the power and prevalence of evil. When under present-day conditions of evolution a man goes through the portal of death, he takes with him the modes of consciousness he has developed between birth and death. If he has occupied himself entirely with concepts and ideas and experiences drawn from the material world, the world of the senses, he condemns himself to dwell after death in an environment related to those ideas. While a man who has absorbed spiritual concepts enters the spiritual world in the right way, a man who has refused to accept them will have to remain tied to earthly relationships in a certain sense, until — and it takes a long time — he has learnt over there to absorb enough spiritual ideas to carry him into the spiritual world. Accordingly, whether or not we have absorbed spiritual ideas in this life determines our environment over there. Many of those — one can say it only with sympathy — who resisted spiritual ideas during this life, or were prevented from absorbing them, are to be found wandering about the earth, still bound to the

earthly realm. And a soul in this situation, no longer shut off from its surroundings by the body, and no longer prevented by the body from working destructively — such a soul, if it continues to dwell in the earth-sphere, becomes a destructive centre.

Thus we see that in these cases — we might call them normal nowadays — when the threshold of death is crossed by souls who have not wanted to have anything at all to do with spiritual ideas and feelings, the souls become destructive centres, because they are held back in the earth-sphere. Only those souls who in this life are permeated by a certain connection with the spiritual world go through the gate of death in such a way that they are accepted in the spiritual world, set free from the earth-sphere, and are able to weave the threads that can continually be woven from themselves to those they have left behind. For we must be clear about this: the spiritual threads between the dead and those of us who were close to them are not severed by death; they remain and are indeed much more intimate than they were during life.

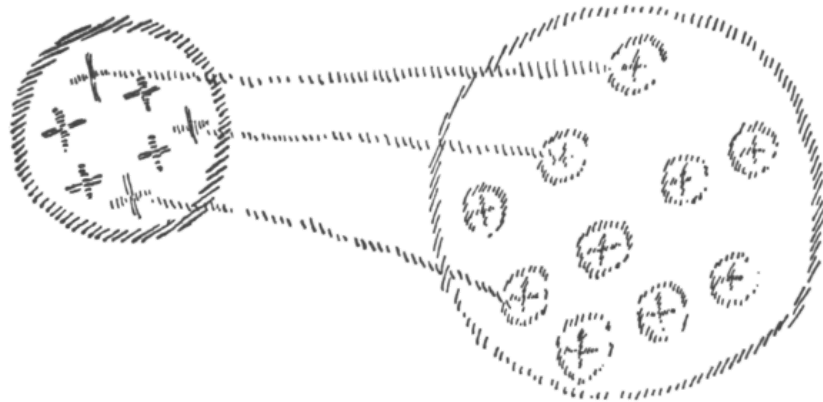
This that I have been saying must be taken as a very serious and important truth. Once again, it is not something known to me alone; others know that this is how things are at the present time. But there are many who make use of this truth in a very bad sense. For while there are misguided materialists who believe that this life is the only life, there are also initiates who are materialists and who disseminate materialistic teachings through their brotherhoods. You must not suppose that these materialists take the feeble-minded view that there is no such thing as spirit, or that men have no souls which can live independently of the body. You can be sure that anyone who has been really initiated into the spiritual world will never succumb to the foolishness of believing only in matter. But there are many who have a certain interest in spreading materialism and try by all sorts of means to ensure that the majority of men will believe only in materialism and will live wholly under its influence. And there are brotherhoods led by initiates who have this interest. It suits these materialists very well when it is constantly said that materialism has already been overcome. For anything can be promoted by talking about it in an opposing sense; the necessary manoeuvres are often highly complicated.

What then are the aims of these initiates, who in reality know very well that the human soul is a purely spiritual entity, independent of the body, and nevertheless cherish and cultivate a materialistic outlook in other people? What they want is that the largest possible number of souls should absorb only materialistic ideas between birth and death. Thus these souls are made ready to linger on in the earth-sphere, to be held back there. And now observe that there are brotherhoods which are equipped to know all about this. These brotherhoods prepare certain human souls to remain after death in the realm of the material; then they arrange things — and this is quite possible for their infamous power — so that these souls come under the aegis of their brotherhood, and from this the brotherhood gains enormous strength. So these materialists are not materialists, for they believe in the spirit — these initiate-materialists are not so foolish as not to do that, and indeed they know the truth about the spirit well enough — but they compel human souls to remain bound to the material realm after death, in order to be able to use these souls for their own purposes. Thus these brotherhoods build up a sort of clientele of souls from among the dead who remain in the earth-sphere. These souls have in them certain forces which can be guided in the most varied ways, and by this means it is possible to achieve quite special opportunities for exercising power over those who are not initiated into these things.

Nothing less than that, you see, is the plan of certain brotherhoods. And nobody will understand these matters clearly unless he keeps the dust out of his eyes and refuses to be put off by suggestions that either such brotherhoods do not exist or that their activities are harmless. They are

in fact extremely harmful; the intention of these initiates is that men should be led farther and farther into materialism, and should come to believe that there are indeed spiritual forces, but that these are no more than certain forces of nature.

Now I would like to describe for you the ideal that these initiates cherish. A certain effort is necessary to understand these things. Picture a world of harmless people: they are a little misled by the prevailing materialistic ideas, a little led away from the old well-founded religious ideas. Picture this — perhaps a diagram will be helpful.



Here (larger circle) is a realm of harmless human beings. They are not very clear about the spiritual world; misled by materialism, they are not sure what attitude to take towards the spiritual world, and especially towards those who have passed through the gate of death.

Now consider this: here (smaller circle) we have the realm of such a brotherhood as I have described. Its members are engaged in spreading the doctrine of materialism; they are taking care to see that these people shall think in purely materialistic terms. In this way they are training souls to remain in the earth-sphere after death. These souls will become a clientele of the lodge; appropriate measures can be taken to hold them within the lodge. Thus the brotherhood has created a lodge which embraces both the living and the dead; but the dead are those who are still related to the forces of the earth.

It was then arranged that seances should be held, as they were during the second half of the nineteenth century. Then it can come about — please note this carefully — that what takes place in the seances is directed, with the help of the dead, by the lodge. But the real intention of the Masters who belong to lodges of that kind was that people should not know that they were dealing with the dead, but should believe that they were in touch simply with higher forces of nature. They were to be convinced that these higher forces, psychic forces and the like, do exist, but that they are higher forces of nature and nothing more. They were to get the idea that just as electricity and magnetism exist, so are there higher forces of a similar kind. The fact that these forces come from souls is precisely what the leaders of the lodge keep hidden. In this way the "harmless" people gradually become entirely dependent in their soul-life on the lodge, without knowing that they are dependent or from what source they are being guided.

The only weapon against these procedures is to *know* about them. If we know about them, we are protected; if we take them seriously and believe in the truth of our knowledge, we are safe. But we must not take too comfortably the task of making this knowledge our own. It is not yet too late. I

have often insisted that these matters can be clarified only by degrees, and that only by degrees can I bring together the essential facts to complete the picture.

As I have often told you, in the course of the nineteenth century many brotherhoods introduced spiritualism in an experimental way, in order to see if they had got as far with mankind as they wished. Their expectation was that at the spiritualistic seances people would take it that higher nature-forces were at work. The brothers of the left were disappointed when most people assumed, instead, that spirits of the dead were manifesting. This was a bitter disappointment for these initiates; it was just what they did not want. They wanted to deprive mankind of belief in survival after death. The efficacy of the dead and their forces was to remain, but the correct, important idea that the manifestations came from the dead — this was to be taken away. This is a higher form of materialism; a materialism which not only belies the spirit but tries to drag it down into the material realm. You see, materialism can have forces which lead to a denial of itself. People can say: "Materialism has gone — we are already talking of the spirit." But a person can remain a thorough materialist if he treats the whole of nature as spirit in such a way that psychism emerges. The only right way is to learn how to see into the real spiritual world, the world of actual spirituality.

Here we have the beginning of a trend which will gather force throughout the next four or five hundred years. For the moment the evil brotherhoods have put the brake on, but they will continue their activities unless they are stopped — and they can be stopped only if complacency regarding the spiritual-scientific world-outlook is overcome.

Thus these brothers over-reached themselves in their spiritualistic seances: instead of concealing themselves, they were shown up. It made them realise that their enterprise had not gone well. Therefore these same brotherhoods endeavoured, from the nineties onwards, to discredit spiritualism for a time. On this path, you see, very incisive results are achieved by spiritual means. And the aim of it all is to gain greater power and so to take advantage of certain conditions which must come about in the course of human evolution.

There is something that works against this materialising of human souls, this exile of souls in the earthly sphere. The lodges exist on earth, and if the souls are to manifest and to be made use of in the lodges, they must be kept in this earthly exile. The power that works against these endeavours to operate through souls in the earthly realm is the impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha. And this also is the healing impulse which acts against the materialising of souls. Now the way taken by the Christ is altogether outside the wills and intentions of men. Hence there is no man anywhere, and no initiate, whatever his knowledge, who can influence those actions of the Christ which in the course of the twentieth century will lead to that appearance of which I have often spoken to you and which you can find indicated in the Mystery Plays. That rests entirely with Christ alone. The Christ will be present as an etheric Being within the earth-sphere. The question for men is how they are to relate themselves to Him. No one, not even the most powerful initiate, has any kind of influence over this appearance. It will come! I beg you to keep firm hold of that. But measures can be taken with the aim of seeing to it that this Christ-Event is received in one way or another and has this or that effect.

Indeed, the aim of those brotherhoods I have spoken of, who wish to confine human souls in the material realm, is that the Christ should pass by unobserved in the twentieth century; that His coming as an etheric individuality should not be noticed by men. And this endeavour takes shape under the influence of a quite definite idea and a quite definite purpose. These brotherhoods want to take over the Christ's sphere of influence, which should spread out more and more widely during the twentieth century, for another being (of whom we will later speak more precisely). There are Western

brotherhoods who want to dispute the impulse of the Christ and to set in His place another individuality who has never appeared in the flesh — an etheric individuality, but a strongly Ahrimanic one.

All these methods I have told you about, this working with the dead and so on, have finally one single purpose — to lead people away from the Christ who has passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, and to assign to another being dominion over the earth. This is a very real battle, not an affair of abstract concepts; a real battle which is concerned with setting another being in place of the Christ-Being for the rest of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, for the sixth epoch and for the seventh. One of the tasks of healthy, honest spiritual development will be to destroy and make away with such endeavours, which are anti-Christian in the highest degree. For this other being, whom these brotherhoods want to set up as a ruler, will be called "Christ" by them; yes, they will really call him "Christ!" And it will be essential for people to learn to distinguish between the true Christ, who will not this time appear in the flesh, and this other being who is marked off by the fact that he has never been embodied on the earth. It is this etheric being whom these brotherhoods want to set in the place of Christ, so that the Christ may pass by unobserved.

Here is one side of the battle, which is concerned with falsifying the appearance of Christ during the twentieth century. Anyone who looks only at the surface of life, and pays heed to all the external discussions about Christ and the Jesus-question, and so on, knows nothing of the deeper facts. All these discussions serve only to hide the real issues and to lead people away from them. When the theologians discuss "Christ" in this way, a spiritual influence from somewhere is always at work, and these learned men are in fact furthering aims and purposes quite different from those they are aware of.

This is the danger of the idea of the unconscious: it leads to unclear thinking about all such connections. While the evil brotherhoods pursue their aims very consciously, these aims never enter the consciousness of the people who engage in all sorts of superficial discussions. We lose the truth of these things by talking of the "unconscious," for this so-called unconscious is merely beyond the threshold of ordinary consciousness, and is the very sphere in which someone who knows about these things can manipulate them. Here we have *one* side of the situation: a number of brotherhoods actually do wish to substitute for the working of Christ the working of another being and are ready to use any means to bring this about.

On the other side are certain Eastern brotherhoods, especially Indian ones, who want to intervene no less significantly in the evolution of mankind. But they have a different purpose: they have never developed an esoteric method of achieving something by drawing the souls of the dead into the purview of their lodges: that is far removed from their aims. But in their own way they also do not want the impulses of the Mystery of Golgotha to work into the course of human evolution. Since the dead are not at their disposal, as they are for some of the Western brotherhoods I have mentioned, they do not wish to set against the Christ, who is to appear as an etheric individuality during the twentieth century, some other individuality; for that they would need the dead. But they do want to distract attention from the Christ; to prevent Christianity from rising to supremacy; to obscure the truth about the Christ, who passed through the Mystery of Golgotha after His one and only incarnation of three years on earth, and who cannot be incarnated again on earth. These brotherhoods do not want to control the dead in their lodges: in place of the dead they employ beings of another kind.

When a man dies, he gives up his etheric body, which separates from the physical body, as you know, soon after death, and is then normally taken up into the cosmos. This is a somewhat complicated process; I have described it for you in various ways. But before the Mystery of Golgotha

something else was possible, and even afterwards it was still possible, especially in the East. When a man surrenders his etheric body after death, certain beings can clothe themselves in it and become etheric beings with the aid of these etheric bodies of dead men. This is what happens in the East: demonic beings are enticed to clothe themselves in the etheric bodies which men have cast aside; and it is these spirits who are drawn into the Eastern lodges. The Western lodges, therefore, have the dead who are banished into matter; the Eastern lodges of the left have demonic spirits — spirits who do not belong to earth-evolution but have insinuated themselves into it by donning the discarded etheric bodies of dead men.

Esoterically, the procedure is to make this fact into an object of worship. You know that the calling up of illusions belongs to the arts of certain brotherhoods, because when men are not aware of how far illusion is present in the midst of reality, they can easily be taken in by skilfully produced illusions. The immediate object is achieved by introducing a certain form of worship.

Suppose I have a group of men with a common ancestry; then, after as an "evil" brother I have made it possible for the etheric body of a certain ancestor to be taken over by a demonic spirit, I tell the people that this ancestor is to be worshipped. The ancestor is simply the man whose cast-off etheric body has been taken over, through the machinations of the lodge, by a demonic spirit. So ancestor-worship is introduced, but the ancestors who are worshipped are simply whatever demonic beings have clothed themselves in the etheric bodies of these ancestors.

The Eastern peoples can be diverted from the Mystery of Golgotha by methods such as these. The result will be that for Eastern peoples — or perhaps for people generally, since that is the ultimate aim — the coming manifestation of Christ in our earthly world will pass unnoticed. These Eastern lodges do not want to substitute another Christ; they want only that the appearance of Christ Jesus shall not be noticed. There is thus an attack from two sides against the Christ Impulse that is to manifest in etheric form during the twentieth century; and this is the situation in which we stand today. Particular trends are always only an outcome of what the great impulses in human evolution are bringing about. That is why it is so saddening to hear it said continually that influences from the unconscious, the so-called unconscious, are an effect of suppressed love or the like, when in fact influences from a highly conscious spirituality are at work on humanity from all sides, while remaining relatively unconscious if no conscious attention is paid to them.

We must now bring in some further considerations. Men with good intentions for the development of mankind have always reckoned with the activities I have just described and have done their best — and no man can or should be expected to do more — to set things right.

A particularly good home for spiritual life, protected against all possible illusions, was Ireland, the island of Ireland, in the first Christian centuries. More than any other spot on earth it was sheltered from illusions; and that is why so many missionaries of Christianity went out from Ireland in those early times. But these missionaries had to have regard for the simple folk among whom they worked — for the peoples of Europe were very simple in those days — and also to understand the great impulses behind human evolution. During the fourth and fifth centuries Irish initiates were at work in central Europe and they set themselves to prepare for the demands of the future. They were in a certain way under the influence of the initiate-knowledge that in the fifteenth century — in 1413, as you know — the fifth post-Atlantean epoch was to begin. Hence they knew that they had to prepare for a quite new epoch, and at the same time to protect a simple-minded people. What did they do in order to keep the simple people of Europe sheltered and enclosed, so that certain harmful influences could not reach them? The course of events was guided, from well-instructed and honourable sources, in such a way that gradually all the voyages which had formerly been made from Northern lands to America were brought to an end. Whereas in earlier times ships had sailed to America from

Norway for certain purposes (I will say more of this to-morrow), it was gradually arranged that America should be forgotten and the connection lost. By the fifteenth century, indeed, the peoples of Europe knew nothing of America. Especially from Rome was this change brought about, because European humanity had to be shielded from American influences. A leading part in it was played by Irish monks, who as Irish initiates were engaged in the Christianising of Europe.

In earlier times quite definite impulses had been brought from America, but in the period when the fifth post-Atlantean epoch was beginning it was necessary that the peoples of Europe should be uninfluenced by America — should know nothing of it and should live in the belief that there was no such country. Only when the fifth post-Atlantean epoch had begun was America again "discovered," as history says. But, as you know very well, much of the history taught in schools is *fable convenue*, and one of these fables is that America was discovered for the first time in 1492. In fact, it was only *rediscovered*. The connection had been blotted out for a period, as destiny required. But we must know the truth of these historical circumstances and how it was that Europe was hedged in and carefully sheltered from certain influences which were not to come in.

These things show how necessary it is not to take the so-called unconscious as actually unconscious, but to recognise it as something that pursues its aims very consciously below the threshold of ordinary consciousness. It is important to-day that more people should come to know of certain secrets. That is why I went as far as one can go publicly in my Zürich lectures, [*Four public lectures given on 5th, 7th, 12th and 14th November, 1917, on the following subjects: Anthroposophy and Psychology; Anthroposophy and History; Anthroposophy and Natural Science; Anthroposophy and Social Science. (Not yet translated.)*] when, as you know, I explained to what extent the history of mankind is not known by ordinary consciousness, but is in fact dreamt through; and when I said that only when people become aware of this, will they come to see history in its true colours.

These are means by which consciousness is gradually awakened. The facts and events confirm what I say; only they must not be overlooked. People sleep their way blindly through events — through tragic catastrophes such as the present one. I would like first to impress on you the historical aspect of these matters: we will speak of them in greater detail to-morrow.

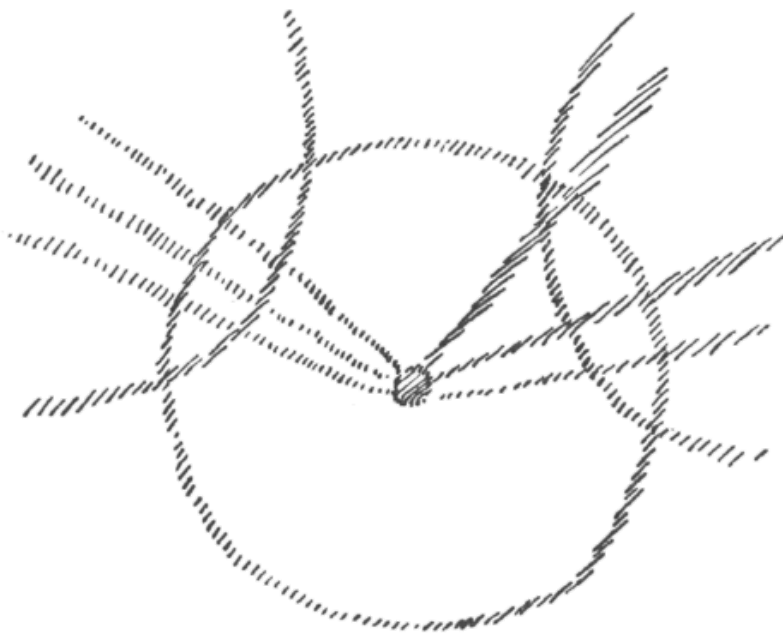
I want to add one further point. You will have seen from my explanations how great is the difference between West and East in relation to the evolution of mankind. Now I would ask you to observe the following. The psycho-analysts talk of the subconscious, the subconscious soul-life, etc. To apply such vague concepts to these things is useless. The point is to grasp what there really is beyond the threshold of consciousness. Certainly there is a great deal down below the threshold, and on its own account it is highly conscious. We must learn to understand what kind of spirituality exists down there, beyond the threshold of consciousness. We must speak of a *conscious* spirituality, not of unconscious mind. Yes, we must be quite clear that we know nothing of a great deal that goes on within us — it would indeed go badly with us if we had normally to be aware of it all. Just imagine how we should cope with eating and drinking if we had to acquaint ourselves with all the physiological and biological processes that go on from the moment when we swallow a piece of food! All that proceeds unconsciously, and spiritual forces are at work there, even in the purely physiological realm. But you will agree that we cannot wait to eat and drink until we have learnt all the details of it. It is the same with much else: by far the greater part of our being is unconscious, or — a better word — subconscious.

Now the peculiar thing is that this subconscious within us is invariably taken possession of by another being. Hence we are not only a union of body, soul and spirit, carrying an independent soul in our body through the world, but shortly before birth another being takes possession of our subconscious parts. This subconscious being goes with us all the way from birth to death. We can to

some extent describe this being by saying that it is highly intelligent, and endowed with a will which is closely related to the forces of nature. I must emphasise a further peculiarity of this being — it would incur the gravest danger if under present conditions it were to accompany man through death. At present it cannot do so; therefore it disappears shortly before death in order to save itself; yet it retains the impulse to order human life in such a way that it would be able to conquer death for its own purposes. It would be terrible for human evolution if this being which has taken hold of man were able to overcome death and so, by dying with man, to pass over into the worlds which man enters after death. This being must always take leave of man before death, but in many cases this is very difficult for it to do, and all sorts of complications result. For the moment the important thing is that this being, which has its dominion entirely within the subconscious, is extremely dependent upon the earth as a whole organism.

The earth is very different from what geologists or mineralogists or palaeontologists say about it; the earth is a living being through and through. These scientists deal only with its mineral part, its skeleton, and its skeleton is all we normally perceive. This is much the same as if you were to enter this hall and through a special change of sight were to see only the bones of the people assembled here. Just imagine that you came in through the door and only skeletons were sitting on the chairs: not that they *were* nothing but bones — that would be going too far — but that you could see only the bones, as though with an X-ray apparatus. That is as much as geology sees of the earth — its skeleton only. But the earth is more than a skeleton: it is a living organism, and from its centre it sends out particular forces to every point and region on its surface.

These outward-streaming forces belong to the earth as



a living organism, and they affect a man differently according to where he lives on the earth. His soul is not directly influenced by these forces, for his immortal soul is very largely independent of earth-conditions, and can be made dependent on them only by such special arts as those I have described to-day. But through the other being, which seizes hold of man before birth and has to leave him before death, these various earth-forces work with particular strength into the racial and geographical varieties of mankind. So it is on this "double" (*Doppelgänger*), which man carries within himself, that geographical and other diversities exert special influence.

This is extraordinarily important. To-morrow we shall see how the "double" is influenced from various points on the earth and what the consequences are. I have already indicated that you will need to bring what I have said to-day into direct connection with what I shall be saying to-morrow, for one lecture can scarcely be understood without the other.

We have to try to assimilate ideas which are most seriously related to the total reality in which the human soul lives, in accordance with its own nature. This reality goes through various metamorphoses, but how these changes occur depends to a great extent on human beings. And one significant change comes about if people realise how human souls, according to whether they absorb materialistic or spiritual concepts between birth and death, are exiled to the earth or pass on to their rightful spheres. The ideas on these matters that prevail among us must become continually clearer, for only then shall we relate ourselves truly to the world as a whole, which is what we must do more and more, for we are concerned not merely with an abstract spiritual movement, but with a very concrete one which has to take account of the spiritual life of a certain number of individuals.

It is a great satisfaction to me that these discussions, which are quite specially important for those of our friends who have passed through the gate of death but are still faithful members of our movement, can be carried on as a reality which unites us more and more deeply with them. I say this to-day because it behoves us to think with loving remembrance of Fraulein Stinde. Yesterday was the anniversary of her death, and with specially loving remembrance we think of one who was so inwardly linked to our Building, [*The first Goetheanum, later destroyed by fire and replaced by the present Goetheanum.*] and whose impulses were so inwardly connected with its impulses.

Lecture 2

Dornach, 19th November, 1917

We have been considering the emergence of a search for knowledge with inadequate means, and this has opened up wide historical perspectives. Now with regard to these matters, and also to what I said with the same intention when I last spoke here, I must ask you to realise that we are concerned not with a theory or with a system of ideas but with the communication of facts. That is the point to keep in mind; otherwise these matters will not be clearly understood. I am not setting out historical laws or ideas, but stating facts — facts that are connected with the plans and purposes both of certain personalities who are held together in brotherhoods and of other beings who work on these brotherhoods and whose influence is also sought. They are beings who are not incarnated in the flesh, but are embodied in the spiritual world. It is essential to keep this in mind when you hear what I told you yesterday. For where these brotherhoods are concerned, we have to do with various parties (as indeed you will have learnt from explanations given in earlier lectures, e.g. *The Occult Movement in the 19th Century* (See p. 71)). Thus there is one party which stands for keeping certain higher truths absolutely secret; and again, allowing for various shades of opinion, there are brothers, particularly since the middle of the fifteenth century, who hold that certain truths, if only those called for by the needs of the moment, should be carefully and pertinently disclosed. Besides these two main parties there are other variations; hence you will see that whatever influence is finally exerted on human evolution from the side of these brotherhoods will very often reflect some kind of compromise.

Early in the 1840s, those brotherhoods who have knowledge of the spiritual impulses that play into history saw coming on that battle of certain spiritual beings with higher Spirits which terminated in 1879, when certain Angel-beings, Spirits of Darkness, were cast down, an event symbolised by the victory of Michael over the dragon. When therefore, in the middle of the nineteenth century, these brotherhoods felt that this event was approaching, they had to decide what attitude to take towards it and to consider what should be done.

Those brothers who wished above all to reckon with the demands of the moment were actuated up to a certain point with the best intentions, but they were mistaken in their approach to the materialism of the time; they thought that men who were prepared to accept only what could be known in physical terms should be offered something from the spiritual world in a materialistic form. So it was with good intentions that Spiritualism was launched on the world in the 1840s.

Since at that time a critical mentality, concerned solely with the external world, was due to prevail on earth, it was necessary to give people at least some inkling, some feeling, that a spiritual world existed around them. And so now this compromise, as is the way with compromises, was put into effect. Those brothers who were altogether against communicating spiritual truths to mankind found themselves outvoted, one might say; they had to give in and agree. Even so, it was not their original intention to introduce the phenomena connected with Spiritualism into the world. Where collective groups of people are concerned one always gets compromises, and naturally, when a collective decision has been reached, not only those who favoured it will be looking for results, but those who at first opposed it will be expecting something or other from it.

Thus the well-meaning members of these brotherhoods took the mistaken view that through the use of mediums people would be convinced of the presence around them of a spiritual world; then on the basis of this conviction it would be possible to impart higher truths. This could indeed have happened if the phenomena that came through the mediums had in fact been interpreted in the intended way, as evidence for the presence of an interpenetrating spiritual world. But — as I explained yesterday — something quite different resulted. The mediumistic phenomena were interpreted by those who took part in the seances as coming from the dead. Hence the experiment was a disappointment for all concerned. Those brothers who had allowed themselves to be outvoted were very grieved that the séance manifestations could be spoken of — sometimes correctly — as coming from the spirits of the dead. The well-intentioned progressive brothers had not expected any mention of the dead, but rather of a general elemental world, so they too were disappointed.

These activities, however, are pursued above all by persons who have been in some way initiated. And besides the brotherhoods already mentioned, we have to reckon with others, or with sections of the same brotherhoods, wherein a minority of members, or even a majority, consists of initiates who within their brotherhoods are known as "brothers of the left;" they are those who treat every impulse that enters into human evolution as a question of power. Naturally, these brothers expected all sorts of things from Spiritualism.

As I told you yesterday, it was these brothers of the left who were specially responsible for dealing in the way I described with the souls of the dead. Their interest was centred on observing what came out of the seances, and by degrees they got control of the whole field. The well-intentioned initiates gradually lost all interest in Spiritualism; they felt in a certain sense ashamed, because those who had all along opposed Spiritualism said they might have known from the start that nothing would come of it. But the result was that Spiritualism came under the power of the brothers of the left. Yesterday I said that these brothers had been disappointed in the following way. They saw that Spiritualism could bring to light what they had set on foot, and they were above all anxious that this should not

happen. Since the persons attending the seances believed they were in touch with the dead, communications from the dead might reveal what the brothers of the left were doing with the souls of the dead. The very souls which they were misusing might manifest in the course of a séance.

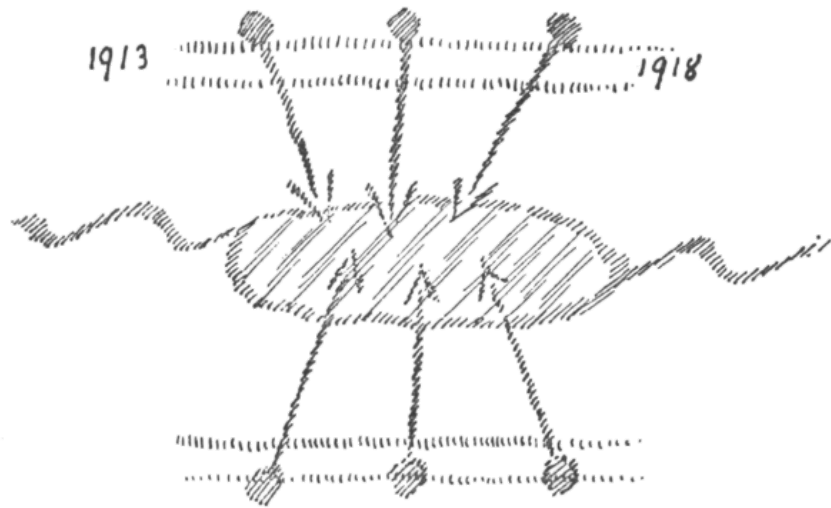
You must please once more keep in mind that I am not expounding theories but relating facts — facts that go back to particular individuals. And when individuals are united in brotherhoods, they will differ in what they expect from the same event. When one speaks of facts that belong to the spiritual world, it is always a question of looking for the outcome of individual impulses. In ordinary life one action will often contradict another. If theories are discussed, the rule of contradiction must be observed. But when one is speaking of facts, then — just because they are facts — we shall very often find that facts in the spiritual world agree just as little as do human actions on the physical plane. Therefore I ask you to keep this in mind. One cannot talk of realities in these matters unless one talks of individual facts. That is the point. Therefore we must keep the various streams apart and distinguish between them.

This is connected with something very important, which must be kept clearly in view by anyone who hopes to arrive at a more or less satisfying outlook on the world. It is a fundamental point, and we must bring it before us, even though it is somewhat abstract.

A person who tries to build up a world-picture rightly endeavours to bring its separate elements into harmony. He does this from habit — a thoroughly justified habit, connected for many centuries with the dearest possession of our souls: with monotheism. He tries therefore to lead back the whole range of his experience of the world to a unitary principle. This is valid enough in its own way — not, however, in the sense in which it is usually applied, but in quite another sense of which we will speak next time. To-day I will deal only with the essential principle.

If we approach the world with the preconceived idea that everything must be explicable without contradiction, as though it came from a single source, we shall be disappointed again and again when we look without prejudice at the world and the experiences it affords. We have acquired the habit of treating everything we perceive in the light of the didactic concept which says that everything leads back to a unitary divine origin — everything derives from God and so must admit of a single mode of explanation.

But this is not so. The experiences we encounter in the world do not spring from a single ground, but from diverse spiritual individualities, who all play a part in producing them. That is the essential point. We will speak to-morrow of the sense in which monotheism is justified. Up to a certain stage, and indeed up to a high stage, we must think of independent individualities as soon as we cross the threshold of the spiritual world. And then we cannot expect to explain everything we experience in unitary terms. Take any series of events — let us say the experiences encountered from 1913 to 1918. A diagram will naturally show them taking their course from two directions at once ...



An historian will always try to reduce the whole process to the working of a single principle, but that is not how things happen. Directly we cross the threshold of the spiritual world, whether downwards or upwards — it is one and the same — we find that different individualities, relatively independent of each other, are working into these events. We shall never understand the course of events if we assume a single source for them; we shall see them rightly only if in the turbulence of events we reckon with the activities of individualities who are working either with or against each other.

This is something that belongs to the deepest secrets of human evolution. For centuries, even for millennia, it has been obscured by monotheistic feeling, but you must take it into account. If to-day we are to come closer to ultimate questions, we must above all not confuse logic with abstract freedom from contradictions. In a world where independent individualities are simultaneously at work, contradictions are bound to occur, and to expect them not to occur leads to an impoverishment of ideas; to ideas which cannot embrace the whole of reality. The only adequate ideas will be those that are able to grasp a world replete with contradictions, for that is the real world.

The realms of nature that lie around us come into being in a very remarkable way. In all that we call nature, the nature we approach through science on the one hand and through aesthetic perception on the other, various individualities are at work. But in the present phase of human evolution a wise Providence has ordained an arrangement which is a great blessing for mankind. We can lay hold of nature with ideas that assume a monistic dispensation, because sense-perception allows us normally to experience only as much of nature as is in accord with that principle. Behind the tapestry of nature there lies something different which is sustained from a quite other direction; but sense-perception shuts it out, admitting only as much of nature as can pass through its sieve. Everything contradictory is strained out, and nature is communicated to us in the guise of a monistic system. But directly we cross the threshold and bring the true facts to bear on the interpretation of nature — the facts concerning the elemental spirits or the influence of human souls, which can also act on nature — then we are no longer able to speak of a monistic system applicable to nature. Once again we see clearly that we have to do with the workings of individualities who may either oppose or reinforce one another.

In the elemental world we find earth-spirits, gnomes; water-spirits, undines; air-spirits, sylphs; fire-spirits, salamanders. They are all there, but they do not form a single united band. Each of the four kingdoms is in a certain sense independent; they do not work only in rank and file as a single

system, but they oppose one another. Their purposes are, to begin with, entirely distinct; the outcome reflects the interactions of their purposes in the most varied ways. If we know what these purposes are, we can discern in a given phenomenon the working together, let us say, of fire-spirits and undines. But we must never suppose that behind them is a single authority which gives them definite orders. This way of thinking is widespread to-day; and philosophers such as, for example, Wilhelm Wundt (whom Fritz Mauthner described with some justice as "an authority by the grace of his publisher" — yet before the war he ranked as an authority almost everywhere) — these philosophers are out to force into a unity all the manifold life of the soul, its concepts, its feeling, its willing, because they say that the soul is a unity, and therefore all this must belong to a unitary system. But that is not so, and the strongly conflicting tendencies in human life, which psycho-analysis indeed brings out, would not occur if our conceptual life did not lead back beyond the threshold into regions where it is influenced by individualities quite different from those that influence our feeling and our willing.

Really it is strange! Here (*drawing on blackboard*) we have in the human being a conceptual life, a life of feeling and a life of willing — yet a systematiser such as Wundt cannot get away from the idea that all this must form a single system. In fact, the life of concepts leads into one world, the life of feeling into another world, and the life of willing into another again. The function of the human soul is precisely to bring together into a unity activities which in the pre-human world — and therefore in the still existing pre-human world — are threefold.

All these things must be taken into account as soon as we study the impulses which have played into human evolution. I have already said that each post-Atlantean epoch has a special task, and I have described the task for mankind in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch as that of coming to terms with evil as an impulse in world-evolution. We have spoken of what this means from various points of view. The indispensable need is that the forces which manifest as evil when they appear in the wrong place shall be overcome by human endeavour during this epoch, so that men can begin to make out of these forces something favourable for the whole future of cosmic evolution. Hence the task of this fifth post-Atlantean epoch is quite specially arduous, and many temptations lie ahead. And as the powers of evil make their appearance in gradual stages, men are naturally much more inclined to give way to them in all realms instead of battling to place what appears as evil in the service of the rightful course of world-development. This, nevertheless, is what has to come about — up to a certain point evil must be turned to good ends. Failing that, we shall not be able to go forward into the sixth post-Atlantean epoch, which will have a quite different task. Its task will be to enable men, while still connected with the earth, to have the spiritual world continually in view and to live in accordance with spiritual impulses. It is precisely in connection with the task of opposing evil during our own epoch that a certain darkening of the human personality can occur.

We know that since 1879 the Spirits of Darkness who are nearest to man, belonging as they do to the realm of the Angels, have been roaming about in the human world, because they were cast down into it from the spiritual world. Hence they are present in human impulses and work through them. Just because these beings are able to work invisibly, so close to man, and by their influence to hinder him from recognising the spiritual with his reason — which is also a task for our epoch — so in this epoch there are many opportunities for surrendering to all sorts of errors and observations that belong to the darkness of evil. During this epoch man has to learn by degrees to grasp the spiritual with his reason; for this possibility has been offered to him by the vanquishing of the Spirits of Darkness in 1879, as a result of which more and more spiritual wisdom has been able to flow down from the spiritual worlds. Only if the Spirits of Darkness had remained up there in spiritual realms would they have been able to obstruct this flow. Henceforward they can do nothing to hinder it; but

they can continue to create confusion and to darken human souls. We have already described in part the opportunities they have for doing this, and the precautions they have taken to prevent men from receiving spiritual wisdom.

All this, of course, gives no occasion for lamentation but for a strengthening of human energy and aspiration towards the spiritual. For if men achieve what can be achieved in this epoch by taking hold of the forces of evil and turning them to good ends, then they will at the same time achieve something tremendous: this fifth post-Atlantean epoch will gain for human evolution grander conceptions than those of any other post-Atlantean epoch, or indeed of any previous epoch. For example, the Christ appeared and passed through the Mystery of Golgotha during the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, but only in our fifth epoch will it be possible for human reason to encompass the meaning of this event. In the fourth epoch men could comprehend that in the Christ Impulse they had something which would carry their souls beyond death: this was made sufficiently clear through Pauline Christianity. The fifth epoch will bring an even more important development: men will come to recognise the Christ as their helper in the task of transforming the forces of evil into good. But connected with this characteristic of the fifth epoch is a fact we must inscribe daily in our souls and never forget, although we are readily inclined to forget it. In this epoch we have to be fighters for the spirit: we must realise that our forces grow slack unless they are kept constantly in training for the conquest of the spiritual world. In this fifth epoch man is in the highest degree dependent upon his freedom, and he has to experience it to the full. And the idea of human freedom should be the criterion of whatever he encounters in this epoch. For if human energies were to grow slack, everything might turn to evil. Man is no longer in a condition to be guided like a child. If the aim of certain brotherhoods is to treat him in this way, as he was in the third and fourth epochs, they are far from doing right and are not advancing human evolution. Anyone who in this epoch speaks of the spiritual world must constantly remind himself to do so in such a way that acceptance or rejection of it is left to the freedom of the individual. Therefore certain things can only be — said; but the saying is just as important as any other way of presenting them was in other epochs. I will give you an example.

In our time the communication of truths — or, if I may use a trivial phrase, lecturing on them — is the most important thing. People should then be left to a free choice of attitude. One should go no further than the lecture, the communication of truths; the rest should follow out of free decision, just as it does when someone takes a decision on the physical plane. This applies also to the things which can in a certain sense be directed and guided only from the spiritual world.

We shall understand one another better if we go into details. During the fourth post-Atlantean epoch it was still necessary to consider other things, not only the spoken word. What were these other things? Let us take a definite instance. The island of Ireland, to use its modern name, has quite special characteristics which distinguish it from the rest of the world. Every part of the earth has some distinguishing characteristics — there is nothing unusual in that — but the point here is that Ireland has them to an exceptional degree.

You know from my *Occult Science* that it is possible to look back and discern various influences which have flowed from the spiritual world into the evolution of the earth. You have heard also what things were like in the Lemurian Age and of the various evolutionary developments since then. Yesterday I called attention to the fact that the whole earth must be regarded as a living organism, and that the various influences which radiate out to the inhabitants of particular territories have a special effect on the "double," also mentioned yesterday. In ancient times people who knew of Ireland gave expression to its peculiar characteristics in the form of myths and legends. One could indeed speak of an esoteric legend which indicated the nature of Ireland within the whole earth-organism. Lucifer, it was said, had once tempted mankind in Paradise, wherefore mankind was driven

out and scattered over the earth, which was already in existence at that time. Thus a distinction was drawn — so the legend tells us — between Paradise, with Lucifer in it, and the rest of the earth. But with Ireland it was different. Ireland did not belong in the same sense to the rest of the earth, for Paradise, before Lucifer entered it, had created an image of itself on earth, and that image became Ireland.

Let us understand this clearly. Ireland is that piece of the earth which has no share in Lucifer, no connection with Lucifer. The part of Paradise that had to be separated, so that an earthly image of it might come into being, would have stood in the way of Lucifer's entry into Paradise. According to this legend, therefore, Ireland was conceived as having been first of all that part of Paradise which would have kept Lucifer out. Only when Ireland had been separated off, could Lucifer get in.

This legend, of which I have given you a very incomplete account, is a very beautiful one. For many people it explained the quite individual task of Ireland through the centuries. In the first of my Mystery Plays you will find what has been often described: how Europe was Christianised by Irish monks. After Patrick had introduced Christianity into Ireland, it came about that Christianity there led to the highest spiritual devotion. In further interpretation of the legend I have just described, Ireland — Ierne for the Greeks and Ivernia for the Romans — was even called the island of the saints, because of the piety that prevailed in the Christian monasteries there. This is connected with the fact that the forces which radiate from the earth and lay hold of the "double" are at their very best in the island of Ireland.

You will say: then the Irish should be the best of men. But that is not how things work out in the world! People immigrate into every region of the earth and have descendants, and so on. Human beings are thus not merely a product of the patch of earth where they live; their character may well contradict the influences that come from the earth. We must not attribute their development to the qualities found in a particular part of the earth-organism; that would be merely to succumb to illusions.

But we can say, more or less as I have said to-day, that Ireland is a quite special piece of land and this is one factor among many from which should come a fruitful working out of social-political ideas. Ireland is *one* such factor, and all these factors must be taken account of in conjunction with one another. In this way we must develop a science of human relationships on the earth. Until that is done, there will be no real health in the organisation of public affairs. That which can be communicated from out of the spiritual world must flow into any measures that are taken. For this reason I have said in public lectures that statesmen and others concerned with public affairs should acquaint themselves with these communications, for only then will they be able to control reality. But they do not do this, or at least they have not done it so far; yet the necessity for it remains.

This speaking, this communication, is the important thing to-day, in accordance with the tasks of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, for then, before speaking leads to actions, decisions have to be taken just as they are taken in relation to impulses on the physical plane. In earlier times it was different; other methods could then be employed.

At a particular time in the third post-Atlantean epoch a certain brotherhood took occasion to send a large number of colonists from Asia Minor to Ireland. These settlers came from the region where much later, in the fourth epoch, the philosopher Thales was born. It was from this same milieu and spiritual background that the initiates sent colonists to Ireland — why? Because they were aware of the special characteristics of a land such as Ireland, as indicated by the esoteric legend I have told you about. They knew that the forces which rise from the earth through the soil of Ireland act in such a way that people there are little influenced towards developing intellectuality, or the ego, or towards

a capacity for taking decisions. The initiates who sent these colonists to Ireland knew this very well, and they chose people who appeared to be karmically suited to be exposed to such influences. In Ireland there still exist descendants of the old immigrants from Asia Minor who were intended to develop no trace of intellectuality, or of reasoning power or of decisiveness, but were on the other hand to manifest certain special qualities of temperament to an outstanding degree.

So, you see, preparations were made a very long time in advance for the peaceful interpretation of Christianity which eventually found scope in Ireland, and for the glorious developments which led to the Christianising of Europe. The fellow-countrymen of the later Thales sent to Ireland people who proved well suited to become those monks who could work in the way I have described. Such plans were often carried through in earlier times, and when in external history written by historians who lack understanding — though of course they may be intelligent enough, for intelligence to-day can be picked up in the street — you find accounts of ancient colonisations, you must be clear that a far-reaching wisdom lay behind them. They were guided and led in the light of what was to come about in the future, and the local characteristics of earth-evolution were always taken into account.

That was another way of introducing spiritual wisdom into the world. It should not be adopted to-day by anyone who is following the rightful path. To prescribe the movement of people against their will, in order to partition parts of the earth, would be wrong. The right way is to impart true facts and to leave people to decide their actions for themselves.

Hence you can see that there has been a real advance from the third and fourth post-Atlantean epochs up to the present; and this is something we must grasp quite clearly. We must recognise how this impulse for freedom must penetrate all the dominating tendencies of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. For it is precisely this freedom of the human mind that is opposed by that adversary of whom I have told you — the "double" who accompanies man from shortly before birth until death, though just before death he has to depart. If someone is under the influence which proceeds directly from the "double," he may bring about all sorts of things which can appear in this epoch but are not in harmony with it. It will then not be possible for him to fulfil his task of fighting against evil in such a way that to a certain extent the evil is changed into good.

Just think of all that really lies behind the situation of humanity in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch! The detailed facts must be seen in their true colours, and understood. For wherever the "double" is strongly active, he will be working against mankind. In this fifth post-Atlantean epoch people have not reached the stage of being able to judge the facts correctly; particularly during these last three sad years they have not been at all inclined to form true judgments.

Take a fact which seems to be far removed from our immediate subject. In a large ironworks, 10,000 tons of cast iron were to be loaded into railway trucks. A definite number of workmen — 75 — were assigned to the job, and it appeared that each man could load 12½ tons a day.

There was a man named Taylor in whom the influence of the "double" prevailed over the needs of the human soul in our epoch. He first asked the managers if they did not think a man could load a good deal more than 12½ tons a day. They said that in their opinion a workman could load 18 tons a day at the utmost. Taylor then called for some experiments.

So, you see, Taylor proceeded to experiment with human beings! Machine standards were to be carried over into social life. Taylor wished to find out whether it was true, as the managers believed, that 18 tons a day was the utmost a man could load. He ordered rest-periods, calculated in physiological terms to be just long enough for a man to make good the energy he had previously expended. Naturally it turned out that the results varied with individuals. This does not matter with

machines — you simply take the arithmetical mean — but it cannot properly be done with human beings, for each individual has his own justified capacity. All the same, Taylor did it — that is, he chose those workmen whose need for rest corresponded to the period he had calculated; the others were simply thrown out. The outcome was that the selected workmen, by dint of fully restoring their energies during the rest-periods, were each able to load 47½ tons a day.

Here we have the mechanics of the Darwinian theory applied to working life: the fit were kept on and the unfit discarded. The fit in this case were those who, with the aid of the given rest-periods, could load 47½ tons, instead of the 18 tons previously regarded as the maximum. In this way the workmen also could be satisfied, for such enormous economies were effected that wages could be raised by 60 per cent. Thus the chosen workmen, who had proved themselves fit in the struggle for existence, were very well pleased. But — the unfit could go hungry!

This is just the beginning of a far-reaching principle. Such things are little noticed, because they are not seen — as they must be seen — in the light of the great issues involved. So far we have not gone beyond the application of faulty scientific ideas to human life; but the underlying impulse remains. The next step will be to make similar use of the occult truths which will be disclosed in the course of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. Darwinism contains no occult truths, but its application to direct experiments on human beings would have horrible results. But if occult truths are brought in, as and when they become available, it will be possible to use them for obtaining enormous power over men — if only by a continual selection of the "fittest." But things will not stop there. There would be an endeavour to use a certain occult discovery for making the fit ever fitter and fitter ... and by that means a tremendous power for utilising human beings — a power directly opposed to the good tendencies of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch — would be achieved.

I wished to give you these inter-related examples in order to show you *how* such far-ranging intentions begin, and how these matters must be illuminated from higher standpoints. Next time we will turn our attention to the three or four great truths which the fifth post-Atlantean epoch must arrive at, and how they could be misused if, instead of being brought into line with the rightful tendencies of the epoch, they were placed in the service of the "double," represented by those brotherhoods who wish to set up another being in place of the Christ.

Lecture 3

Dornach, 25th November, 1917

To-day I want to make various comments on matters that have been mentioned lately, and to fill in certain gaps. If you follow with attention current trends, you will have noticed a feeling that the thoughts and impressions and impulses which for a long time have led to such "splendid progress" are no longer capable of helping us to cope with the immediate future. Yesterday one of our members gave me a copy of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* for last Wednesday, November 21st. There speaks a very learned gentleman ... he must be very learned, for he is not only a Doctor of Philosophy but also a Doctor of Theology, and also a Professor, so naturally he is a very clever man. He has written an article which deals with all sorts of spiritual needs of the present time, and in the course of it he says:

"The experience of the form of being which lies behind things does not require pious dedication or a religious evaluation, for it is itself religion. We are concerned not with feeling and grasping a particular content, but with the great Irrational which lies hidden behind all existence ... Anyone who makes contact with this, so that the divine spark leaps across, goes through an experience which is of primal character and may be called the primordial experience. Anyone who experiences this one thing, together with all that is stirred by the same flow of life, is imbued with — to use a favourite modern phrase — a feeling of cosmic existence."

Excuse me for reading this to you: I am quoting it not in order to arouse in you any magnificent ideas, but so as to bring before you a sign of the times:

"A cosmic religiosity is coming to birth among us, and how strong is the demand for it is shown by the evident spread of the theosophical movement, which undertakes to discover and unveil the phases of this life beyond the range of the senses."

It is really difficult to stumble through all these wishy-washy ideas, but you will agree that the article is remarkable as a symptom of the times! He goes on: "In this cosmic piety there is no question of a mysticism which turns away from the world ..." and so on.

It would be hard to discover anything intelligent in all this, but since it is written by a man with all these degrees, one must suppose that some intelligence is there! Otherwise we should have to take it as the obscure stammering of a learned man who has reached a dead end on his own path and now feels impelled to call attention to something which certainly exists and evidently appears to him as not wholly unattainable.

There is no cause for satisfaction in such remarks; we must above all take care not to let them lull us into a comfortable slumber just because it has again been noticed, from some point of view or other, that something lies behind the spiritual-scientific movement. That would be really harmful. People who write in this way are often quite satisfied with having written it. With these misty thoughts they point to something which is trying to make its way into the world, but they are far too complacent to go in for the serious study that Spiritual Science requires. Nothing less than that must lay hold of men's minds if some reality is to be brought into the trends of the times, so that healing can come of it. Of course it is easier to talk of this "surge" of "cosmic feeling" than to give serious attention to those things that are demanded by the signs of the times and must be made known to mankind. For this reason it seems to me necessary to repeat here the remarks I have made in public lectures and shall make again, with particular emphasis now on the distinction between the worn-out ideas which have led into these catastrophic times and those which must take hold of human souls if any sort of progress is to be accomplished.

The old wisdom, through which mankind has been guided up to our time, may give rise to thousands of congresses, world-congresses, people's congresses and so on; thousands and thousands of societies may be founded; but we must be clear that all these congresses and societies will accomplish nothing unless the life-blood of Spiritual Science flows through them. What is lacking among people to-day is the courage to embark on real research into the spiritual world. Strange as it may sound, it must be said — as a first step nothing else would be needed than to spread the little

booklet, *Human Life in the light of Anthroposophy*, in the widest circles. Something would thereby be done to evoke knowledge of a connection between man and the cosmic order. The booklet calls attention precisely to this knowledge by showing in concrete terms how throughout the year the earth undergoes changes in its state of consciousness — and so on. What is said in that booklet and in this lecture is said with full consideration for the needs of our time. Acceptance of it would signify more than all this wishy-washy talk on cosmic feeling and surges and I know not what. I have just read this to you and I can't bring myself to repeat it — it is all put in such a senseless way.

This should of course not prevent us from taking note of such things: they are important and real. What I want to bring home to you is that we must not befog ourselves: we must be absolutely clear as to what we wish to do on behalf of Spiritual Science.

Now I will turn again to the fact that in this fifth post-Atlantean epoch humanity will have to find ways of dealing with great life-problems which in a certain sense were veiled by the wisdom of the past. I have already called your attention to them. One of these great problems will be concerned with finding out how to place the spiritual etheric forces at the service of practical life. I have told you that in this epoch we have to solve the problem of how the radiations from human states of mind are carried over into machines; of how human beings are to be brought into relation with an environment which must become increasingly mechanised. A week ago I pointed out how superficially this mechanisation is treated in a certain part of the world. I gave you the example of how an American way of thinking tries to extend the realm of the machine over human life itself. I told you of the rest-pauses which were used in order to enable a given number of workmen to load up to 47½ tons, instead of a much lower figure; this involves simply the application of Darwinian natural selection to human life.

Where this kind of thing goes on, the wish to yoke up human strength with the strength of machines is always involved. It would be quite mistaken merely to oppose these things. They are not going to fade away; they are on the march. The only question is whether in the course of world-history they are going to be brought on to the scene by men who are unselfishly aware of the great aims of earth-evolution and wish to shape these developments for the healing of mankind, or by groups of men who want to use them for their own or the group's selfish ends. That is the issue. The point is not *what* is going to happen, for it certainly will happen, but *how* it happens — how these things are handled. The welding together of human beings with machines will be a great and important problem for the rest of the earth-evolution.

I have often pointed out, even in public lectures, that human consciousness depends on destructive forces. During public lectures in Basle I twice said that in our nerve-system we are always in process of dying. These forces of death will become stronger and stronger, and we shall find that they are related to the forces of electricity and magnetism, and to those at work in machines. A man will be able in a certain sense to guide his intentions and his thoughts into the forces of the machines. Forces in human nature that are still unknown will be discovered — forces which will act upon external electricity and magnetism.

That is one problem: the bringing together of human beings with machines, and this is something which will exert ever-increasing influence on the future.

The other problem is concerned with calling in spiritual relationships to our aid. This can be done only when the time is ripe, and when a sufficient number of people are rightly prepared for it. But we must come to the stage when spiritual forces are brought into action for the governance of life in relation to illness and death.

Medicine will be spiritualised — very highly spiritualised. These things will be caricatured from various standpoints, but the caricatures only show what has to come. Again, the question is whether or not this problem — like the other problem I have mentioned — is handled in an egotistic way by individuals or by groups.

The third great question concerns ways of thinking about human birth and upbringing. I have told you how congresses on this subject have already been held, and how a materialistic form of science will be brought to bear in the future on procreation and the union of man and woman. These things indicate the great significance that attaches to this process of becoming. It is easy enough to ask why those who have the right knowledge in these matters do not apply it. In the future it will be clear enough what the state of affairs is regarding this application, and what are the forces which are even now opposing, for example, a more generous provision for a spiritualised medicine or a spiritualised economic life. All that can be done at present is to speak of these things, until people — I mean those who are ready to accept them selflessly — understand them sufficiently. There are many who think they have already got as far as that, but many hindrances arise from the circumstances of life to-day. These will be overcome in the right way only if understanding goes deeper and deeper, and if we actually refrain, for a time at least, from attempting practical applications on any large scale.

Things have developed in such a way that one can say: Little is known of all that lay behind the old atavistic searchings which continued up to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. People talk a great deal about the old alchemy; sometimes they call to mind the creation of Homunculus and so on. But most of this talk misses the point. If people would come to understand what can be said about the Homunculus scene in *Faust*, for instance, they would be better informed: the essential thing is that a mist has been spread over these subjects since the sixteenth century. They have receded into the background of human consciousness.

The law which prevails here is the same law which governs the rhythmic alternation of waking and sleeping in man. Just as a person cannot do without sleep, so mankind could not dispense with the sleep regarding spiritual knowledge which has marked the whole period since the sixteenth century. Man had to fall asleep to the spiritual, so that it could reappear in a new form. These necessities must be clearly seen, but without letting them depress us. We must realise clearly that the time for awakening has now come, that we have to play our part in it, that events often run ahead of our knowledge and that we shall not understand the events going on around us unless we are willing to receive the knowledge and to act in accordance with it.

I have repeatedly told you that certain groups are working esoterically in the direction I have indicated. It was first of all necessary that certain forms of knowledge — called nowadays by such misunderstood words as alchemy, astrology, etc. — should fall into abeyance, so that men should no longer be able to discern the soul-element in outer Nature and should rather be thrown back on themselves. And in order that they should awaken their inward forces, certain things had to appear as abstractions. Now these things must again take on a concrete spiritual form.

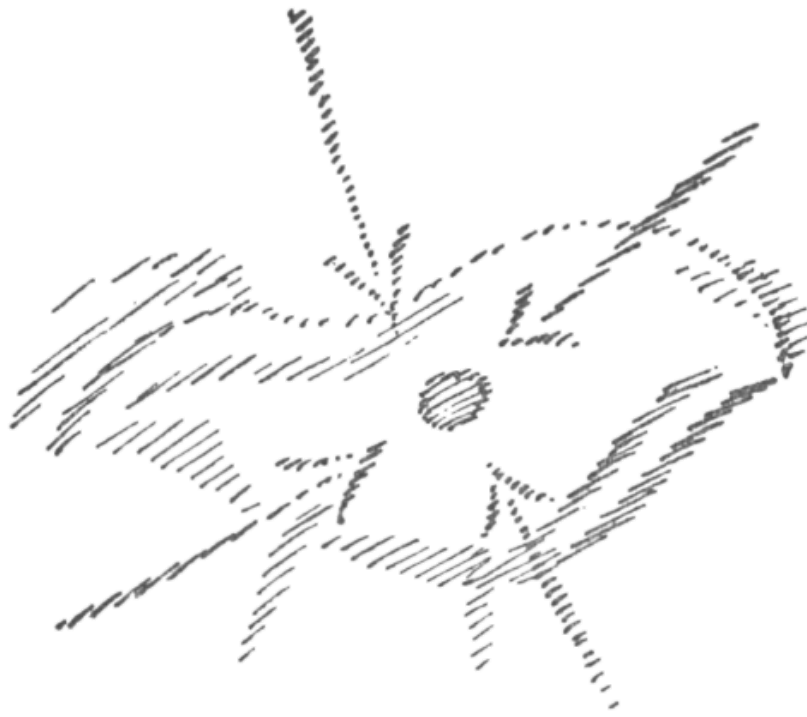
During the last centuries three ideas have gradually emerged in abstract guise. They were incorrectly named by Kant, and correctly by Goethe. Kant called them God, Freedom and Immortality; Goethe called them God, Virtue and Immortality. If we look into what lies behind these three words, we find that the same words are taken abstractly by modern man and were taken more concretely — but also more materially in the old atavistic sense — up to the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. Experiments in the old style were carried out: the alchemists sought to observe processes in which the working of God could be seen. And they tried to produce the Philosopher's Stone.

Something concrete lies behind all these things. The Philosopher's Stone was to enable men to become virtuous — but this was thought of in a more material sense. It was also to lead to an experience of immortality: to bring a man into such a relationship to the cosmic whole that he would experience in himself what lies beyond birth and death. All the nebulous ideas by which people nowadays try to grasp these things no longer correspond with what was really intended. It has all become abstract, and it is of abstract ideas that modern men speak. They want to understand *God* through an abstract theology, and *virtue* also as something abstract — the more abstract it is, the better people like it. And it is the same with *immortality*. Speculation turns on what in man could be immortal. In my first Basle lecture [23rd November, 1917. (Not translated into English.)] I said that the kind of learning which under the name of philosophy occupies itself with such questions as that of immortality is a starveling, under-nourished kind of learning. That is merely another way of describing the abstract terms in which such matters are pursued.

In certain Western brotherhoods, however, a connection with the old traditions has been retained, and endeavours are made to use it for the egotistic interests of the group. It is time to call attention to these things. Of course, if from this Western quarter anything is said about God, virtue or freedom, and immortality, the words are given an abstract sense, but in the circle of initiates it is well known that all this is not mere abstract speculation. For their own part, they look for something much more concrete behind these abstract formulae, and in their own schools these terms are accordingly translated. God is translated as *gold*, and an endeavour is made to arrive at what lies behind the secret of gold, as it may be called. For gold, the representative of the sun-like within the earth's crust, does in fact enshrine an important secret. Gold stands in the same material relationships to other substances as the thought of God does to other thoughts. The only question is what is made of this secret.

This is linked up with the egotistic use of the mystery of birth, and here, real cosmic understanding is sought. All such understanding has been replaced for modern men by a purely earthly understanding. If someone wants to investigate, for example, how the embryonic life-cell of animal or man develops, he studies it through a microscope and is concerned only with what lies there directly under his lens. But that is far from being the whole thing. It will be realised — and some groups are very near this already — that the forces at work are not contained in the cell but come from the cosmos and its constellations. When a seed of life arises, it does so because the living creature which harbours the seed is receiving forces, cosmic forces, from all sides of the cosmos. And when fertilisation occurs, the results depend on *which* cosmic forces enter actively into the process.

One thing, not yet seen, will be recognised. To-day the idea is that we have a living creature, a hen, let us say. When a new seed of life appears in the hen, the biologist investigates how the egg arises out of the hen; he looks within the hen itself for the forces which cause the seed to grow. That is nonsense. The egg does not grow out of the hen; the hen is merely the substratum for it. The growth-forces work from out of the cosmos on to the soil which has been prepared in the hen for engendering the egg. The biologist to-day believes that the relevant forces are all to be found within the field of his microscope. Actually, what he sees there depends on stellar forces which work together in a certain pattern at a given point. When we discover the cosmic at this point, then for the first time we shall have got at the reality and the truth: it is the cosmic whole which conjures up the egg in the hen.



All this is connected especially with the secret of the sun, and in earthly terms with the secret of gold. To-day I can give you only a sort of schematic indication of it; these things will become much clearer in the course of time.

When "virtue" is discussed in these same schools, they call it simply "health," and try to learn how the cosmic constellations are connected with health and sickness in men. By this means they come to know the particular earthly substances, the juices and so on, which are in their turn connected with sickness and health. We shall see develop increasingly from a certain direction a more material form of medical knowledge, but it will rest on a spiritual foundation.

From this side also will be spread the idea that man cannot be made good by learning all sorts of ethical principles, but by ingesting copper, for example, under a certain constellation, and arsenic under another. You can well imagine how ideas of this kind can be used by egotistic groups for enhancing their own power. They need only withhold this knowledge from others, and this will be the best means of dominating large numbers of men. They will not need to talk about such things; it will be enough to bring forward some new titbit. Then they will find openings for this titbit, having first flavoured it appropriately, and they will achieve their purpose when these novelties are accepted in a materialistic sense. We have only to remember that spiritual potencies are hidden in everything material. Only he who knows that in a true sense there really is nothing material, but only the spiritual — only he will penetrate behind the secrets of life.

Similar endeavours are made from the same quarter to transpose the problem of immortality into a materialistic frame, and this, too, can be done by making use of the cosmic constellations. This method certainly does not yield the immortality that is the subject of so many speculations, but immortality of another sort. Given a brotherhood lodge, then — at least so long as life cannot be lengthened by working on the physical body — preparations are made for subjecting a soul to such experiences as will enable it to remain within the lodge after death, so that it may contribute its forces to those at the disposal of the lodge. In these circles, accordingly, immortality is called simply "lengthening of life."

External signs of all this can indeed be seen. I don't know if some of you may have noticed a book which also came from the West and caused a little stir for a while; it was called "On the Nonsense of Death." These things all move in the same direction. They are still at their beginnings, for everything beyond that is kept as a closely guarded esoteric secret by the egotistic groups. But these things are really possible if they are given a materialistic colouring; if the abstract ideas of God, virtue and immortality are turned into the concrete ideas of gold, health and lengthening of life, and if what I have called the great problem of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch is utilised for the purpose of an egotistic group. You see, this "cosmic feeling," which the learned Professor and Doctor of Theology talks about, is already being widely presented to people — and often, unfortunately, in an egotistic sense — as cosmic knowledge. For centuries science has kept its eyes fixed on earthly processes, and has ignored all the most significant influences that come from beyond the earth, but it is precisely in our fifth post-Atlantean epoch that extra-terrestrial forces from the cosmos will be put to use.

And so, just as it is essential for an orthodox professor of biology to have the most powerful microscope available and the most efficient laboratory methods, so, in the future, when science has been spiritualised, it will be of the utmost importance whether certain processes are carried through in the morning or in the evening, or at midday, and whether what has been done in the morning is allowed to be further influenced by an evening activity, or whether the cosmic influences are cut out, paralysed, from the morning until the evening. Processes of this kind will of necessity come to light and will run their course. Naturally, a great deal of water will have to flow under the bridges before the professional chairs and laboratories, at present organised on purely materialistic lines, are handed over to spiritual scientists, but this replacement must come about if humanity is not to sink into utter decadence. For example, if the question is one of doing good in the immediate future, existing laboratory methods must give way to methods whereby certain processes take place in the morning and are interrupted during the day, so that the cosmic stream passes through them again in the evening and is in turn rhythmically withheld again until morning. So the processes would take their course: certain cosmic workings would always be interrupted by day, and the cosmic morning and evening processes would be brought in. All sorts of arrangements would be necessary for this. You will realise that if one is not in a position to take any public action about these things, all one can do is to speak of them.

However, just as gold, health and the prolongation of life are put in the place of God, virtue and immortality, so from the same quarter efforts will be made to work not with the morning and evening processes, but with others. Last week I told you how an attempt will be made to set aside the impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha, while for the West another impulse, a sort of Anti-Christ is introduced; and from the East an attempt will be made to paralyse the twentieth-century manifestation of the Christ Impulse by diverting attention from the coming etheric Christ.

Those concerned to present an Anti-Christ as the real Christ will try also to make use of something that works through the most material forces, but in this very way can work spiritually. Above all they will strive to make use of electricity and earth-magnetism in order to produce effects all over the world. I have shown you how earth-forces rise up into what I have called the human Double, the *Doppelgänger*. This secret will be opened up. An American secret will be to make use of earth-magnetism, with its north-south duality, and by this means to send over the earth guiding forces which will have spiritual effects. Look at the magnetic chart of the earth and compare it with what I am now saying. Observe where the magnetic needle deviates to East and West and where it does not deviate. I can give only hints about all this. From a certain direction in the heavens, spiritual beings are continually active, and they have only to be put into the service of the earth, and — because these beings working in from the cosmos can mediate the secret of the earth's magnetism — it will

be possible for egotistic groups to get behind this secret and to accomplish a great deal in connection with gold, health and the prolongation of life. It will be necessary for them only to pluck up their faltering courage — and in certain circles that will be done readily enough!

From the East an endeavour will be made to strengthen what I have already explained: to place in the service of the earth the beings which work in from the opposite side of the cosmos. In the future there will be a great battle. Human science will stretch out to the cosmic, but will try to get there by different paths. It will be the task of good, healing science to find certain cosmic forces which can reach the earth through the co-operation of two cosmic streams, those of Pisces and Virgo. The great secret to be discovered will be how the influence which works from the direction of Pisces as a power of the sun unites itself with the influence working from the direction of Virgo. It will make for good when it is learnt how the morning and evening forces from the two sides of the cosmos can be brought into the service of humanity. (See diagram at end of lecture.)

These forces, however, will be left aside by those who try to achieve their whole purpose through the polaric duality of positive and negative forces. The forces which enable the spiritual to stream down to earth with the aid of positive and negative magnetism come from Gemini; they are the midday forces. In ancient times it was known that cosmic influences were involved in this, and to-day even exoteric scientists are aware that in some or other way positive and negative magnetism lie behind Gemini in the Zodiac. The aim will be to paralyse all that could be gained through a revelation of the true duality in the cosmos — to paralyse it in a materialistic, egotistic way by means of the forces which stream in particularly from Gemini and can be placed entirely at the service of the human "Double."

Other brotherhoods, concerned above all to divert attention from the Mystery of Golgotha, will try to make use of the duality in human nature — the duality which in our epoch embraces man as a unity, but includes within him his lower animal nature. A human being is really a centaur in a certain sense: his humanity rests on his lower animal nature in its astral form. This working together of the duality in man gives rise to a duality of forces. This duality of forces will be utilised particularly by certain egotistic brotherhoods, chiefly from the side of India and the East, in order to mislead eastern Europe, whose task it is to prepare for the sixth post-Atlantean epoch. And this will be done with the aid of the forces which work in from Sagittarius.

Whether to conquer the cosmic for mankind in a wrong, twofold way, or rightly in a one-fold way — that is the question facing mankind. From this will come a true renewal of astrology, which in its old form is atavistic and cannot survive. The wise Beings of the cosmos will enter into the struggle; one side will use the morning and evening processes in the way I have indicated; the West will prefer the midday processes, shutting out the morning and evening ones; and the East will prefer the midnight ones. Men will no longer manufacture substances on the basis merely of chemical attraction and repulsion; they will know that different substances arise according to whether they are made with morning and evening processes, or with midday and midnight ones. It will be known that such substances act in a quite different way on the triad, God, virtue and immortality — gold, health and prolongation of life. When the forces of Pisces and Virgo act in co-operation, nothing wrongful can be brought into being. Men will achieve something through which the mechanism of life will be detached, in a certain sense, from man himself, but will not give any one group power and rulership over another. The cosmic forces drawn from this direction will create remarkable machines, but only those that will relieve man of work, because they will carry a certain power of intelligence within themselves. And a Spiritual Science which itself reaches out towards the cosmic will have to see to it that all the great temptations which come from these machine-animals, created by man himself, are not allowed to exercise any harmful influence upon him.

With regard to all this, the essential thing is that people should prepare themselves for it by not treating realities as illusions and by coming to a genuine spiritual conception and understanding of the world. To see things as they are — very much depends on that! But we can see them as they are only if we are in a position to bring the ideas of Spiritual Science to bear on reality. For the rest of the earth's existence the dead will be co-operating actively in the highest degree, and it is *how* they co-operate that will matter. Here, above all, a great distinction will arise. On one side the attitude of men on earth can rightly lead the co-operation of the dead in such a direction that the dead will be active out of their own impulse, an impulse coming from the spiritual world which the dead are themselves experiencing. But from the other side many endeavours will be made to introduce the dead into human existence by artificial means. Along the indirect path through Gemini the dead will be led into human life, with the result that human vibrations will pass over into the mechanism of machines and will continue to vibrate there in a quite definite way. The cosmos will impart motion to the machines by the indirect path I have indicated.

It will thus be essential, when these problems emerge, that no improper methods should be applied to them, but only those elemental forces which belong to nature on their own account, and great care will have to be taken not to introduce improper forces into the realm of machines. In this occult sphere the human element must not be related to machinery in such a way that the Darwinian natural selection theory is used to determine the working capacity of human beings, in the way of which I gave you an example last week.

I am making these remarks — obviously they cannot exhaust the subject in so short a time — in the belief that you will meditate on these things and will try to build a bridge between them and all those experiences of life which can be encountered, particularly in this difficult time. You will see how things become clear to you if you contemplate them in the light that can come from such ideas as those I have been placing before you. The real point is not that in our time powers and constellations of powers are standing opposed to each other, as we are always being told in external exoteric life. The real point is quite different. It is that a kind of veil is now meant to be spread over the true impulses at work. Certain human powers are intent on saving something for themselves — what is it? Their aim is that impulses which up to the time of the French Revolution were justified, and were represented also by certain occult schools, shall now be taken charge of in an Ahrimanic-Luciferic sense, so as to maintain a form of society which is generally thought to have been overcome since the end of the eighteenth century.

Two powers, especially, stand in opposition to each other: the power representing the principle that was overcome at the end of the eighteenth century and the power representing the new age. A great many people, of course, are instinctively supporters of the new age. Therefore the representatives of the old impulses, those of the eighteenth, seventeenth and sixteenth centuries, must be yoked by artificial means to the forces which emanate from certain brotherhoods who are working for group-egotistic ends. The most effective principle for extending power over as many men as may be needed is to-day the principle of economic dependence. But that is only an instrument: the real thing is quite different. The real issue you can gather for yourselves from all the various hints I have given. The economic principle is connected with everything which seeks to enlist a great number of men all over the world as a kind of army in the service of these principles.

These are the powers which stand opposed to each other. And this indicates what it is that is really battling in the world to-day. In the West we have the principle which is really rooted in the eighteenth, seventeenth and sixteenth centuries, but which passes unnoticed because it clothes itself in the phrases of revolution and democracy. It wears them as a mask and by this means strives to gain all possible power for itself. These endeavours are favoured if as many people as possible do not

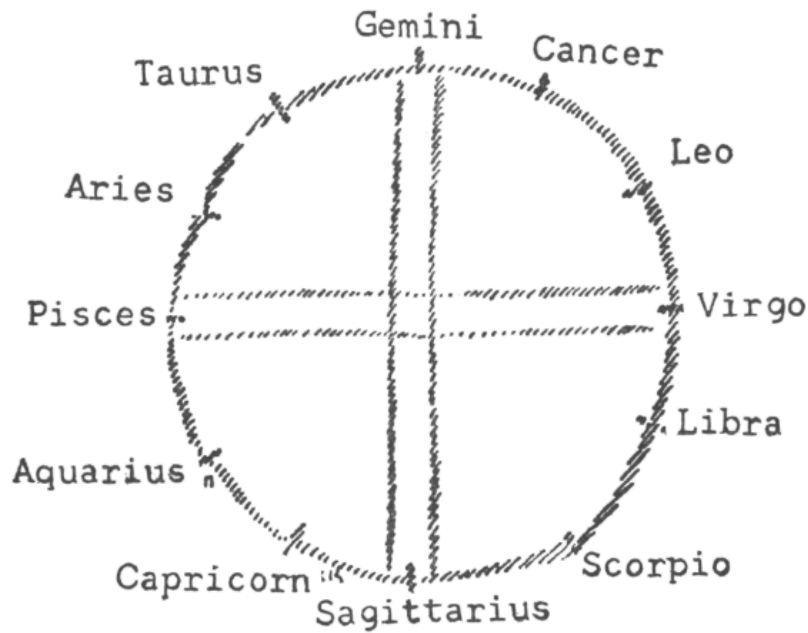
exert themselves to see things as they are, and in this field allow themselves to be lulled to sleep again and again by the illusion that to-day there is a war between the *Entente* and the powers of Central Europe.

In reality there is no such war; only by going behind this illusion can one get at the real struggle, but light can be thrown on it if it is approached along the lines which, for certain reasons, I only hint at. At least we should endeavour not to take illusions for realities: then gradually the illusion will be dispelled as far as it need be. Above all we must strive to see these things objectively, as they really are.

If you bring together all that I have been saying, you will see that an apparently casual remark I made in the course of these lectures was not so at all. When I quoted something that Mephistopheles said to Faust, "I see you know the Devil" (he would certainly not have said this to Woodrow Wilson), it was by no means a casual remark: it can throw a great deal of light on the present situation. We must really look at these things objectively, without sympathy or antipathy; above all, we must be able to see how much in a particular case depends on the setting and how much on the capacity of an individual, for behind an individual's capacity there often lies something quite different from what lies behind the setting. Ask yourselves without prejudice — how much would Woodrow Wilson's brain be worth if it were not throned on the Presidency of the United States? Consider how it would be if this brain had a quite different setting: then its individual capacity would be revealed! The setting is what matters.

Let me now speak abstractly and radically, of course without discussing in detail the particular case I have mentioned — in a neutral country that would not be appropriate. If you take any individual brain, it can be revealing to ask whether it is worth something because it is illuminated and activated by a particular spiritual soul-force — whether it has the kind of spiritual significance I have been speaking of here — or whether it is worth no more than its weight, measured on a pair of scales.

In the eyes of people to-day, all this is grotesque; but what seems grotesque to them must come to seem obvious, if certain things are to be diverted from an unhealthy stream into a health-giving one. And what good is it to be always talking about them? You must come to see that there is no point in wishy-washy talk about "cosmic religiosity" or "how strong the striving for it is," or of "the movement which aims at discovering and revealing the circulation of the life behind the senses," and so on. All this does is to spread a mist over things which must be brought out clearly in the world, and should above all be carried as practical moral-ethical impulses into human life.



I can give you only indications. I leave you to build on them in your own meditations. I have been speaking aphoristically in many respects. But you will have the possibility of drawing a great deal out of the relationships shown in this picture of the Zodiac, if you truly use it as a subject for meditation.

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