

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHT.

THE STUDY COURSE.

General information about the Society, its aims and methods is given in the accompanying pamphlet. For those who wish not only to know of the Path of the Mysteries, but to take initiation and tread that Path, which is a Way of Regeneration and creative service, preliminary training is given by the Study Course. Initiation through this Group automatically admits to full membership of the Group and it is only initiates who are full members.

The Course is a correspondence one and those who aim at initiation have to take it under supervision and pass it. It consists of four parts and when the first three have been passed the student decides finally whether he wishes to apply for initiation, or for Affiliateship which will be explained later on. At this stage the usual procedure is for the applicant for initiation to come here for an interview, this being the only interview given to anyone other than full members. After this interview it is finally decided whether the applicant can be accepted as a candidate for initiation and if he is accepted, he then takes Part 4. The interview takes place at this Headquarters, as, of course, does the initiation.

In the case of an overseas student the procedure may be varied in order that the interview and initiation may take place during the same visit to this country but in no case can the interview be waived. Those who come for the interview should realize that not only must they have passed the Course, but that they must also have been accepted after the interview if they are to become candidates for initiation and full membership.

Overseas students will be given initiation if they qualify even though there may be little likelihood of their coming here again. The Society is a properly contacted organization of the Western form of the Esoteric Tradition and those who can come here only on the occasion of initiation will have been given the contacts and the papers issued to neophytes and will thereafter be sent the papers appropriate to their grade. They will thus continue to receive current teaching and will be able to live as initiates by giving, according to their understanding, expression to the principles they learn.

It should be realised however, that if the process started at initiation is to continue in reality a considerable amount of attendance here is necessary since full participation in the Group's work, which is undertaken not merely for the individual's benefit but for the service of God and Man, includes several avenues of development which can be experienced fully only with considerable attendance.

Affiliateship is for those who wish to go further than the Study Course, maintain contact with the Society and study its teachings as far as may be but who either do not wish to apply for initiation or who cannot do so since they can foresee no possibility of coming here. It is not confined to overseas students. Those who wish to become Affiliates have to take under supervision all four Parts of the Course and pass them but do not have to be interviewed though there are certain conditions attaching which are explained later in this paper.

If an Affiliate later decides to apply for initiation he may do so provided he can fulfil the necessary condition - that is to say that he can come here for the interview after which, if accepted, he can take initiation.

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An Affiliate takes no further training with this Group (unless he later becomes an initiate) but he receives, four times a year for the Equinoxes and Solstices, papers selected from those otherwise given only to full members. The conditions to which he has to agree concern the safety of these papers, their return to the Society in the event of his death, prompt acknowledgment of the papers when they are received, and the giving of donations twice a year, at the times of the Equinoxes. If the conditions are not observed the Affiliate will be held to have lapsed and will be asked to return the papers sent to him.

The condition of giving Equinoctial donations also applies to initiates. In both cases the amount is entirely for the donor to decide but there is no fixed rate, and no information can be given as to the "usual amount" since there is no usual amount. These donations are one way of contributing to the Work.

The Course is designed to give the student a sound grounding in the Western form of the Esoteric Tradition, esoteric philosophy and psychology, elementary mind-training and kindred subjects, and thus to prepare the way for deeper work. Those who take it under supervision should realize that if they are initiated they will not be free to make or maintain contacts with any other organization giving esoteric training or teaching. The reason is that experience has proved it to be unwise to mix systems or contacts - therefore the Society will take as supervised students only those who will agree not to participate in the activities of any other esoteric group from the time they start the Course. See attached paper, "Esoteric Training".

The cost of the Course, taken under supervision and excluding textbooks, is as follows:-

Part 1.	£4.4.0.
Part 2.	£2.2.0.
Part 3.	£2.2.0.
Part 4.	£4.4.0.

The following textbooks are used:-

- Part 1. (a) "Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science" 5/-
by Dion Fortune. (Supplied by the Society
in Roneo form.)
- (b) "The Training and Work of an Initiate" 12/6
by Dion Fortune.
- Part 2. "The Mystical Qabalah" 42/-
by Dion Fortune.
- Part 3. "The Mystical Qabalah"
by Dion Fortune.

N.B. For American enquirers, the dollar equivalent can be found approximately by taking the dollar as equal to 7/-. Since there are 20/- in one pound the cost of Part 2, for example, is 42/- or approximately 6 dollars. And since there are 12 pence in one shilling the cost of the 12/6 textbook is approximately 1 dollar and 77 cents.

The fees are a contribution towards the mundane plane running of the organization from those to whom it brings benefit. The teaching, however, is never withheld because of financial difficulties and, if circumstances appear to warrant it, arrangements for gradual payments or adjustment of fees can be made. No subsequent fees are required from those who complete the Course - the monetary contributions required from initiates and Affiliates have already been explained.

The duration of the Course is roughly as follows:

- Part 1. 20 weeks.
Parts 2 & 3. 16 weeks each.
Part 4. Up to 8 weeks.

On the conclusion of each of the first three Parts the student is required to submit an essay based upon a skeleton form supplied at the appropriate time. For writing it, he is allowed up to one month from the completion of the last lesson of the Part.

A student may proceed from one Part of the Course to the next only if he qualifies - that is to say if the record of his work on the preceding part has been satisfactory and if his essay has been accepted as a 'pass'. It will be seen, therefore, that we cannot accept payment for the whole Course in advance since there is no guarantee that a student will go through the whole of it. Consequently only one Part at a time can be paid for though there is, of course, no restriction on the purchase of the books.

There is no essay at the end of Part four.

Students in the U.K. are asked (when sending in their work for correction) to enclose stamped, addressed envelopes for the return of their papers. Overseas students are asked to send a sum to be put into a personal account and drawn upon for postage when corrected work is returned.

After successful completion of Part 3 and acceptance of the essay upon it the student will be sent a paper setting out the alternatives before him if he wishes to go further - i.e. initiation or Affiliateship. Applicants for initiation will find in this paper information about the necessary interview.

Those who apply for initiation will be given papers dealing with information required before initiation and explaining, as far as may be, conditions prevailing after it.

All correspondence is to be addressed to the Secretary and not to any other official of the Society nor to any person by name. If this instruction is not observed considerable delay may ensue.

Should married couples enrol as supervised students they may, if they wish, work from one set of papers and books. In this case, the one set of papers and books is charged for plus £1 each for the supervision fee. Thus for Part 1 the charge with supervision is £4.4.0. of which £1.0.0. is the supervision fee - for married couples working from the same papers and books the charge, therefore, would be £5.4.0. plus 17/6. for one copy of each textbook. For part 2. it would be £3.2.0. plus the cost of the books, and so on.

In another paper sent to enquirers, particulars of Associateship are given. Associateship is open to anyone, whether a student or not, upon payment of an annual subscription.

Students, Associates and Library members will automatically receive the Society (free) Quarterly Review.

The serious enquirer will have realised that much of the foregoing information applies to those who really wish to tread the Path of Initiation or to those who wish to get as near full membership of this Group as is possible for them by becoming Affiliates.

All English-speaking people may take the Course under supervision but it is emphasized that a thorough understanding of English is essential since some of the subjects dealt with are abstruse. There are many, however, whose command of English is not sufficient for them to be able to cope with the written work but who could eventually arrive at an adequate understanding of the teaching if they were free to work in their own time and did not have to send in their work for correction. Students

under supervision have to send in their work once a fortnight and regularity and continuity are important. Others, whilst not wishing to take initiation or to become Affiliates, may wish to have some knowledge of the teaching; and some who will not be able to come here may not think it worth their while to work under supervision.

Such people may buy Part 1. and its textbooks for study on their own. They can then study at leisure but will not submit any work. As a matter of interest the Part 1 essay form will be sent them with Part 1. The cost to those studying in this way is £3.4.0. for Part 1 and 17/6 for the books.

The teaching studied in Parts 2 and 3 is Part 1 of the Mystical Qabalah. These Parts themselves consist of questions on the book and of certain imagination-training exercises which should not be done without supervision, and for this reason Parts 2 and 3 are not given to unsupervised students. The material of these Parts, however, may be obtained by reading the "Mystical Qabalah".

Thus all the teaching given in the first three Parts of the Course may be obtained by unsupervised students though they do not qualify for membership. If, however, they later decide they wish to become full members of the Group, or Affiliates, they may enrol and, upon payment of the £1.0.0. supervision fee, may work through Part 1 with a supervisor and if they qualify may go on to the other Parts in the usual way.

Those who study without supervision are not required to complete the Questionnaire or the undertaking attached to the paper, "Esoteric Training" but should they later go on to work under supervision these have to be completed.

Those who work under supervision are expected to devote ten to twenty minutes daily to the meditation exercises and for this privacy and reasonable certainty of freedom from disturbance are required. Some students, particularly among the members of the armed Forces, find they cannot have these conditions and so cannot perform the meditation work satisfactorily. Such people may find it a good plan to work on their own for a while and change over to supervised work when conditions alter for the better.

Those wishing to apply for the Course are asked, while retaining the foregoing particulars for reference, to detach the Form of Application attached to this paper and send it to:-

The Secretary of the Society of the Inner Light,
38, Steele's Road, London, N.W.3.

Those wishing to work under supervision should complete the top section of this Form and send also the completed Questionnaire and the signed agreement attached to the paper called "Esoteric Training".

Those wishing to study on their own and not under supervision should complete the lower section of the Form of Application but the Questionnaire and agreement are not required. It will be understood that students working on their own do not send their work here.

Cheques, Postal Orders, etc. should be made payable to "The Society of the Inner Light", and crossed " & Co."

Those enrolling as students should keep these particulars and also the paper, "Esoteric Training", for future reference.

N.B. The Society of the Inner Light, founded in 1924, was formally incorporated as a legal entity in 1948, in order to provide continuity of existence and not for any commercial purpose. The income and property of the Society are applied solely to the promotion of the objects of the Society.

The Society's office is open from 10 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., Mondays to Fridays only. It is closed at weekends and throughout August, and also on Bank Holidays.

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHT.

Esoteric Training.

It is not advisable to follow more than one system at a time since the resultant diffusion of effort and possible confusion of method impede or prevent progress. For that reason we insist that those who study with us and those who take initiation into the Lesser Mysteries do not participate in the studies, training or activities of other esoteric groups, including Spiritualists.

Our training is designed to develop initiates along our lines so that continuity of method and complete unity of effort is assured.

This does not mean that all are cast in the same mould; the more diversity of gifts and temperament the better, but we have been told that we have to be "of one mind in one place" and the meaning of this goes very deep, deeper than differences of psychological make-up or individual ability. It means that members are built together into one whole, a living organism; it is this living organism that is used in our dedicated work.

This end cannot be achieved if initiates of the Lesser Mysteries have contacts other than ours on the Inner Planes, and it is for this reason that members and students are asked voluntarily and unreservedly to abide by the above mentioned ruling. Our contacts reach up to the highest levels in an unbroken chain.

Please detach and return to the Secretary the acknowledgment below, duly signed and dated.

H.B. Those who avail themselves of the offer of buying Part 1 of the Course and textbooks (see page 3 of Study Course particulars) for study on their own are not affected by this condition.

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHT.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP.

Associates of the Society will receive papers containing extracts from communications received by the Society from the Inner Planes. These papers will be sent quarterly, for the Equinoxes and Solstices, and subscriptions will be dated from the quarter nearest to the time of their receipt.

Should other activities develop in which Associates could participate they would be informed.

The annual subscription for Associateship is 10/6.

If you wish to enrol as an Associate of the Society please fill in the application form, detach it at the dotted line and return it to:-

The Secretary,
The Society of the Inner Light,
38, Steele's Road,
London N.W.3.

N.B. Cheques, Postal
Orders etc should be
made payable to
"The Society of the
Inner Light".

FORM OF APPLICATION.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I wish to enrol as an Associate of the Society of the Inner Light and enclose remittance for 10/6 as my subscription for the year.

Signed.....

Date.....

STUDENTS LIVING ABROAD - POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Students are asked to enclose a stamped, addressed envelope with their work for its return to them after correction - see page 10 of Part 1. This is possible only for those living in Britain as foreign stamps cannot be used here. We therefore ask each student abroad to send a sum to be drawn upon for postage. This sum is put into an account specially opened for him and he is notified when it is becoming low.

The amount required depends upon how the material is to be returned - by air or surface mail. Lightweight paper reduces the cost of air mail but there are 11 lessons in Part 1, nine of which include answers to questions plus the meditation diary, consisting of the record of the realisations during meditation each day for two weeks.

When sending the money for postage students should let the Secretary know whether they want their corrected work returned by air or surface mail - or if they prefer to use another system, described below.

According to this system, the student takes a carbon copy of all his work and sends here one copy but retains the other. After the supervisor has been through the work he does not return the copy sent here but sends his comments in a 6d air mail form. The student can then relate such comments to his own copy of the work. Students will appreciate that this method is considerably less expensive than if the actual work is returned by air at a cost of 1/3 per half ounce.

In order that supervisors may be notified students are also asked to let the Secretary know when they propose to start recorded work. See page 11 of Part 1.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE LIGHT OF OCCULT SCIENCE.

by

DION FORTUNE.

This book is used as one of the text books in the Study Course because it serves to show where occult science and spiritualism meet and where they diverge and because of the light it throws on certain phenomena. The book was published in 1931 and some aspects there classed as undesirable have doubtless been changed or modified. Moreover the 'trance' state spoken of is limited to the experience and observation of one person only - many years ago.

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SPIRITUALISM IN THE LIGHT OF OCCULT SCIENCE.

Part 1.

CHAPTER 1.

Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science.

In this study of spiritualism it is not proposed to weigh the evidence in regard to the actuality of psychic phenomena; this has been done by such men as Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, and Mr. J.W. Crawford, and their experiments have been repeated so often under test conditions that they may be safely accepted. Fraudulent mediums there will always be as long as there are credulous members of the general public who are willing to put their hands in their pockets. We will not concern ourselves with the sifting of this oft-threshed chaff. Let us accept the facts, as we have reasonable grounds for doing, and proceed forthwith to attempt their elucidation.

Scientific investigators have tried to explain them in terms of psychology; their hypotheses, however, prove to be no more satisfying than those they would supersede, for psychology itself is in need of a good deal of elucidating, and it may quite well be that psychic science has more to tell us about psychology than psychology has to tell us about psychic science.

There is a school of thought whose opinion has never been asked upon the subject of spiritualism, and it is an opinion which would be well worth having, for the workers in this school are studying closely allied subjects, and their experience throws much light on the findings of psychic research. The occultist is working in the same field as the spiritualist, and as both his motives and theories are different from those of the spiritualist, he comes as an independent witness. In so far as he confirms the spiritualist on the question of fact, his evidence must carry weight, and in so far as he differs from him in the matter of opinion concerning the interpretation to be placed upon the agreed facts, he is also worthy of a hearing, because he may be able to throw light on problems that the spiritualistic hypothesis leaves obscure.

Occult science and psychic science approach their mutual subject-matter from different standpoints. The psychic investigator observes the manifestations of the subtler forms of existence when they have been translated into terms of matter by a medium. Through the intervention of one of those people who have a specialised type of constitution - no more abnormal than the ear of a musician - it is possible to render perceptible to the physical senses things which normally they cannot cognise. It is only when this has been done that the psychic investigator can begin his work. He has to wait for the subtle to impinge upon the dense, observe the effect it has upon the dense, and draw his conclusions.

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The occultist, on the other hand, by means of the special training of his own mind, enables himself to observe the intangible on its own plane, and does not necessarily bring it through into manifestation in dense matter. He is, in fact, his own medium. But instead of bringing the intangible through to the plane of matter, he transfers his own consciousness to the subtler planes.

The phenomena which the spiritualist causes to take place are looked upon by the occultist in the same light as the leaping of fish into the air, or the diving of water-fowl into a pond. He himself prefers to work on a plane in terms of that plane itself.

With this end in view, he analyses the different forms of existence into their different types; he recognises that just as there is a faculty of sight which reacts to etheric activity, and a faculty of smell which reacts to gaseous activity, so there are faculties of our minds which react to the different types of existence. They react thus because they are akin to them in nature. We may say, then, that our constitution is not all of a piece, but composite, and that all the different types of existence distinguished by the occultist enter into it.

Four main types of manifestation are recognised - the material, the emotional, the mental, and the spiritual, and each of these types is held to have a denser and a rarer aspect. This fourfold classification represents four entirely different types of manifestation, each real in every sense of the word; each tangible according to its type; each with its own natural laws; and each interacting with the systems next to it in density, being able to influence that which is more dense but less dynamic than itself, and being influenced by that which is less dense but more dynamic than itself.

For convenience, these different planes are arranged schematically in a series, from the densest and least dynamic to the subtlest and most dynamic. The First Plane is the plane of matter, too well known to need description in these pages. The occultist, for his own convenience, divides it into the Dense and the Etheric Sub-planes. The Dense Sub-plane consists of matter in its solid, liquid and gaseous states; the Etheric is known to us through the activities of magnetism, light, heat, certain aspects of sound, all radio-activity, and certain other less-known forms of force which have long been known to the yogi and the ju-ju man but have not yet been discovered by science, although it is beginning to draw very near to them, and it is probably only a matter of time until the discovery is made. Such systems as homeopathy, such instruments as the emanometer are opening up this plane.

Primitive man may have believed that every object had a soul. The modern physicist knows that every object has a magnetic field. It is really two different ways of saying the same thing. Every atom of matter is an electric circuit with its consequent magnetic field. Upon this physicist and occultist are agreed. But, says the occultist, there is known to me what I call a Prime Atom in relation to each plane: that is to say, a unit which forms the root-substance out of which a plane of existence is developed, and it belongs, not to that plane itself, but to the plane above, relatively less dense, relatively more dynamic. This fact is the key to the whole problem. An atom, according to the use made of the term in occult science, is a portion of

the substance of a plane which, for the purposes of that plane, behaves as a unit and is indivisible. But, viewed from the standpoint of the plane above, it is a molecule, being an association of the atoms of that plane. The atoms of dense matter are, nevertheless, composed of associations of electrons; they are, therefore, composite when viewed from the standpoint of the Etheric Plane. The Prime Atom, or fundamental unit of the Etheric Plane, is the electron, but the electron, when viewed from the standpoint of what the occultist calls the Astral Plane, is composite in its turn.

The Astral Plane may be defined as the plane of life-force, of vitality; and life-force, considered apart from the vehicles through which it manifests itself, is emotion. We see it in the great fundamental instincts and their accompanying passions. We see it sublimated into the tender affections related to ideas. In order to realise this concept we need a form of thought which will enable us to conceive the change-over from matter to consciousness which takes place on the etheric-astral borderline. It is this which occult science endeavours to supply by means of its symbol-systems. It is these symbol-systems which, taken literally by inadequately instructed students as well as by the uninitiated, are the cause of much misunderstanding and confusion, and lead to the accusation of self-deception and superstition being levelled at the Ancient Wisdom. As a matter of fact, these symbol-systems are really an algebra which enables us to compute the intangible.

Occult science, then, teaches that every object has an etheric counterpart, and natural science, though using other terms, would probably agree. Occult science would go further than this, and say that many objects have a vital aspect, an organised system of life-forces in addition to their etheric system. Natural science, though perhaps not prepared to commit itself to this statement in the absence of evidence of a nature that it can accept, would nevertheless hardly be prepared to deny it. Occult science goes on yet further, and says that in many of the types of existence that have physical, etheric, and vital organised systems, there is also an organised system of ideas or mind.

Here, however, comes the point where occult science parts company with natural science. It does not hold that life begins with simple forms of matter, but with simple forms of consciousness. It carries to its logical conclusion the dictum that it is not form which creates function, but function which creates form. The life preceded the form in which it manifested itself. It is not, according to the occult hypothesis, the physical form which gives rise to its etheric counterpart of electro-magnetic stresses, but the etheric counterpart, organised by life forces, which, in their turn, are organised by consciousness, which holds the molecules composing the physical body as in a network, wherein each particle rests in its appointed 'etheric socket'.

It is possible to conceive, therefore, that were all the material particles withdrawn, there would still remain an etheric framework. It is this etheric framework, organised and capable of responding to the directing influence of consciousness, which is the basis of all supernormal phenomena which involve manifestations on the material plane - raps, levitations, apports, the touch of ghostly hands - all these are due to the properties of the etheric sub-plane of matter - the aspect of matter which can be controlled by mind.

It is held among occultists that the etheric counterpart of the arm or leg can be withdrawn from its physical form and used independently. It is done by thinking of the limb as being in a different position from that which it actually occupies. When this is done with sufficient concentration, the kinesthetic sense, which automatically tells us the position the body occupies, disappears from that limb; and as the sense of position is noted subjectively to have disappeared, a psychic, observing the experiment, would tell us that the etheric limb was seen to be coming out as a shadowy ghost-limb which, under certain conditions of light, may even be visible to ordinary sight. It is this phenomenon which produces the well-known hysterical symptom of glove-and-stock anaesthesia and hysterical paralysis. Emotional shock or tension causes the extrusion of the etheric counterpart of the limb by concentratedly wishing it were in some different position from the one it actually occupies. It is a common experience for an occultist, after a projection experiment, to be unco-ordinated in his movements for a few minutes, owing to the etheric counterpart not being at once fully reabsorbed.

People vary greatly in their power to extrude an etheric limb; some can do it readily, others only in a minor degree and with great effort. Experience shows, however, that everybody parts with a certain amount of etheric substance fairly readily, though not always in an organised form. A materialising medium is a person who can extrude large amounts of it in that unorganised form which is called ectoplasm. This type of matter appears to be readily moulded by the mind. Herein we may find the clue to the many curious effects produced by the mind on the body. The effects of repercussion, the stigmata of the saints, the injuries to an unborn child inflicted by the emotion of its mother, all these may be ectoplasmic phenomena.

If organised consciousness survives bodily death it is easy to conceive of its moulding this ectoplasm into a body for manifestation if it desired sufficiently ardently to manifest and were able to draw to itself sufficient ectoplasm for the purpose.

How much of the physical phenomena which occur at a seance are due to the projection of the etheric limbs of the medium, and how much are due to the use of unorganised ectoplasm by a disembodied entity, is a matter which has to be ascertained in each individual case. The occultist would aver that all psychic phenomena cannot be ascribed to disembodied entities, though he would not exclude their intervention; but he knows that he himself can produce many supernatural phenomena at will by projecting an etheric limb, or even the etheric body itself as a whole.

It is a common experience to feel a cold wind sweep round a circle just before a spirit-manifestation is about to commence. Occultists believe that this sensation is due to a small amount of etheric substance being withdrawn from the sitters in the circle. As good materialising mediums are rare, occultists are accustomed to use other substances than human ectoplasm for the purposes of enabling entities to materialise. The emanations of freshly-shed blood serve equally well; and it was for this reason that blood-sacrifices were employed in certain cults. Certain aromatic substances, when burnt, give off an etheric emanation which, although it will not produce as tangible a manifestation as the vital fluids, will nevertheless enable a

fairly solid form to be fabricated. The grave objections attendant upon the use of blood for materialising purposes cause it never to be used by reputable occultists; but in black magic, where the experiments are carried out regardless of the moral consequences, it is said to be used.

It is a curious fact that in ritual magic where incense is used as the basis of manifestation, instead of the usual sensation of coldness experienced by the participants in psychic experiments, the temperature rises most markedly. Any one who is used to experimenting in ritual magic knows that he should start in a cool room, or the atmosphere will be unpleasantly hot before he has finished. This is attributed to the fact that instead of vitality being withdrawn from the sitters in the circle for the purposes of the experiment, vitality is being poured in by the invisible participants.

Out of the principles enumerated in the foregoing pages, it will be found possible to construct a working theory of spirit manifestation, based on the properties of the etheric form of matter, a form which is capable of being manipulated by mind.

All these different types of supernormal phenomena are produced by the same means. The occultist, able to produce them at will, can tell us a very great deal about them because he knows how he goes to work when he intends to produce them. He knows that by means of concentrated thought he can manipulate this subtle aspect of matter, akin to electricity. He concludes that it is by similar means that similar results are produced by others, whether those others be a pregnant woman, a saint, or a disembodied spirit.

CHAPTER 2.

Communication with the Dead.

There are two questions which are frequently asked. Firstly, why is it that the spirits who communicate with the spiritualist deny reincarnation, or at least have no knowledge of it, and the spirits to whom the occultist looks for his instruction take it for granted? Secondly, why is it that the occultist discountenances attempts to communicate with the dead?

In order to answer these questions, some explanation of the occultist's theories concerning death must be given; for in the light of these theories the answer to both these questions can be seen.

Death, according to the occultist, begins when the soul withdraws from the physical body, but does not finish then. The process of death goes through certain stages, each of which might be called a death in itself.

The human organisation is composed of several different, distinct, but co-operating systems, and when disintegration occurs, these separate one from another and are resolved into their elements; there is, however, an interregnum of varying length between the separation of the organised systems one from another and their final resolution into their elements when 'the body returns to the dust and the spirit to God that gave it'.

When the first stage of death occurs, the soul, that is to say, the composite consciousness of the personality, withdraws from the physical body. The physical body consists of two distinct organised systems, the body of dense matter, solid, liquid, and gaseous, and the system of electro-magnetic stresses of which natural science is beginning to be aware and which occult science has long known and used. Consciousness withdraws from both these systems simultaneously, and for a brief period they remain together. Then the etheric death takes place, and the etheric counterpart withdraws from the dense physical body, which thereupon rapidly succumbs to the onslaughts of the disintegrating influences which only the forces of vitality have enabled it to keep at bay. The saphrophytic bacteria fulfil their function as scavengers, and the body is reduced to its elements which then become available once again for the purposes of life.

The system of magnetic stresses which is known to us as the etheric double does not immediately disintegrate; three days normally elapse from the moment of the departure of the soul to the commencement of disintegration of the etheric body. It is for this reason that some occultists advise that cremation should be delayed till three days after the physical death. There are certain abnormal conditions, however, in which the etheric double holds together much longer than the normal period. The occultist considers that such a prolongation of a transition state is pathological and highly undesirable for it means that a soul is still attached to the etheric counterpart. The words 'a soul', are used advisedly, for it need not necessarily be the original soul which is thus attached. The etheric counterpart is like a discarded garment - anyone can put it on.

It may well be asked why any disembodied spirit should desire to maintain itself on the frontiers of death by clinging to an etheric counterpart which normally should be disintegrating. The motive in most cases is fear. As soon as the soul is freed from its material body, both physical and etheric, it goes to the "Judgment Hall of Osiris", in the picturesque phrase of the ancient initiates; or, in the psychological terminology of the modern occultist, it faces its realisation. All the incidents of its past life pass in review before it and it is compelled to assess them. Evidence in support of this statement may be found in the fact that people who are revived after apparent death by drowning frequently report this experience. Their past life rises up before their eyes, they tell us, after the initial struggles cease. It is this subjective realisation which partly constitutes both the heaven and hell so vividly delineated by theology.

It is not surprising that a soul with a bad record, confronted by the vision of its own life, refuses to face its memories, and does in death what the neurotic does in life - it dissociates. Attention cannot be forced; what it will not look at it does not see, and what it does not see it cannot abreact, and so the winding-up of the affairs of the previous life is held up.

Such a suspension of the normal processes of discarnation also occurs when there is an intense fear of death or an intense desire to cling to life. The breakdown of the physical machinery forces the soul out of the dense body, but it clings desperately to the etheric counterpart. Now this etheric counterpart is built by the mind, not by the body; it is not the disintegration of the body that causes its break-up, but the withdrawal of the organised forces of consciousness, and it is the break-up of the etheric counterpart which permits the disintegration of the physical body to take place. As long as vitality is present it will hold decomposition at bay; when it is withdrawn necrosis takes place, whether of a tissue or of the entire organism.

The third cause which leads to the ensouling of an etheric counterpart is the deliberate action of an occultist who, possessing the necessary knowledge, determines on this psychic crime. For reasons best known to himself he does not wish to face the Judgment Hall of Osiris, and he employs this device to maintain himself in the transition stage of life-in-death.

The length of time for which this condition may be maintained depends upon circumstances. The etheric counterpart is comparable to an electric storage battery. If it were possible completely to insulate the etheric counterpart it would continue to exist indefinitely, but in actual practice this is not possible. The energy slowly diffuses away and, unless it is recharged, the etheric counterpart disintegrates. When it is being held together by a soul, however, a certain amount of recharging takes place, and it is this that constitutes the danger of the earth-bound to the living for emotional rapport brings the 'ghost' into touch with both its

friends and its enemies on the physical plane and from their bodies it is able to recharge its own etheric form to a certain extent. This accounts for the extreme exhaustion which can suddenly supervene in those who have been in close emotional relationship with the dying, a collapse which is not accounted for by physical exhaustion, for the impersonal hospital nurse who may have borne the heaviest end of the burden is unaffected by it.

This is a process which normally goes on at death: to allow it to take place is an act of mercy to the departing soul, for it gives it a sense of security and comfort as it first comes out into the unfamiliar conditions of the Unseen World. It is for this reason that people crave for the presence of those they love round their death-bed, and those who love them are able to give them this comfort and help as they pass on provided they are prepared to endure the temporary discomfort. It is when the normal act of psychic charity is overdone that it becomes pathological and injurious to both giver and receiver.

It helps to supply this magnetic element to the departed soul and save it from the shock of a sudden disintegration if candles are kept burning beside a corpse and fresh flowers laid upon it, for these both supply a form of magnetic energy which, though less potent than human vitality, is better than nothing, and serves to tide the soul over the first shock of transition; for remember, the workings of death do not end with the moment of physical death, and our care and service should follow some distance into the future life.

It is interesting to note that it was to delay the leakage of energy from the etheric double in order to give the soul as long as possible between incarnations that the Egyptians embalmed their dead; while the Hindus, another but more spiritual race with natural occult aptitude, burn their dead in order to ensure the release of the soul and its departure to its own place. Our own system of earth-burial is as good as can be found in normal cases, for it permits of the processes of death to proceed unhurried, and where occult science is but little understood, cases of necromancy are sufficiently rare to require no special precautions to be taken against them in the ordinary way; but where there is any reason to suspect obsession, it is far wiser to resort to cremation for that dispatches the soul to its own place whether it likes it or not, destroying its point d'appui before it has time to construct for itself another.

When all these facts, well known to esoteric science, are taken into consideration, it will be seen why occultists object to the practice of trying to get in touch with the dead through mediums, thereby recalling their attention to the life they have just left. To send out thoughts after them to help them on their journey is one thing, and is considered by the occultist to be not only an act of mercy, but an important duty; but to recall the dead to our sphere is to do them an injury, and occultists deplore the prevalence of the practice. The dead have no need to communicate with the living, save in rare cases when some duty has been left undischarged, and it is far better and more humane that the living gain their certainty of a future life from the philosophical considerations of occult science than by vivisection of the departed, however well-intentioned.

CHAPTER 3.Spirit-Teaching and Reincarnation.

Why is it that the spirits who communicate with occultists teach reincarnation, and the spirits who communicate with spiritualists sometimes deny it? This is a question which is often asked. It might appear at first sight that this direct contradiction of testimony must throw doubt on the whole question of life after death. A closer examination of the matter will reveal, however, that this is not so. The communicating entities are speaking in the light of two different types of experience, and their contradictory statements are what would be expected. Far from denying the occult hypothesis, the statements made by spirit communicators bear it out. This may appear paradoxical but an understanding of the esoteric doctrines concerning post-mortem conditions will reveal the solution of the problem.

After the soul has finally severed its connection with the body, which, as we have seen in the previous chapter, does not occur with the passing of the breath, but when the etheric death takes place some three days later, the soul enters upon the second phase of its discarnate existence. Its consciousness is that of its prime, for it retains all it acquired during its last incarnation and is no longer hampered in the use of its faculties by worn-out bodily organs.

Its organism now consists of:

- (1) the spark of Divine Spirit which is the nucleus of all human existence;
- (2) the spiritual nature, consisting of spiritual qualities;
- (3) the power of abstract thought, or Higher Mind;
- (4) the power of concrete thought, or Lower Mind and
- (5) the emotional nature.

Each of these is a thing in itself, an organised system of reacting forces. Each normally functions in co-operation with all the others, but is capable, under certain conditions, of independent function. It will be seen that two other organised systems of forces go to the making of the complete man, the physical and the etheric; these, however, have already gone into the discard, and the Ego is left with its subtler aspects only. We have, therefore, a complete human consciousness, unchanged by death, but minus a physical body. It lacks sense-organs by means of which to contact the plane of dense matter, and its subtler sense-organs have been released for function by the casting off of the physical body, therefore the plane of its consciousness is changed. It has ceased to be aware of what is happening on the earth-plane, but it is still aware of the feelings of those with whom it is in emotional rapport.

For a varying period it exists on this plane, pulling itself together and making its adjustments to its new phase of existence. It still has full memory of its past life, and its interests only gradually detach themselves from the things of that life. It is still, as it were, looking back over its shoulder. Gradually, however, it is being weaned from its old ties. Memories fade, new interests are awakened; consciousness is making its adaptation.

The plane on which the soul now finds itself is called, in some esoteric terminology, 'the Ante-Chamber of Osiris'. It is not a place, however (there are no "places" in the geographical sense upon the subtler planes), but is a state of consciousness - a state of consciousness, however, which the soul possesses in common with all other souls that share in it; the limitation of the physical body which keeps consciousness separate, being gone.

It is while in this state that the soul is most readily contacted by those who would link the living with the dead. It is in the Antechamber of Osiris where is spirit-life as known to the spiritualist. Here souls live among their own thought-forms, the creations of their own imagination, each in a subjective world of his own, yet able to perceive the subjective worlds of others because the barriers of brain-consciousness are down. Here live and work those beings whose task it is to rule and supervise the souls waiting in the Antechamber, to attend to their needs and assist them to adjust themselves to their new conditions.

It is of the conditions in the Antechamber that the souls of the departed tell those they leave behind them when a medium acts as telephone. The entities who live and work on this plane never tell what they know concerning that which lies beyond the barrier because it is forbidden them to do so. The Antechamber of Osiris is like a lock on a river; there must be no leakage from up-stream till the down-stream gates are shut. In due course, however, it is observed that the souls of the departed tell those who are keeping in touch with them that they have received a summons to go on, and will no longer be able to communicate as they did heretofore. It may be that messages will be received from them through spirit friends on the inner planes, but the actual voice of the departed is heard no more for a time. The summons has come to the Judgment Hall of Osiris.

In other words, the soul having made its adjustment to its new stage of consciousness, sinks into a state of profound meditation on the events of its past life. It sees them in their true significance, and experiences as much regret as it is capable of feeling, thereby abreacting them. This is Purgatory. For the hardened soul that will not feel regret there is also Hell, wherein the consequences of its own evil nature react upon it. The soul who sincerely desires to amend does not experience Hell; that is reserved for the unrepentant sinner, who remains there until it is borne in upon him that evil had better be avoided.

After the period of repentance and realisation has been passed through, the tenor of consciousness begins to change; the soul, still in a subjective state but having worked out its emotional reactions to the past, now begins to work upon it intellectually according to its capacity, realising the spiritual significance of the events of its past life. Its mood has changed. Its emotional reactions towards the past have been worked out; it has no more acute emotion left but only those generalised regrets and desires that determine temperament in the next incarnation. Its passions are burnt out. Its emotional consciousness has also gone into the discard, even as did its physical body. Death has progressed another stage.

The discarnated soul now consists of an intellect overshadowed by a spiritual nature. Memory of the past life still remains, but the attitude of the soul towards it is impersonal; it seeks to understand; it has ceased to feel. Souls remain in this state for varying periods according to the amount of mental development they possess. In souls of very rudimentary intellect, objective consciousness is not achieved on this plane, and they remain in a subconscious state as in sleep.

When all the meditation concerning its past life of which that soul is capable has been performed, the Second Death occurs. Even the memories of the past life then go into the discard. The Personality is dead, finished. But what survives? The abstract mind and spiritual nature survive, forming what we call the Essential Self. It is this alone which is immortal. The Personality is as mortal as the body. This does not mean, however, that the individualised existence ends with the Second Death. It is immortal and eternal, never born, undying. Only its objective consciousness is withdrawn stage by stage at each successive death, taking with it the absorbed essence of the experiences of incarnated existence. That is to say, the Individuality realises the spiritual significance of these experiences of an incarnation and profits by them, and that is all it needs to know. The abstract mind retains the abstract essence of all the past lives, just as a phial of digitalin contains the abstract essence of a spinney of foxgloves.

We are now in a position to distinguish between the Personality of an incarnation, and the Personality of evolution - a distinction of the utmost importance in occult science. It is in the light of this distinction that all considerations concerning communications with the departed must apply. In the Society of the Inner Light we talk of Spirit, Evolutionary Personality and Incarnationary Personality

The occultist considers that the processes of discarnation continue long after the death of the physical body, and he deprecates any interference with these processes as being detrimental to the interests of the departed spirit. We should give our dead their quittance and allow them to go on freely to their own place, confining our activities on their behalf to sending loving thoughts to cheer and companion them on their journey. We should no more seek to hold them back than a mother should seek to prevent her son from leaving home to go out into the world when his time has come. To summon the dead to come back and comfort the living, which is all it really amounts to, is an act of selfishness, just as much as is the misguided love of a mother who calls a son away from his work to keep her company at the fireside. She is wasting his time and spoiling his opportunities. It is no more fair to a departed soul to recall it to the earth-life than it is fair to a youth to keep him tied to apron-strings. It is for this reason that the occultist disapproves of activities in connection with communication with the dead.

Communication with a soul that is passing through the different stages of death is one thing, and communication with a dweller in the spirit-world is another. Souls who have learnt all that the earth-life can teach them no longer need to incarnate, but continue their evolution on the subtler planes. And not only do they grow and evolve thereon themselves, but they

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also have their work to do; they have passed beyond the stage when they float like animalculae in the current of evolution. They are self-conscious, self-directing entities, intelligently co-operating with the work of God. To come into touch with these is a very different matter from disturbing the dead.

To contact them, however, it is necessary to rise to a much higher level of consciousness than to contact the souls of the departed who have not yet passed the Gates of Osiris. Only highly developed mediums can make the contact; they are beyond the reach of the average psychic.

There are two types of discarnate souls, then, whom the medium can contact - souls that are living and working upon the subtle planes, and souls who are only sojourning there between incarnations. We have shown in detail the processes by which the discarnating of a soul goes on. It will be seen, therefore, that if communication is established before the soul has cast off the last of the limitations of the lower self, it will still be viewing things from the standpoint of the incarnation just finished. If, however, a soul be contacted which is no longer bound to the wheel of birth and death, as the old Eastern phrase expresses it, that soul will view things from the standpoint of the immortal spirit, eternal, unborn, undying, evolving with the evolution of the solar system. It is these perfected souls with which the occultist seeks to establish communication.

The consciousness of the Incarnationary Personality is built up in the brief span between birth and death; as long as we are communicating with that consciousness, we shall hear nothing concerning reincarnation because the Incarnationary Personality does not reincarnate, its essence being absorbed by the Essential Self at the end of each incarnation. It is only when we touch the levels of consciousness which compose the Essential Self that we shall receive teaching concerning reincarnation, for it is only the Essential Self which survives bodily death. The Incarnationary Personality, being built up during the life of the body, does not remember its predecessors in the long line of the evolution of the immortal spirit which ensouls it. It has no knowledge of the Second Death until it experiences it, and then it cannot communicate through the average medium who offers his services. Up to a certain stage of spiritual unfolding, the soul is driven in blinkers. Its vision is limited to the task in hand lest it should be confused by a multiplicity of experience which it has no means of sorting or assimilating. To ask such an one concerning Cosmic things is a waste of time. He may answer according to his lights, but his lights are dim. The trained occultist spends no time with such communicators unless circumstances should cause him to lend them a helping hand. He himself, being an initiate and therefore able to function with the higher consciousness, knows a great deal more about the inner planes than they do, and is in a position to give help rather than to receive it.

In view of all this, it may be asked why it was that the spiritualistic movement was ever started, or that spirits can be found willing to co-operate with it? The answer to this question involves a further explanation of the nature of the unseen side of life as understood by the occultist.

Evolution reached the lowest point of its descent into matter during the nineteenth century. At that point there is great danger of an evolution sticking at a dead centre; the centrifugal impulse has spent its force and the attraction of the centre has not yet made itself felt. The tide is neither ebbing nor flowing, but at slack water. It is exactly comparable to the process which is gone through when an engine is reversed. It has to be stopped before it can be re-started, even if that stoppage be of the briefest.

Some means had to be found to re-start the wheels of evolution in their reversed movement, for whereas they had hitherto been descending into matter, they had now to turn round and ascend back to spirit. Something had to be done to induce men to change their viewpoint, and whatever was done had to be drastic, for not otherwise could the attention of the crowd be caught and held.

The spiritualist movement was started by the spirits themselves for this purpose. A number of them undertook to produce phenomena which should startle humanity into a new concept. They got out of the train of evolution in which they had been travelling, put their shoulders to the wheel, and heaved it off its dead centre. The story of that undertaking can be read in the history of the early days of spiritualism.

Communication with the departed ought to be taken as an established fact at the present day, and we should no longer disturb our dead by halloing after them with the help of a medium. It is too near akin to the trick of the small boy who shouted after the man in a hurry until he returned to enquire what was wanted of him, only to be asked, "How far would you have got by now if I hadn't called you back?" There is much work still to be done in psychic research, and the great entities concerned with the spiritualist movement are engaged in it, and are giving us some very wonderful results, especially in the work concerning ectoplasm. But there is far too much playing about with the subtler planes. It is unwholesome for both communicator and sitter, and has developed a class of spirits only one degree from the earth-bound entities we considered in a previous chapter. These spirits are able to maintain themselves in the Antechamber of Osiris and do not take their call to go on to the judgment. They are not necessarily evil in any way, but their development is arrested. It is this cloud of ignorant witnesses which is obscuring the issues for the spiritualist movement at the present moment. They are expert at communicating and come through easily, therefore they are much in evidence at seances, especially public ones, to which the higher types of spirit will not come.

Those entities whom occultists call the Masters only communicate with those who have been trained in their own Tradition. An initiate of an occult Tradition has access to the Masters connected with that Tradition, and until he is of a high degree, is advised to refuse contact with all others. The trained occultist takes great precautions to ensure that he shall only be in touch with reliable entities; he considers that the average medium does not take anything like sufficient precautions, and consequently gets unsatisfactory communications. It is like a modern

hospital nurse, thoroughly drilled in asepsis, watching the surgical methods of Sairey Gamp. A heated argument is apt to arise. The hospital nurse objects to the risks, and Sairey Gamp objects to the trouble. I do not mean by these words to impugn the work of high-class mediums who lend themselves to the experimentation of qualified observers; such work is done under conditions which the occultist would agree were satisfactory, but there are, unfortunately, a great many Sairey Gamps in the psychic world, with their advertisements in its various periodicals, and the spiritual sepsis which claims so many victims is not infrequently due to the psychic infection of their dirty hands. It is high time there were some check on the tendency to run to psychics without adequate motive or enquiry; the people who do so contribute no more to psychic science than the people who go up in an aeroplane for ten minutes at a fete contribute to the science of aeronautics; and it is a further drawback to the promiscuous seance-sitters that they encourage the worst element in spiritualism - the element that brings it into disrepute.

There is a great work to be done in the field of psychic research; the spiritualist is steadily and patiently proving his case upon scientific principles. The occultist knows many things which he has never attempted to prove to the satisfaction of inductive science. The advance of psychic science is bringing these facts within the range of laboratory experiment.

CHAPTER 4.Clairvoyance.

An adequate study of the psychology of psychism is subject-matter for a book. When such a study is attempted, it is immediately seen how inadequate is the average clairvoyant's explanation of his vision. He declares that he sees the presences he describes. As a matter of fact, he no more sees them on the astral plane than he sees chairs and tables on the physical plane, as any one who understands the physiology of vision is aware. He reacts to their emanations, and he reacts according to certain reaction-habits which have become stereotyped by experience. Even in the vision of the physical eye on the material plane we never 'see' the object to which we react, we only feel the sensations which the reaction of the cells of the retina to the light, reflected from the object on to their surface, cause to take place among the cells of the brain. Impair the retina, the connecting nerve, or the brain-cells concerned with vision, and the object disappears.

In all vision we never 'see' the object, we only look into our own consciousness as the Lady of Shalott looked into the magic mirror. It is by practice and habit we learn to refer an object to position in space, and this power of judgment is the result of binocular vision. We judge distance by the angle of convergence of the focus of our two eyes. Moreover, in dealing with a familiar object we do not look at it in detail, we recognise it by a general impression of its salient features, and infer the rest.

Exactly the same mechanism is at work with the clairvoyant. Upon a newly developed sense-centre in consciousness impinge vibrations of an unfamiliar character. He is receiving in a different octave from that available for the five physical senses and he interprets the unfamiliar vibrations in the nearest stock image he has got in consciousness. He generally gets an accurate analogy; and provided it be recognised that what he interprets in terms of sense consciousness is but a symbolic representation of the psychic actuality, no harm is done. He translates his impressions back into terms of their own plane, and the result becomes clear.

Trouble arises, however, when, with what is termed naive psychology, he accepts what he perceives as being an exact portrayal of the objects represented, and concludes that the inner planes are but etherealised copies of the material planes with which his physical senses have made him familiar.

A little consideration will show why this is not, and cannot be, a fact. Take first the robed forms of spirits which appear to the vision of the seer. We know that they have no physical bodies, but are intelligences. Upon what, then, do they hang their robes? We are seeing our own thought-forms of what we think such presences ought to look like, and our concepts are determined by traditional religious art. It is very interesting to note that in the visions of Asiatics, a similar conventionalising of the angelic presence occurs, which is seen in terms of Oriental art.

It is my contention that the clairvoyants see nothing but the reactions of their own consciousness produced by the influences impinging upon them, and that it is the translation of these impressions into the nearest equivalent image in memory which endows the angelic visitants with form, and voice

The trained occultist, properly tuning-in on the planes, does not employ this visual consciousness, but perceives direct, without the need of translation from a symbolic rendering. He perceives the thought-impressions of the mental plane as ideas and the forces of the astral plane as emotions. All form is subjective. It is out of this realisation that his dominion over it comes.

Accustomed to refer an object to position in space according to its size and clarity, the untrained clairvoyant does with the visual images evoked from his subconscious mind by psychic stimulus exactly the same thing that he is in the habit of doing with the visual images evoked by the stimulation of his retina. In the language of psychology, he 'projects' them. It is the same mechanism which occurs when the lunatic, having good cause for self-reproach, refuses to recognise his memories as concerning himself, and 'hears' the voice of a demon shouting abuse at him.

In the case of the lunatic it is recognised that a dissociation of personality has occurred, and that the mind is no longer being held together by the unifying ego. A part has got into a state which is analogous to that of an artificial elemental.

We are now in a position to understand the psychology of the untrained psychic; a part of his personality is dissociated for the purposes of his psychism. But whereas in the lunatic, it is a part of the lower self which thus becomes separated because it is felt to be too base for admittance to the fabric of co-ordinations which makes up the soul, in the case of the psychic it is a part of the higher self which thus becomes disconnected because the rest of the personality is not sufficiently evolved to admit of its integration.

Although the cause is different, the result may end by being the same, for when once dissociation of personality is permitted to take place there is no saying how far it may continue. The little rift can become a deep fissure in a surprisingly short time.

The trained occultist is well aware of the power of the dissociated personality to obtain special psychic results, and he employs this faculty at his discretion. He knows that if he desires to function with a power of the soul which is not yet developed to an equal degree with the five physical senses, he must close down those senses in order that the faint vibrations registered by the higher centres may become audible to consciousness instead of being swamped by the louder vibrations of a lower octave. He also knows that if he wants to hear the vibrations of the mental plane, he must close down the emotional reactions of the astral plane. He has a regular system of inducing these successive closings-down, and it is known as 'rising on the planes,' and is produced by a concentration on the chosen plane of such a degree of intensity that all else is automatically excluded

from consciousness. In this way he does not cause a faculty to split off and function independently, but inhibits all planes below the one on which he elects to operate, and the chosen faculty then functions in full correlation with the ego. A little thought will reveal the fundamental difference between this method and that of the naive psychic who allows a dissociation of personality to take place through repeated 'projections' of mental images.

The trained occultist, moreover, is exceedingly careful not to swim out further than he can be sure of swimming back, for he knows that if the silver cord be loosed, the golden bowl of the integrity of the personality will be broken.

The highest development of occult work occurs when the objective consciousness of the different planes can be synthesised into a single chord, as we synthesise the sensory consciousness of the physical plane when we see, hear, smell, and feel an object simultaneously, and out of this combination of impressions gain a far richer idea of the nature of that object than we could from any one of them taken singly.

For a full understanding of any form of existence, more than one plane of consciousness is necessary. The combined consciousness of the planes is to the psychic what binocular vision is to the ordinary mortal. For each added faculty of consciousness, there is an added dimension of existence.

It is only the supreme adept, however, who is thus able to co-ordinate consciousness simultaneously; most occultists rely on the method already described of inhibiting the unwanted faculties until the desired one is laid bare and freed for function.

The weakness of the uninitiated psychic lies in the fact that he misunderstands his own *modus operandi*. Projection and dissociation, as already described, can undermine the integrity of his mind. Moreover, by the method he uses he can only touch the fringe of the Unseen. Unlike the occultist, he cannot rise on the stepping-stones of the symbols. He stops short at the first symbol that is evoked in consciousness, and that symbol may have little power of rendering the philosophical subtleties of the higher planes of mind.

Psychism is limited by the contents of the psychic's subconscious mind. The spirit-control is like an artist working in mosaic, he has to put his picture together out of little blocks of coloured marble and is limited by their characteristics. We find, therefore, that the psychic of limited intellectual content relies chiefly on picture-consciousness for his symbols, whereas the more educated psychic brings through actual teaching in verbal form, for his subconscious content has been enriched by the study of the spoken and written word. It is not very common, however, to find psychics among highly educated people; when the mind is enriched by study it is also apt to be stereotyped, for the ideas received from its studies do not enter it as isolated units but as parts of systems from which they cannot be detached. Therefore it is not possible for the spirit-designer to rearrange the mosaic of his ideas to represent some new design. He cannot

take a symbol from psychology, and a symbol from dynamics and a symbol from religion and recombine them into a new concept to be represented to the mind. The integrated systems of the educated intellect resist this process. But where there can be found an educated mind with a wide range of intellectual content wherein it is possible to close down the directive intelligence and permit the spirit-entity to manipulate the images available in the subconscious memory, then is a high degree of mediumship possible.

PART 2.CHAPTER 5.The Psychology of Trance-Mediumship.

That a phenomenon is unusual does not justify its classification as a fraud, a pathology, or a miracle. The phenomenon of trance has been known from the earliest days of which history has any record. It is known today among primitive peoples and among the most highly developed spiritual communities. It is also known in certain diseased conditions, and can be produced at will by drugs. It is obvious, therefore, that we are dealing with a definite psychological state, and that it is not the product of phantasy or fraud.

Being a state of consciousness, it must be explicable in terms of psychology, and it must be possible to relate it to other states of consciousness and demonstrate the intervening transitional states. It must also be possible to explain it, to some extent at least, in terms of that which is already known, for it is not a thing apart; it has its congeners, as we have already seen.

It is said by occultists that the gift of natural mediumship is due to occult training in a previous life. Be that as it may, the schizophrenic or personality-splitting tendency plays a part in a good many forms of psychopathology which have been exhaustively investigated, and it is necessary to consider what the psychologists have to say on the subject, for, as we have previously pointed out and as cannot be too often reiterated or too strongly emphasised in connection with the study of psychic states, they are not things sui generis, but are an integral part of our mental make-up, and we ought to study all allied mental states in order to see what light they may throw upon them. It is of far more service to occult science to be able to demonstrate the relationship between normal consciousness and super-consciousness and explain it in terms of known and proven science, than to guard the psychic faculties as sacrosanct and make a religion out of them. Spiritual things are placed on a far firmer basis if spirit can be shown to be natural than if it has to be regarded as super-natural.

It is, of course, always necessary to bear in mind the many pathological conditions which closely resemble trance - epilepsy, hysteria, diseases of the central nervous system, and last, but unfortunately by no means least, the self-delusion which is first cousin to fraud on the one hand and hysteria on the other, but which cannot definitely be assigned to either because it contains an admixture of both. This, unfortunately, is always with us, and renders the task of psychic investigation very difficult.

For the present, however, we will leave out of consideration all such unsatisfactory cases, and seek to establish an understanding of true trance which will serve as a standard with which to compare all pseudo-trances.

We shall find the analysis of consciousness employed by occultists very useful in enabling us to arrive at a definition and classification of trance, and we shall therefore briefly recapitulate such aspects of it as concern our present subject.

A human being, according to the occultist, consists of two clearly-differentiated aspects - a higher and a lower; the higher being immortal and eternal, subject to neither birth nor death, but evolving with the evolution of the universe; and the lower, mortal and temporary, built up upon the basis of the higher in each incarnation, beginning with the rudiments of consciousness at birth, and disintegrating at death, when its abstract essence is absorbed by the higher aspect which, by means of a series of such incarnations, gradually evolves. The higher aspect can be called the Evolutionary Personality and the lower the Incarnationary Personality, and as these terms are convenient, they must be borne in mind for the purposes of this argument.

The nucleus of consciousness can be called the Divine Spark or spark of pure life essence, about which all the rest is organised. The Evolutionary Personality consists of the spiritual nature, and the power of abstract thought. The Incarnationary Personality consists of the concrete mind, which is built up out of sensory experiences in each incarnation, the emotional nature in its higher aspect, which relates to ideas, the emotional nature in its lower aspect which relates to the instincts and senses, and the physical and etheric bodies, concerning the last of which natural science knows so much and understands so little because it considers it apart from the different organised systems of consciousness which the occultist terms the "subtle bodies".

Normally, all these types of consciousness are synthesised into a whole which may aptly be likened to a chord of music that, to the unskilled ear, appears as a single sound, but which the ear of the trained musician can analyse into its component parts and detect the slightest impurity in any note of it. Equally can the adept occultist, who has trained his mind, analyse the different levels of consciousness and use them independently.

It is the experience of the trained occultist which throws most light on the phenomena of trance, for by means of a carefully developed technique he does deliberately and voluntarily that which takes place automatically and below the level of consciousness in the naturally mediumistic person. We can, therefore, learn much if we examine the modus operandi of the occultist who has learnt to go into trance.

Before proceeding any further, however, we must define our terms. The state of trance must be distinguished from other states in which normal consciousness is in abeyance to which it bears resemblance.

A trance condition may be described as a transmutation of consciousness rather than an abolition of consciousness such as occurs in coma. Anyone familiar with the phenomena of trance knows that there is not

complete unconsciousness; a response can always be elicited. It is in the nature of the response that differentiation is found, for the response of the entranced person differs materially from that of the same person in his normal state.

We can distinguish three distinct types of trance by observing the nature of the response which is obtained from the entranced person. Firstly, there is a type of trance in which the subject is apparently perfectly passive, in a deeply cataleptic state; if, however, a determined attempt is made to rouse him, he will awaken as if from deep sleep, possibly angry and indignant at the interruption, but responding in propria persona. That is to say, the response will come from his normal personality, conscious of its surroundings.

In the second type of trance a response can be elicited much more readily; the subject will not be ruffled and upset by being spoken to, and will again reply in propria persona, but with this difference, it will be obvious from his reply that he is but dimly conscious of his surroundings, and that his attention is directed elsewhere and he is perceiving with senses other than those of his physical body upon a plane of existence which is not that material environment which he shares with the observers; though all the while he remains sufficiently in touch with his companions to be able to report what is passing before his inner vision.

In the third type of trance a response can also be elicited readily enough when once it has been fully established, but that which responds is apparently not the original owner of the body, but someone else.

The occultist declares that trance is due to a dissociation of the self. A separation has taken place, or been induced, between the different levels of consciousness described on a previous page; the lower aspect being deprived of the directing intelligence of the higher, becomes passive, devoid of initiative, and only reacting to stimuli according to ingrained habit.

The different types of trance, according to the occultist, are due to the fact that the dissociation has taken place at different levels of consciousness. In the first type of trance, the separation takes place at the line of demarcation between the physical body and consciousness as a whole. The physical body then continues with the merely vegetative life of the tissues, while the self functions as a complete human consciousness minus a physical body. This is the deepest trance of all, and somewhat rare in the trained occultist who is not naturally mediumistic, for he considers it a very risky practice, as it is always problematical whether the heart can be induced to take up its beat again. This is the method used by yogis when they allow themselves to be buried alive, and in the condition into which hibernating animals enter.

A certain degree of levitation has been observable in the cases with which I have been acquainted - not sufficient to float the body

spontaneously, but enough to make it very easy to lift. The teacher under whom I originally trained frequently made use of this form of trance, and I have many times had occasion to help to lift his inanimate body while in this state, and was always struck by the lack of weight. On one occasion I was able, without any undue effort, to lift him single-handed from the floor to the sofa

This kind of trance we shall call the Trance of Projection, because the being as a whole is withdrawn from the physical body and functions independently. I have many times witnessed this phenomenon in the case of my own teacher, and have on several occasions been able to verify the fact that he had appeared at a distance in a well-materialised form.

The second type of trance we will call the Trance of Vision, because in this case the soul does not withdraw from the body, but, inhibiting the physical senses, appears to open up the senses of super-consciousness which can perceive the subtler planes of existence.

In this case the occultist declares that the dissociation of consciousness takes place between the upper and lower aspects of the Incarnationary Personality, that is to say, the mentality which is built up in the course of the present incarnation. The instincts and passions, being those aspects of consciousness which relate specifically to material existence, are linked with the physical body, while those aspects of the Incarnationary Personality which are closest akin to the Evolutionary Personality, maintain their union with that Evolutionary Personality, and when, freed from the bondage of matter, it becomes the predominating influence in the Self, they share in the expansion of consciousness which ensues.

In the third type of trance, which is called the Mediumistic Trance, dissociation takes place between the Incarnationary and Evolutionary Personalities; that is to say, the whole of the self which has been built up by the experiences of the current incarnation is left to ensoul the body, while the Evolutionary Personality as a whole, withdraws as far as may be.

It is held by occultists that the Evolutionary Personality is the present seat of consciousness, and that the Incarnationary Personality, deprived of it, has no initiative or centralised directing intelligence, but simply consists of an elaborate co-ordination of reaction-complexes, stereotyped by habit, which are capable of responding to their accustomed stimuli by their habitual reaction, but are without initiative or intelligent adaptability.

In the Mediumistic Trance we have, then, the whole Incarnationary Personality as we know it, minus the directing intelligence. The engine of consciousness is there: the engineer is absent.

It appears possible, however, for others than the original owner to lay hands on the levers and operate the machine. The mind with its knowledge of language, the body with its co-ordinated mechanism, are at

the disposal of any that can manipulate them if the original owner stands aside.

What is it that takes place under such circumstances? How are we to explain an occurrence which diverges so widely from our usual experience of the nature of human personality?

The psychologist declares that what he calls dissociation of personality, or schizophrenia, has taken place, and secondary personalities have been formed by means of certain mechanisms well known to psychopathology. The occultist replies: I grant you that cases such as you describe do occur, but this case, though comparable to them, is not identical with them.

A case of schizophrenia is due to a complete break occurring in the stream of consciousness, a break so complete that no shred of memory extends across the gulf. Consequently, the incoming impressions cannot associate themselves with any existing memories because there are none, so a fresh start has to be made. A fresh personality is built up. For a personality, after all, is only a co-ordinated system of memories.

In schizophrenia, new Incarnationary Personalities are built up upon the nucleus of the same Evolutionary Personality. But in mediumistic trance, different Evolutionary Personalities take possession of the same Incarnationary Personality.

The essence of trance, then, is the withdrawal of the higher aspect from the physical body, leaving behind it varying amounts of the lower consciousness, and the different types of trance are due to the different amounts of consciousness remaining behind. The unconsciousness, be it noted, is only apparent; the body is inert because the self is withdrawn, but the self is fully conscious upon the plane to which it goes, though unaware of what transpires in connection with its physical body.

The reason that for many trance mediums trance appears to be a time of complete unconsciousness, is because the memory of what happens in the higher consciousness has no connecting-links with ordinary consciousness and so can never be called to mind, just as a poem of which the first line is forgotten persistently eludes the memory. Keep the association-chain intact or re-establish it, and the memories can be recovered. The occultist employs certain devices to maintain an association-chain of ideas between the higher and the lower consciousness, and thereby he can prevent his memories of the experiences he undergoes in trance from being lost. He, therefore, has no sense of having been unconscious while in trance, though if withdrawal from the physical body has been at all complete, he will have no memory of what has transpired on the physical plane during the trance.

Under certain conditions, however, it is possible to remain in touch with the physical body, but the study of these conditions must be put aside until we have further considered the phenomena of trance consciousness, for at the present state of our inquiry we are not in a position to assess them.

CHAPTER 6.The Physical Phenomena of Trance.

An ounce of experience is notoriously worth a pound of theory, so before proceeding with any speculations as to the nature of trance, it will be advantageous to describe what exactly happens, or is experienced, when a person goes into trance.

I would not wish to be thought to speak dogmatically on this subject, for different schools of psychic development have different methods; I can speak only of that which I myself have seen and experienced; but I believe that that which I describe is substantially true as to general principles of all trance-mediums, though differences in detail undoubtedly differentiate even between those psychics who have been developed in the same circle. No two persons taking an anaesthetic have precisely the same experience, yet the process of anaesthesia is well understood. So it is with trance mediumship. The psychology of trance is the same in all mediumship, whether natural or acquired.

As has already been said, the mental processes of trance can be more readily studied and analysed in the person who has acquired the power of mediumship by means of training than in the one who has it naturally; for the processes of the natural medium are so swift that they are exceedingly difficult of observation and analysis. Moreover, unless he has been drilled in the technique of psychological observation, his introspections will have little value.

The description upon which we are about to embark is of the nature of a slow-motion film; it has been pieced together out of innumerable experiences, one point being noted here, another there; pondered over, pieced together and experimented with for over ten years, in a ceaseless endeavour to make psychic experience fit in with psychological studies, holding steadfastly to the dictum that truth cannot contradict truth, but only requires to be correctly formulated in order to be correlated.

All three types of trance start in the same way, and consist of a withdrawal of consciousness from the objective world in order that the being may be freed from the limitations of the physical senses and the brain and enter upon independent activity upon another plane.

The person who desires to use the subtle senses which belong to the higher states of consciousness is in the position of someone who wants to use the telephone while a gramophone is playing in the same room. In order to be able to hear the comparatively faint sounds of the telephone, he has to stop the gramophone.

In order to perceive the subtle impressions due to the reaction of the different types of consciousness to the conditions of their own separate modes of existence, it is necessary to inhibit the stronger

impressions of the physical senses. This is done by shifting the focus of consciousness from the objective sphere to the subjective sphere.

In order to achieve this all-important occult operation, the occultist concentrates with such intensity on the subjective world that all attention is withdrawn from sense impressions. It is for this reason that a trance medium usually requires a darkened room of an even and rather high temperature. Anything which attracts attention to the objective world tends to prevent the concentration of attention on the subjective world, and so inhibits trance.

The first stage of trance, then, consists of the withdrawal of attention from the objective world. It is for this reason that it is desirable to eliminate all external distraction as far as possible. It is not, of course, impossible to go into trance under conditions of considerable disturbance, but only the very experienced medium can do so, and the results are apt to be so unsatisfactory that it is generally reckoned to be inadvisable to attempt it as complete withdrawal of consciousness does not take place, and the subconscious content gets mixed with super-consciousness.

The first physical sign to become apparent may be a change in the rhythm of the breath; a few deep, sighing respirations are followed by a complete stoppage of breathing for a few seconds, and then respiration begins again with a different rhythm, shallow, slow, and from the diaphragm only; the ribs seem to play no part in it. Respiration, in fact, seems to be reduced to a minimum. This fact appears to relate trance-mediumship to yogi breathing, as a change in the breath-rhythm plays an important part in inducing changes of consciousness and aiding deep meditation. Moreover, the minimum nature of the respiration must certainly induce oxygen starvation in the blood, and we know that oxygen starvation of the brain is the reason for loss of consciousness in syncope. It is probable, therefore, that the reduction of the oxygen supply to the brain renders the perception of sense impressions less vivid, and so makes it easier for the being to withdraw. Be that as it may, it will be found that unless special care is taken to keep a trance medium warm, he will awake from his trance feeling chilled to the bone.

It is not easy to do physiological experiments on a medium who is entranced without breaking the trance and so vitiating the results, but on one occasion it was possible for a doctor to keep a stethoscope on the chest of a person who was going into trance, and he reported that all chest sounds ceased entirely for a time, and then continued very faintly. This indicates that definite physical changes do accompany trance, which is what we should expect according to both natural and esoteric science, and gives us a valuable means of distinguishing genuine from simulated trance.

The next physical sign to be noticed, and one which supervenes

rapidly upon the change in the breath-rhythm, is a peculiar spasm of the throat muscles, contracting and relaxing several times in succession as if trying to swallow a lump. This undoubtedly is closely related to the well-known phenomenon of globus hystericus, so common in neurotics. It is said by occultists to be caused by the closing down of the thyroid gland, whose secretion is suspended during trance, for it is by the activation of the different chakras that the different levels of consciousness are opened up, and the chakras correlate exactly with the endocrine organs.

Rapidly upon the heels of the swallowing movement of the throat comes an unpleasant sensation in the eyes as if the eyeballs were being drawn upwards and inwards in a horrible squint, and immediately afterwards there is a sensation in the solar plexus such as is experienced in a rapidly descending lift. Then all sensations cease and the soul seems to be free of the body.

The body thus vacated becomes so rigid, that it is possible to pick it up by the shoulders and ankles without its sagging. In all cases there is at least a momentary tensing of the muscles. In my experience of trance, there has never been any limpness or relaxation. In fact, so great is the tension of the muscles that unless precautions are taken to keep the knees flexed, they will become fixed and will be exceedingly painful to move after the trance is over.

It is held by occultists that the blood becomes very acid during trance; whether this is so or not, I am not in a position to say, but it is noticeable that after trance the perspiration is sometimes of a very strong odour. That changes in the blood-state go with changes in consciousness is probable, and would form a fruitful line of study for those who are competent to undertake the investigation. It is noteworthy in this connection that if the trance be unduly prolonged, there will be cramp, and even convulsions resembling tetanus which points to a poisoned blood-stream.

CHAPTER 7.The Mental Phenomena of Trance.

While the physical phenomena described in the previous chapter are proceeding, a regular series of changes is taking place in consciousness, which we will now consider in their proper sequence.

First comes the relaxation and abstraction of consciousness from mundane things; all thought slows down to a stop even as a flywheel slows down when an engine is to be reversed; then it starts off again focussed upon subjective things. It is in order to secure this cessation of conscious thought that it is necessary to have quietness and darkness while the medium is going into trance. The part played by light is very curious, for a trance medium is sensitive to light, not only upon the eyes, but on the whole surface of the skin, especially the back of the head and nape of the neck. It is probable that this sensitiveness would be found to extend down the spine were it not protected by the clothes.

As soon as the necessary slowing down of objective consciousness has taken place, the subjective consciousness increases greatly in vividness, the images in the imagination becoming extraordinarily clear-cut and intense; nevertheless, they are recognisable as being the products of the image-making faculty because they can be changed at will, which is not the case with the images evoked by objective psychic consciousness.

Now comes the dividing of the ways. Up to this point the different types of trance are identical. In each one the shutting down of brain consciousness has taken place. Now begins the opening up of the higher consciousness.

In the case of the Trance of Projection, no attempt is made to keep open the line of communication with the physical brain; the more complete the withdrawal (that is to say, the deeper the trance), the more satisfactory the results.

We will not attempt the study of the Trance of Projection in these pages, however, for it involves so many problems of the deeper aspects of occultism that without a working knowledge of esoteric science its discussion would be unprofitable.

The study of the Trance of Vision we must also reluctantly put aside, for it would lead us too far afield into psychology both orthodox and esoteric. We will therefore limit ourselves to the study of our subject proper, the psychology of trance-mediumship; the other types of trance having only been referred to for the purpose of classification.

If the experimenter, having thrown himself into a trance, proposes neither to project his subtle self nor to make use of psychic vision, a third course is open to him, and we will explain exactly what takes place under such circumstances, in order that we may have the necessary data available for our consideration.

The experienced medium will have certain "spirit-controls" with whom he is accustomed to get into touch, and it is at this point that he begins the invocation of his control. Soon the answering voice formulates itself in consciousness, and a mental conversation is exchanged between the two. If it is intended to establish communication between the two planes of existence, and the spirit-control desires to communicate with the circle who are sitting with the medium, the consciousness of the medium has, as it were, to "put the communicator through". The control utters some phrase which the medium hears mentally, and instructs the medium to repeat it aloud. In order to do this, the medium has to re-establish contact with his own body. This is a somewhat intricate process. As soon as the swoop into space takes place, which is recognised as the sensation caused by the Ego withdrawing from the physical body, the kinesthetic sense, which indicates the position of the body in space, undergoes a change, so that, although the position of the body upon the couch remains unaltered, the kinesthetic sense reports that one is standing upright.

It will thus be perceived that the medium is now upon the same plane as the spirit communicator, he too has shed his body, though in his case but temporarily. In order to carry out the control's instructions and repeat to the earth-plane the message given him, usually some brief and simple formula of greeting, the medium proceeds to take control of his own body in just the same way as a spirit communicator does. That is to say, he does not re-enter it, sinking in through the solar plexus till subtle and dense body blend limb by limb as he does when he returns at the end of a trance, but merely contacts the throat centres by projecting his will upon them and, as it were, giving suggestion to them.

With considerable effort the muscles of the larynx are manipulated, though not through their usual channels; the words are spoken, some one in the circle answers, and immediately communication is established. As soon as some one on the physical plane responds, it seems as if the mind of the communicating entity immediately takes over the control of the throat centres of the entranced body, and the medium steps aside. The whole process takes place so swiftly that it is very difficult to know exactly what happens, but the vital point seems to lie in the reply of some member of the circle. What subtle interaction of mind upon mind takes place is difficult to define. Probably the minds of the sitters are directed towards the communicator, and thus a rapport is set up. But why, and wherefore, I cannot say. Subsequent communicators who take over from the first speaker, have no such difficulty in establishing communications.

Communication once established, the body of the medium appears to be used as a telephone by the communicators from another plane of

existence. Control and medium seem to have changed places; the medium is now standing aside and it is the mind of the control that is manipulating the brain and nervous system. The medium is fully conscious, there is no such thing as loss of consciousness in trance; it is only the memory which is frequently obliterated, like the memory of a dream. Nothing but the most intense concentration can keep the medium from involuntarily slipping back into his body. A single thought concerning the earth-plane, and he is back. All the time he has to think of himself as being on the inner planes, and disembodied; but so habitually do we think of ourselves as embodied and in terms of our physical sensations, that only a mind that is highly trained in concentration can inhibit these customary thoughts. For this reason an arduous apprenticeship in concentration and mind-control is necessary before anyone who is not a natural trance medium can throw himself into trance. In the natural trance medium the dissociation of consciousness takes place automatically and involuntarily, and the processes are so swift as to defy analysis. In the case, however, of a person who has deliberately set himself to acquire the power to go into trance, gradually perfecting his technique as experience grows, it is possible to observe the stages through which consciousness passes, because in the earlier days of his training he painfully and laboriously struggles from one plane to another with intense effort, frequently losing his grip on his mind and sliding back to a lower state of consciousness and from there working his way up again. With experience comes expertness, and the trained occultist will be as 'slick' in his transition through the planes of consciousness as the natural psychic.

CHAPTER 8.Trance and Hypnosis.

The physical and mental data of trance being now available for consideration, what shall we say concerning the whole matter? Can any one who is familiar with the two sets of phenomena deny that it is a process of auto-hypnosis? But when we have said that, have we said all? Does the adept, highly trained in occult science, who by constant practice has attained skill in throwing himself into trance, achieve results which exceed those obtained by the hypnotist who works on a purely psychological basis?

The answer to this question will surprise many people, both in the ranks of the psychologists and the psychics. The hypnotists have frequently achieved the same results as the occultists. Mesmer himself was in touch with the occultists of his day, but whether he discovered his powers spontaneously and developed and elaborated his system with the help of those who were familiar with the traditional methods of using these little-known powers of the mind, or whether he first learnt of them from his illuminist friends and then developed the application of them to the healing of diseases, is not known.

Dr. Albert Moll, in his book on hypnotism, which is one of the standard works on the subject, chronicles a list of phenomena which is the envy of the occultist.

Being familiar with both sets of phenomena, I have no hesitation whatsoever in giving it as my opinion that the deliberately induced trance of the adept occultist is a process of auto-hypnosis, and that the intricate rituals of ceremonial magic and initiation ceremonies that have come down to us from the ancients, or have been elaborated today upon traditional principles, are based upon a knowledge of those little-known powers of the mind which today we call hypnosis, auto-suggestion, and psycho-analysis. The ancients were aware of these powers, and developed their application to the spiritual unfolding of man just as today we are developing their application to therapeutics.

Occultism and psychotherapy rest on the same basis. There are certain aspects of the mind which are beginning to be understood in the West today and which were well understood by the ancients and in the East. Anyone who investigates the mind impartially, and who is not limited by preconceived concepts, will soon find that he is opening up aspects of consciousness of which he had never hitherto suspected the existence. But the mind being exceedingly subject to suggestion when functioning in these subjective states, it follows that if the investigator contemptuously rejects the first manifestations of supernormal consciousness, those states will immediately close down and the mind limit itself to what is expected of it. If, on the other hand, the investigator is looking for the supernormal states, he will not be long before he finds them. They can be inhibited or brought forth by the clearly-held idea in the mind of the investigator.

Let us grant that trance and auto-hypnosis are one and the same thing and that the hypnotist by means of suggestion can obtain from his subject the same results that the trance medium exhibits spontaneously; in what, then, can we differentiate between hypnosis and trance? It differentiates in this, that in one case there is a visible hypnotist, and in the other there is not. We say visible advisedly, for is it possible that there is an invisible hypnotist?

Here we are opening up a big field of speculation. Who, or what is it, that in the case of self-induced trance, takes the place of the hypnotist and gives suggestion to the passive subconsciousness? How are we to differentiate auto-suggestion from auto-hypnosis? How are we to tell the difference between a spirit-control and a secondary personality, a form of psychopathology with which psychology is well acquainted, and whose mechanisms it can demonstrate?

Up to a point the psychological process appears to be identical in hypnosis, trance, and dissociation of the personality, for in each case the Ego appears to be separated from the personality. An understanding of esoteric science enables us to see how this separation takes place, for according to its doctrines, at each incarnation the individuality, or higher self, which is immortal, builds up a personality, or lower self, consisting of the concrete mind, the emotions and passions, and the physical body with its etheric counterpart of electro-magnetic stresses. There is a natural line of cleavage, therefore, between the individuality and the personality. If the higher self be in abeyance, the lower self, which is simply a very elaborately organised system of reflexes and associated ideas, is left without a directing intelligence, and will remain passive until stimulated from without, in which case the appropriate complex, or organised system of ideas, will be galvanised into activity, and run through its reaction-circuit till it comes to a stop.

A personality in this condition may be likened to a car standing at the roadside with the engine just ticking over; the owner may get into it, open the throttle, engage the gears, and drive off; or, on the other hand, some one to whom he lends the car may do the same thing, returning the car in due course to its original owner.

It appears as if the elaborate system of inherited reactions and acquired memories that we call the personality of the incarnation is simply a vehicle of consciousness, and is no more the real self than the car is the driver. We habitually identify ourselves with it, because when our consciousness is limited by the brain, we are aware of no other kind of existence; but the trained occultist, knowing that consciousness in reality is not limited by the brain but built the brain as its instrument, is able to escape from the suggestion of the physical senses and know himself as he really is - a spiritual being who has built up out of experience certain instruments of consciousness which serve but limit him. Man is a tool-using animal even on the spiritual plane. Under certain conditions the Ego can be separated from its tools, even in life, and then apparently other Egos can pick up those tools and use them.

There appear to be two processes in what is usually classified under the one heading as suggestion - either the suggestion is given to the conscious mind, is assimilated by the Ego, and then conveyed by it to the subconsciousness: or the suggestion is given direct to the subconscious mind, the Ego being out of the picture for the time being.

Subconsciousness might very well be defined as mind minus Ego. It possesses all the characteristics of mind save intelligent direction which can adapt itself to circumstances and serve the general aims of the self. Its different complexes are like mechanical toys which are wound up and run through their tricks till the power of the spring is spent and they come to a stop. They are purposive but not intelligent.

Take away the Ego from the personality, and it is simply a collection of co-ordinated motor-complexes directed by associated ideas. The only controller is memory. That which has been done before can be done again because the associated idea-links are there and evoke each other in their accustomed sequences, but nothing can be originated or adapted. The personality, deprived of the ensouling spiritual intelligence, is nothing but a collection of mechanical toys, that is to say, an automaton. It is this automaton condition that characterises trance and hypnosis.

Now supposing this machine, perfect in all its parts but deserted by its driver, feels another hand on the controls, what then? This, we may presume, is what takes place in hypnosis and spirit-control. There is no difference in principle between the control of a hypnotic subject by the mind of the hypnotist, and the control of the entranced medium by the mind of the disembodied spirit. It is a well-known and frequently repeated experiment of hypnosis that a good subject can be controlled by the unspoken thought of the hypnotist; there is no difference in kind between the telepathic control exercised by an embodied mind, and the telepathic control exercised by a disembodied mind.

Those, of course, who do not believe in the survival of bodily death will be reduced to explaining all trance phenomena by a hypothesis which excludes this possibility, but in the face of the accumulated evidence of psychic research, one may not unjustifiably describe them as the die-hards of materialistic science. Those who are prepared to concede the possibility of the survival of bodily death by some form of integrated consciousness cannot logically exclude the possibility of telepathic operations by that consciousness.

If it be conceded that there is sufficient evidence available to justify the opinion that under certain circumstances, e.g. under hypnosis and in trance, the Ego is cut off from the personality, so that the personality is deprived of intelligent direction, and can be manipulated by the mind of another, and if it be further conceded that organised

consciousness can survive bodily death, there seems no reason to deny the possibility of spirit-communication through a trance-medium, for in cases that we are able to examine experimentally we can see the same *modus operandi*.

It is difficult to see how, in the face of the accumulated evidence, either of these hypotheses can be denied; and if they are admitted, their implication follows naturally, and we have an explanation of the nature of trance-mediumship which links it on to the known and proven facts of hypnosis, suggestion and telepathy.

CHAPTER 9.

The Technique of Trance.

Having arrived thus far, our next consideration must be concerning the exact nature of the process by means of which the separation between the Ego and the personality is effected.

Let us first consider the normal process of the mind; it consists of a ceaseless streaming of images across the illuminated screen of consciousness. It may best be likened to the projection of a kinematograph film. It does not appear to be possible for two trains of ideas to occupy the focus of consciousness simultaneously, but the alternation can be so rapid that to a superficial observer they appear to be superimposed. This ceaseless succession of ideas appears to be of the very essence of the nature of consciousness.

We can get an interesting insight into this matter if we study the mental exercises performed by the occultist when he is engaged in acquiring the faculty of going into trance. These mental exercises have been handed down in the Mystery Schools from time immemorial, and are even better known and more highly developed in the East than they are in the West. They can be found in many books on mind-training, notably in those emanating from mystical and occult circles. The comparative study of these, and the different yoga systems, soon suffices to show that they are all founded on the same principles.

The earlier exercises are directed to teaching the pupil to follow a train of thought without mind-wandering. He has, in fact, to learn to inhibit unwanted thoughts as the first essential of his training. He soon acquires considerable proficiency in this, and a good student can follow a train of thought for a considerable length of time without any obtruding ideas arising, becoming quite oblivious of his surroundings. The story of Newton working out mathematical formulae with his papers on fire could be told of many an occult student.

The power to follow a definite train of thought is succeeded by exercises designed to teach the student to concentrate on a single thought and perceive in it all its implications without allowing the mind to move from it. In this case the mind is circling round a fixed centre instead of proceeding forward in a straight line.

This process differs markedly from the preceding one in that ideas are not sought, but, alien images being inhibited, are allowed to rise into consciousness. There is a great difference between directive thinking and allowing ideas to rise. It is one of the points in esoteric psychology that have important practical applications. The use of this method of mentation is a knack which is hard to describe; its acquirement often resists the utmost efforts of the student until he realises that his effort has to be directed to inhibiting, not originating, whereupon he may suddenly acquire the trick.

Once acquired, it is comparatively easy to practise, and renders available the riches of the subconscious mind, thus bringing a tremendous increase to the scope and power of the personality. This method is used in psycho-analysis, but its applications have been brought to a far higher degree of specialisation by the occultist, who makes much use of them in the course of his work. It is a form of mentation notably characteristic of genius, and accounts for the rapid and effortless nature of the highest types of creative art.

The final stage in the training for trance consists in the practice of formulating a mental picture of some simple form, such as a black circle on a white ground, and visualising it mentally and holding it steadily before the mind's eye for considerable periods. The first attempts at such an exercise yield some rather interesting results and throw a good deal of light upon the nature of thought. It is easy enough to formulate the image, but very difficult to make it hold still. It will dance about, swing like a pendulum, go far off and approach again, do anything, in fact, except 'stay put'. One of the modifications of this exceedingly difficult exercise, by means of which it is approached step by step, consists in formulating the image, and then watching it swing at the end of a pendulum. Or again, the image may be seen as stationary, with the background moving behind it, like landscape sliding past a train-window. Either of these devices aids greatly in enabling the image to be held before consciousness; but stand still for any length of time it will not, as anyone can prove for themselves by trying the experiment. This experience bears out the statement that thought is like a cinematograph film, a constant succession of images, and that to hold it still is to stop the show.

But let us consider our study of the last yoga exercise. When expertness is obtained, it becomes possible to hold the image still for considerable lengths of time, but it will be found that as soon as the image is stilled, consciousness of external impressions is lost and time passes unheeded. A few minutes may seem like long periods of time, or, contrarily, several hours may pass without any apparent break in the continuity of consciousness.

Is there any difference between the voluntary stilling of the thought-processes by fixing the mind's eye upon some imagined object, and that of fixing the physical eyes on some bright object? Both methods tend to slow thought to a standstill and to break the sequence of the unceasing stream of mental images, leaving the broken ends in mid-air. In order to go into trance or under hypnosis, the conscious mind is literally jammed, as if one had poked a stick into its wheels, and so brought it to a standstill.

When the constant stream of images ceases to pass through the mind, it seems as if the ego were no longer bound to the body. It is a maxim of esoteric science that where the attention is directed, there is the soul present. As long as the attention of consciousness is directed towards the sensations derived from the body, the soul, to put it crudely, is in the body; but as soon as attention is cut off from the body, the soul is no longer bound to it but is free upon its own plane. The difficulty lies in withdrawing all attention from the body, for concentration upon the symbol has to be so complete that no physical sensation is felt, not even the kinesthetic sense, which tells us the position of the limbs in space. Only very great powers of concentration can achieve this, and therefore the trained trance-medium who can go into deep trance is rare.

So great is the concentration achieved by the trained occultist that it has been known successfully to mask the pain of severe scalds and permit of sleep without the use of drugs.

The unconsciousness of trance differs from that of anaesthesia, syncope or concussion in that the separation between the higher and lower aspects of consciousness takes place at a different level. In anaesthesia and other forms of what we will denominate physical unconsciousness, it is the physical vehicle of consciousness that is put out of commission, so that the Ego cannot make use of it. The separation, then, is between the physical body and the personality, not between the personality and the individuality, or higher self. In sleep the separation seems to take place between the lower and higher aspects of the personality, so that a certain amount of the personality and its consciousness remains co-ordinated with the physical body. Thus the higher self is still bound to matter, because the higher aspects of the personality are associated with it, and therefore in ordinary sleep it is not free to function on its own plane. Thus the three types of living unconsciousness - physical unconsciousness, sleep, and trance, are differentiated by the difference in plane of the point at which the higher

self with its self-consciousness separates from the lower self, which is built up by experience during incarnation, and consists of organised systems of complexes.

Our study of trance would be incomplete unless we considered the way in which the medium gets into touch with the communicating entity. To the consciousness of the medium, now withdrawn from the body, the communicating entity appears as a very clear-cut picture seen with the mind's eye. He visualises the mentality which he feels trying to contact his own. As soon as he is able to form a clear mental picture of it, the dim sense of a presence gives place to the formulation of words heard mentally; he gets a distinct sense of a definite personality, and the sitters who form his circle, if they are accustomed to receive communications from a group of controls with whom they have become familiar, will also get a sense of a personality being present, and if they are experienced, will be able to recognise which control it is before any communication comes through. This is strong evidence in favour of the objectivity of spirit-controls as against the theory that they are secondary personalities of the medium's own self, dissociated according to the well-known laws of psychopathology, such as have been studied in detail by Dr. Morton Prince, and others.

Now it is obvious that the medium cannot really be seeing anything, because the corporeal form of the communicating entity has long since mouldered to dust, so that if he saw the actual physical form of the entity, it would appear as a skeleton wrapped in shreds of grave-clothes. But instead of this he sees the communicator as he or she appeared in life. It is obvious, therefore, that what he is seeing is the entity's mental picture of itself, communicated to him telepathically. It is the same mechanism which is employed if two living people are trying to communicate telepathically: the transmitter visualises as clearly as he can the person with whom he wishes to communicate and then imagines himself as speaking to him. The receiver, if he is at all sensitive, will frequently have a clear mental picture of the communicator and hear the words he speaks.

We may reasonably conclude, therefore, that what takes place between two embodied minds when they try to communicate telepathically also takes place between an embodied and a disembodied mind when they try to communicate telepathically.

The communicating entity visualises himself as he was when in the body; the medium is able to perceive this thought-form psychically, and it forms the means of communication between them. Once this contact has been established, the medium is able to get into psychic touch with any spirit-control whom he knows by visualising him. It has also been found that, by employing the same device, mediums can invoke each other's control.

We may therefore disabuse our minds of the idea that 'control' is the same thing as 'obsession' as popularly understood; that is to say, that the body of one person is occupied by the soul of another. What we are dealing with in trance-mediumship is the hypnotic influence of

the mind of a disembodied spirit over the mind of the medium, and it will be found that the whole of the phenomena of trance-mediumship can be explained in terms of the psychology of hypnosis.

This explanation is in no wise meant to discredit trance-mediumship, but to explain it and even to extend its scope and make it more readily accessible. The knowledge of hypnosis was one of the most carefully guarded secrets of the ancient Mysteries, and if we recognise the principles of hypnosis, telepathy, and the survival of bodily death by intelligent consciousness, we have the key with three wards which turns the lock of trance-mediumship.

All occult schools depend for their working on their contacts with those who are known to them as the Masters. Different schools are in touch with different Masters, and it is the portraits, names, or symbols of these Masters which are among their most carefully guarded secrets. Of course, the Masters are nothing more or less than spirit-controls of a very high type.

Those who are familiar with occult literature will have realised that the presence we have described is what is known to occultists as the Master, to mystics as the vision of a saint, to spiritualists as the control, and is repeatedly described in the Bible as the visit of an angel, such an one as taught the interpretations of dreams to the prophet Daniel and announced to the Virgin Mary her destiny.

It is noteworthy that the spiritualist, the occultist, the mystic, the prophet, and the seer all bear witness to such meetings with invisible visitants from another plane of existence.

Such divergent witnesses giving corroborative evidence establishes it as certain that some common experience must be at the bottom of it. The fact that the lunatic adds his testimony to the cloud of witnesses need not necessarily invalidate the evidence, for it may be that the experiences of those possessed of super-consciousness may throw light on the hallucinations of the lunatic, instead of vice versa. At any rate, the source whence Daniel drew his power to impress two successive kings of Babylon and Joan of Arc drew her influence over a king of France and his generals, cannot be dismissed as such stuff as dreams are made of unless we are prepared to admit that that stuff is real in its own sphere.

To say that a thing is imaginary is not to dispose of it in the realm of mind, for the imagination, or image-making faculty, is a very important part of our mental functioning. An image formed by the imagination is a reality from the point of view of psychology; it is quite true that it has no physical existence, but are we going to limit reality to that which is material? We shall be far out of our reckoning if we do, for mental images are potent things, and although they do not actually exist on the physical plane, they influence it far more than most people suspect.

CHAPTER 10.The Inhabitants of the Unseen (I)

Whoever contacts the invisible world, whether by means of his own psychism or by employing the psychism of another as a channel of evocation, has need of some system of classification in order that he may be able to understand the varied phenomena with which he will meet. Not all of them are due to the spirits of the departed; there are other denizens of the invisible world than those who have once had human form. Nor are all the phenomena due to the subconscious mind entirely subjective. Confusion arises when that which should be assigned to one division is allocated to another. It can be clearly shown that the explanation which is offered does not account for the facts. Nevertheless, the facts are not disposed of by showing the explanation to be fallacious. A correct classification would yield an explanation which can stand up to any impartial investigation and be justified of its wisdom.

The classification which it is proposed to employ in these pages is drawn largely from the traditional occult sources, and it is believed that it will throw light on certain experiences met with by psychic research workers. It is offered in a spirit of co-operation, as independent testimony to a common experience.

1. THE SOULS OF THE DEAD.

Of all the inhabitants of the invisible worlds, the ones with which it is easiest for us to get into touch are the souls of human beings who have shed their outer garment of flesh, either temporarily or permanently. Anyone who is familiar with spiritualistic or esoteric thought soon becomes habituated to the idea that a man is not immediately changed by death. The personality remains; it is only the body that is gone.

The esotericist, in his concept of the nature of departed souls, distinguishes between those who are going through the inter-natal phase, that is to say, who are living in the non-physical worlds between incarnations; and those who will not re-incarnate again. There is a great difference in capacity and outlook between these two types of souls, and many of the issues at present outstanding between spiritualism and occultism are undoubtedly due to a failure to recognise this fact.

The occultist does not maintain that existence is an eternal sequence of birth and death, but that at a certain phase of evolution the soul enters upon a series of material lives, and through the development made during these lives, it finally outgrows the mundane phase of evolution, becoming more and more spiritualised towards the end of this period, until finally it wins its freedom from matter and reincarnates no more, continuing its existence as a disembodied spirit with a human mind. Mentality, the occultist maintains, can only be obtained through incarnation in human form. Those beings who have not undergone this experience have not got mentality as we understand it, with certain exceptions which we will consider later.

For the most part, it is the souls of the living dead who are contacted in the seance-room. Liberated souls go on to their own place and are not so easily reached. Only those return within range of the earth-sphere who have some business there. The discussion of this point would open up a vast field of interest which we cannot deal with at the moment. It must suffice to say that, as is well known to all workers in psychic research, there are souls of a higher type than those commonly encountered, who are concerned with the evolution of humanity and the training of those who are willing to co-operate with them in their work.

We may say, then, that the souls of the departed may be divided into three types: the souls of the living dead, who will return again to the earth-life; liberated souls, who have outgrown earth-life and have gone on to another sphere of existence; and the liberated souls, who, having gone on, return again to the earth-sphere because they have work to do therein. A recognition of these three types of departed souls will serve to explain many of the discrepancies we encounter between the statements of spiritualists and occultists. The occultist aims chiefly at getting into touch with the returning souls for the purposes of specific work in which both he and they are concerned; for the most part, he leaves the souls of the living dead severely alone. Personally, I am of the opinion that he is mistaken in so doing. It is quite true that they can be of little assistance to him in his chosen work, but the normal companionship of the living with the dead robs death of most of its terrors and is steadily building a bridge between those who remain and those who have passed over. The occultist should certainly not invite the co-operation of the living dead as he would that of the returning souls, for they have their own work to do; nor can he place as much reliance on their knowledge and insight as on that of those who are freed from the wheel of birth and death; neither has he any right to try to use them as he would elemental spirits in the course of his experiments. Admitting these qualifications, however, there seems no reason why the occultist should not share in the interchange of amenities which is continually taking place across the borderline. After all, death is one of the processes of life, and the dead are very much alive and quite normal.

2. PROJECTIONS OF THE LIVING

The appearance of a simulacrum of a human being at the point of death is exceedingly common, and innumerable well-attested instances exist of its occurrence. It is not so well known, however, that it is possible for the simulacrum, or astro-etheric form, to be projected voluntarily by the trained occultist. Such projections, in proportion to the hosts of disembodied souls encountered when the threshold is crossed, are exceedingly rare; nevertheless they occur, and may be met with, therefore they must be included in any classification which aims at being comprehensive. Usually such a projected soul appears to be entirely occupied with its own affairs and in a state of absorption which causes it to appear to ignore its surroundings. As a matter of fact, it most frequently happens that the disembodied spirit has its work cut out to maintain consciousness at all on the higher planes,

and its self-absorption is that of the beginner on a bicycle. Occasionally communication may be established between such a projected etheric body and a group of experimenters, and very interesting results are obtained; but unless there is sufficient materialisation to render the simulacrum visible to the non-psychic, the experiment will partake rather of the nature of telepathy grafted upon mediumship than of a true projection of the astro-etheric form. Such visitants are neither angels nor devils but 'human, all too human.'

3. THE ANGELIC HIERARCHIES.

The average Protestant has a very dim notion concerning the angelic hierarchies, the great hosts of beings of another evolution than ours, though children of the same Heavenly Father. The Qabalah, however, is explicit on this point, and classifies them into ten archangels and ten orders of angelic beings. Buddhist, Hindu and Mohammedan theologies are equally explicit. We may therefore reckon that in this agreement of witnesses there is surety of testimony, and it may serve our purpose best to take for our guide that system from which Christianity took its rise - mystic Judaism.

We will not go into the elaborate classifications employed by the Jewish rabbis, which have their importance for the purposes of magic but are not germane to our present issue. It is quite enough that we realise that there are divinely created beings of varying degrees of greatness, from the mighty archangel whom St. John the Divine saw standing in the sun, down to the nameless heavenly messengers who have from time to time visited mankind.

Beyond the spheres to which are assigned the disembodied spirits of humanity dwell these heavenly beings, and in some high range of spiritual light the psychic or medium sometimes touches them. In the Vale Owen scripts there is much concerning them that is of great interest.

It is said by the rabbis that these beings are perfect, each after his kind; but they do not evolve, and it is noticeable that they are non-intellectual. One might almost call them divine Robots, each strictly conditioned by its own nature perfectly to fulfil the office for which it was created; free from all struggle and inner conflict, but changeless, and therefore unevolving.

No angel, it is held, ever goes outside his own sphere of activity. The angel who has 'healing in his wings' cannot bestow visions, nor the bestower of visions serve as the strong guard against the powers of darkness.

Esotericists make a fundamental distinction between angels and the souls of men. They say that the divine sparks, which are the nuclei of the souls of men, proceed from the noumenal cosmos, from the same plane whereon the Solar Logos has His being. They are therefore of the same innermost nature as the Godhead. Angels, on the other hand, are created by the Solar Logos as the first of His created beings. They neither

fall into generation, nor rise by regeneration, but remain in changeless but unevolving perfection till the end of the epoch.

The functions of the angels are diverse, and cannot be entered upon here in detail. They are, each according to his office and rank, God's messengers in things of the spirit, but they have no direct contact with dense matter. That office is performed by another order of beings altogether, the Elementals, who differ in origin and inmost nature from both angels and men.

4. ELEMENTALS.

Much confusion of thought exists concerning the order of beings known as Elementals. They are sometimes confused with the spirits of men. Undoubtedly many happenings attributed to spirits are to be assigned to the activities of these other orders of beings. Again, they are not to be confused with the evil demons, or, to give them the Qabalistic name, the Qliphoth.

Elementals are the thought-forms generated by co-ordinated systems of reactions that have become stereotyped by constant and unchanging repetition. Some explanation is necessary to make this concept clear, and we shall understand it best if we survey the means by which Elementals come into being.

Each epoch of evolution is constituted by the outgoing and return of a life-wave of living souls. These are referred to in esoteric terminology as the Lords of Flame, of Form, and of Mind. The present evolution will become the Lords of Humanity. Each life-wave develops its characteristic contribution to evolution. When the Divine Sparks which constituted the nuclei of the evolving souls of each evolution are withdrawn back up the planes and reabsorbed into the Kingdom of God, their work remains behind them in that which they have builded, whether it be the chemical elements evolved by the Lords of Form, the chemical reactions evolved by the Lords of Flame, or the reactions of consciousness evolved by the Lords of Mind.

Humanity, it is held, is evolving the power of co-ordinated consciousness, and the Lords of Humanity therefore hold the same relationship to the Lords of Mind that the Lords of Flame hold to the Lords of Form. These beings, however, of the three earlier life-waves, have passed out of range of the life of our earth, each group to its appropriate planet, and the Lords of Humanity are still absorbed in the task of building and have not yet, save those few who have become Masters, escaped from the bondage of the material in which they work. Consequently it is but rarely that any psychic save the higher grades of adept ever contacts any of these beings.

They have left behind them, however, as has already been noted, the forms which they built up in the course of their evolution. These forms, as psychics teach, actually consist of co-ordinated systems of magnetic stresses. Whenever any movement takes place an electric current is

set up, and if the series of co-ordinated movements is repeated many times, these currents tend to make adjustments among themselves and become co-ordinated on their own account, quite independently of the physical forms whose activities gave rise to them. It is out of these co-ordinations that the elementals are evolved.

We cannot go more deeply into this most interesting and intricate subject in the present pages. It is a matter for a separate study. Enough has been said, however, to indicate that although the ultimate product of the evolution of the angelic, the human, and the Elemental Kingdom is to produce consciousness and intelligence, the origin of the three types of beings is entirely different, and so also is their destiny.

The Divine Sparks are the emanations of the Great Unmanifest, Ain Soph Aur, in the terminology of the Qabalists; the angels are the creations of the Solar Logos, and the Elementals are 'the creations of the created', that is to say, they are developed out of the activities of the material universe.

Of the Elementals thus evolved there are many types. Firstly, the four great divisions of the Elemental spirits of Earth, Air, Fire and Water, known respectively to the Alchemists as Gnomes, Sylphs, Salamanders and Undines. These really represent four types of activity arising out of four types of relationship. In solids (the element of Earth) the molecules adhere together. In liquids (the element of Water) the molecules are free-moving. In gases (the element of Air) they repel each other and therefore diffuse to their uttermost limits. And in Fire, the essential property of its activity is to change plane, or transmute. The four Kingdoms of primary Elementals under their angelic kings represent the co-ordinated, purposive, and intelligent action of these four properties of matter - the mind-side of the material phenomena, to be precise.

This fact is well known to occultists, and they employ the mind-side of matter in their magical work. Consequently many of these Elemental systems of reactions have, as it were, been domesticated by adepts. Elementals thus domesticated become imbued with consciousness of a human type. These developed (or initiated) Elementals are sometimes met with by psychics.

We are now trenching upon some of the most secret aspects of occultism, and not a great deal can be said; and even if it were said, little of it would be understood save by those who were already well versed in esoteric science.

CHAPTER 11.The Inhabitants of the Unseen (2).5. NATURE SPIRITS.

Whenever any set of natural objects is essentially a unit, an oversoul develops by the method we have already considered with regard to the evolution of Elementals. But as the term Elemental is usually reserved for the spirits of the Four Elements, it is as well to employ a different term to describe these oversouls, for they are essentially different. The Elementals evolve from Elemental Substance, that is to say, from the etheric existence which was the fore-runner of dense matter. Nature Spirits, however, evolve from the co-ordination of many complex forms which have a certain factor in common. For instance, an oversoul is developed by a forest, or a mountain. These oversouls are psychic units, built up out of the innumerable co-ordinated reactions made by the forest as a whole, to their respective not-selves. Any cleft in the mountain, any glade in the forest, so long as it is sufficiently differentiated to function as a unit and have definite lines of demarcation to the not-self, develops an oversoul also. Out of this fact comes the concept of the gods of places. All sensitives readily sense the presence and nature of such oversouls.

Each species of living creature has a similar oversoul according to the esotericist, and many important considerations which we cannot enter upon now arise from this point. It is possible to contact the composite lion, or the composite eagle, and these entities are closely related to great psychic forces, hence the use of their symbolism in the representation of both the gods of the Egyptians and the Evangelists of the Christians.

6. THE QLIPPOTH OR DEMONS.

These beings are developed in the same way as the Elementals, save that they originate in the unbalanced force which is generated as each new phase of evolution comes into existence. For there is always a transition period to be gone through as a new phase is evolved. Equilibrium cannot be established immediately and the unbalanced force tends to run riot. As far as possible it is compensated by the conscious action of the angelic hosts. This is a part of their function, but a complete compensation is practically impossible. Especially was this the case during the earlier phases of evolution, when the angelic hosts themselves were not all yet in being.

These unbalanced forces, then, form the substance of the Kingdom of positive evil, as distinguished from so-called 'negative' evil, which is mere resistance, inertia, and has its uses. Into this Kingdom of the Qlippoth go all unbalanced forces generated by man, reinforcing the original evil.

Many of these Qlipphothic Elementals have been brought under control by black magicians. It is these that form the chief danger of mediumship, and are one of the reasons why the occultist is so chary of its use, and will only employ it under definite precautions. The uninitiated psychic comparatively rarely meets a demonic intelligence, but the initiate, who has to shoulder the karma of his fraternity when he takes initiation, is liable to do so, for there are black sheep in every society, and their legacy of black magic has to be contended with by those who come after them. All the older fraternities have this problem to face in varying degrees, and therefore their neophytes are instructed to have nothing whatever to do with the seance-room in case a dark familiar of one of the past brethren should take advantage of the opportunity. This is the real reason why the occultist will not work with the spiritualist. It is one of the drawbacks of admission to a fraternity, and the reason why many sensitives fear to take initiation.

The trained occultist, however, knows how to protect himself from unwanted intruders, and once he has reached psychic adulthood, does not fear them because he knows how to deal with them. The neophyte is instructed to keep out of harm's way until he is in a position to take care of himself. So long as this common sense precaution is observed, all is well, but if ambition, or curiosity, or mere ignorance cause a beginner to take risks, he may expose himself to considerable unpleasantness, to say the least of it.

It is for this reason that an occultist always draws the magic circle and works inside it. The procession of priests and acolytes round a church that is being consecrated and the Masonic custom of "squaring the Lodge" have their roots in the "magic circle" which guards against the power of darkness.

Whenever any manifestation from the Unseen is expected there should always be the "circle", the delimited sphere within which evocation takes place; never the "unconsecrated place" which permits the inrush of forces from all sides.

7. THOUGHT FORMS.

It is difficult to know whether thought-forms should be designated beings or objects. After all, everything which has existence is a being, and though a thought-form is one of the "creations of the created" and therefore has not got noumenal existence, nevertheless, being an actuality on its own plane, it has a phenomenal existence. We may therefore not unjustifiably class them among the beings of the Unseen, especially as there are certain types of thought-forms which are very highly organised and endowed with considerable intelligence. A thought-form is an externalisation of the mind-essence of an intelligent being. Every thought that is formulated is, of course, an organisation or modelling of thought-substance, but for the most part such lightly

constructed forms never get beyond the aura of the person who evolved them. An influence is radiated from them, but the actual thought-form is not extruded from the aura to take up an independent existence outside. We may make the distinction clearer by thinking of the light of a lamp shining out of a house, and the lamp itself being hurled through the window at the head of an intruder.

Only by a powerful effort is a thought-form extruded. That effort may be made spontaneously under the influence of emotion, or deliberately, by an effort of will directed by the necessary knowledge. Any person in a high state of emotional tension extrudes thought-forms, but unless there is an organised idea behind them, they rapidly disintegrate. It is only when a little bit of the real self is extruded with them that they hold together and remain potent. Such ensouled forms are often spoken of as 'artificial Elementals'. As a matter of actual fact, only a person with some mediumistic tendency can project actual thought-forms. Other folk, whose etheric substance does not readily part company with their dense body, although they may emanate strong thought-influence, will not extrude the actual Elementals. It is these ensouled thought-forms extruded by a mediumistic person under emotional stress which form the basis of many 'hauntings'. It must be borne in mind that at the moment of death the etheric double is withdrawn from the physical body. If, therefore, death takes place under great emotional stress, it may well happen that the thought-forms being cast off in myriads from the profoundly disturbed mind, get ensouled by etheric substance even in people who normally would not be mediumistic.

The trained occultist frequently avails himself of this little-known fact. He deliberately, according to well-known laws, 'magnetises' objects by projecting a portion of his etheric double, usually the etheric hand, into them. The clothes we wear are, of course, filled with our etheric emanations, but these are usually fugitive and soon evaporate unless precautions are taken. It is for this reason that the black magician tries to get hold of some portion of the clothing of his intended victim, and people who are living in countries where ju-ju and similar rites are practised learn that is injudicious to give cast-off clothing to servants, and highly advisable to commit all unwanted personal possessions to the flames.

A consecrated object differs from a magnetised one in that the force employed for its ensouling is not that of the operator, but of a non-material entity which is invoked to descend upon it. A talisman may be consecrated to Mars with due ceremony, just as a crucifix may be consecrated to Christ. There is no difference in principle between the two consecrations, though different types of force are invoked and the resulting talisman or amulet is potent for different purposes. We had better realise that the ceremonial aspect of Christianity is purely magical, and that that is nothing against it. Ceremonial magic is not necessarily the evocation of devils. The Eucharist is a magical ceremonial for evoking the Christ. Ceremonial is largely a psychological method.

Thought forms are sometimes extruded apart from intense emotion. If a mental image be repeatedly visualised and brooded over, it tends to take up an independent existence. Such a thought-form may receive ensoulment from many different sources, attracting to itself that which is congenial to its nature. For instance, a long-brooded thought of hate might attract a Qlipphothic demon; a long-brooded thought of love might attract one of the higher Elementals or even an angelic presence. These, however, would not, except in very rare cases, when the work was done deliberately by a magician, actually enter into and embody themselves in the thought-form but rather extrude a portion of their substance into it. Such a thought-form has a very peculiar existence, being endowed with life by the non-human contact and with intelligence by its human contact. Several interesting stories have been written having this fact for a theme. The invisible playmates of children are not infrequently thought-forms thus ensouled.

This brief survey makes no attempt at any detailed description. No more than an enumeration has been aimed at. It may serve, however, to give some indication of the different types of being that may be discerned on the Inner Planes and to convey some idea of the exceeding variety of the life of these regions. The planes lie one above the other in successive spheres of consciousness and as we rise upon them, we contact first one, and then another type of being. This accounts for the divergent reports given by different seers. They are not necessarily untrue because they do not agree with each other; it may be that they are describing different spheres of the Unseen. The value of the traditional occult cosmogony is very great to all those engaged in investigating the subtler planes of existence, for it gives a bird's-eye view of the whole and enables things to be correlated and seen in proportion and perspective. Without such a comprehensive survey, psychic science is in the same position as biology before the advent of Darwin. A mass of data had been observed, but no valid general laws had been deduced. So it is with psychic science: it has observed well its data, but the time has now come when that data must be classified and expressed in formulae. Psychic science will be well advised to take counsel with the traditional wisdom of the initiates when it sets out upon this task, for there may be found the fruits of centuries of experience. If that age-old experience of occult science be mated to the scientific methods of the best school of psychic research, the progeny should be a light to the nations.

CHAPTER 12.

Astral Psychism.

The rending of the Veil of the Temple has undoubtedly brought about some of the results that were dreaded by the upholders of occult secrecy. A little learning is as dangerous a thing in occultism as in any other line of study that gives practical results. It is not easy for the neophyte to assess the extent of his own knowledge. Particularly is this difficult in occultism, where but a partial revelation has been made. Moreover, the subject-matter of esoteric science differs so completely from that which brain-consciousness is accustomed to handle that a prolonged training is necessary to enable the mind to deal with it without distorting it, just as preparation is necessary for the comprehension of advanced mathematics or classical music.

Confusion is made worse confounded in esoteric studies by the fact that many of those who set up as teachers are not themselves initiates of any Tradition; they are 'self-made men', with all the faulty technique and imperfect apprehensions which the self-taught are liable to acquire. More harm has been done to the cause of esoteric truth by the naive and superstitious concepts of it that have been spread abroad and popularised of recent years than by all the persecutions of the past, which, though they destroyed, did not pervert.

Judging by the questions heard at lectures, more confusion and misapprehension concerning the nature of the astral plane exist than concerning any other of the many debatable tenets of esoteric science. So many people regard the astral plane as an etherealised reproduction of the physical plane. They believe that their efforts at occult training will be rewarded by a glimpse of its denizens and visits to its palaces. This belief is inculcated and upheld by many writers who have large followings in esoteric circles, and their romantic and spectacular teachings attract an uncritical public which is always avid for romance. The serious thinker is estranged by such ideas, for he knows their intrinsic unsoundness, and so we see the occult field largely occupied by the credulous and the charlatan, and the scholar is conspicuous by his rarity.

Although several schools of esoteric thought derive their inspiration from the East, they seem to forget that Eastern philosophy has ever spoken of the astral plane as the realm of Maya, illusion, and regards its visions as among the chief fetters which the soul must break in order to win freedom. Again, the astral plane is also known as the plane of Desire, and desire is always referred to as the bondage of the soul. When the immemorial occult tradition of the East adds its testimony to that of the West, surely it is time for the purveyors of spurious psychism to reconsider their doctrine.

To encourage any student in the development of astral psychism, which is recognisable by the pictorial or visual nature of its representations as distinguished from the intuitional realisations of the higher psychism, is to send that student down a blind alley. No true spiritual realisation

is possible for him until he has re-traced his steps. The habit of picture-vision, once acquired, is not easy to break, and its practice tends more and more to bring about the dissociation of consciousness which is the basis of nervous instability.

The study of the astral plane does not resemble the work of an exploring expedition, wherein the geographer draws his maps and the zoologist collects his specimens. We must try and disillusion our minds of the idea that the astral plane is a fantastic replica of the physical plane - 'such stuff as dreams are made of'. Actually, the study of the astral plane is a study in consciousness, and is pursued by the methods of psychology, not geography. It concerns the study of the emotional consciousness and the visualising power of the memory and imagination. The emotions and desires are the driving forces of the astral plane, and the visual imagination builds up the forms which embody them.

If we realise clearly that the forms seen by psychic vision on the astral plane are, without exception, thought-forms constructed by the visual imagination; are, in fact, 'the creations of the created', we have the clue to the nature of Maya, illusion.

The difference between the initiate and the self-taught occultist lies in the fact that the former is fully alive to this all-important point, and the latter believes the forms seen with astral vision to be the actual objects which they represent. The initiate, therefore, can manipulate at will the forms of the astral plane, for what the imagination has made, the imagination can influence. Secure in this knowledge, his attitude towards the astral form of existence enables him to manipulate it; he is its master, not its victim. The uninitiated psychic, functioning in astral consciousness, is entirely controlled by astral conditions; its hells fill him with horror and its heavens with delight. He looks to its denizens for teaching and guidance and receives from them the reflection of his own desires and fears. Whatever we expect on the astral plane, that we see.

The astral plane is the plane of emotion, and emotion is the only reality thereon existing. If you want to understand and master the astral plane, look upon it simply as emotional experience; control the spontaneous emotional reactions of your own nature; learn to generate emotion at will from the contemplation of an idea, and the astral image-forms will fall into line at your command, for it is emotion that causes them to assume their forms, and if emotion can be controlled, the manifestation in astral form can be determined, subject, of course, to the natural laws of the astral plane, which are really its inherent nature, and not arbitrary enactments.

The difficulty of astral control in actual practice lies in the fact that the emotions are deep-rooted in the natural instincts of self-preservation and reproduction, and that the herd-mind of the race holds many highly organised emotional complexes. Hence the significance of Our Lord's words that he who would find his life must lose it. Only when we are indifferent to the lure of the instincts can we manipulate the

driving-forces which are generated by the instincts. It is to induce this power of emotional control that the disciplinary and ascetic practices of the occultist are undertaken.

There are two types of emotion, that which is the reaction to a sensation, or a remembered or anticipated sensation, and that which is the reaction to an idea. The former is derived from without, and the latter originates within. The aim of the adept and the yogi is to acquire the power to inhibit the reaction to external impressions and thus to reverse the flow of influence between himself and his environment; as soon as he ceases to react emotionally to his environment he becomes able to influence it by means of his thoughts. As long as he reacts emotionally, his attitude towards the not-self is negative; receptive; reverse the polarity, let him cease to react, and he becomes positive to a negative environment, which must accept its stimuli from him. Every word that he speaks then becomes a Word of Power. Every thought he formulates is potent. Let him teach himself such thought control that he will not react to emotion; let him look for the mental cause behind all phenomena so constantly that the habit of mind engendered becomes second nature to him, thus breaking the habits of thought built up by sensory experience, and he will become the master of the astral, for he will be able to distinguish between the actuality and the representation.

CHAPTER 13.The Psychology of Clairvoyance.

When a psychic tells us that he 'sees' a presence, to us invisible, how are we to understand that statement? The veridical nature of many of these visions prevents us from disposing of them summarily. Whatever alloy of fraud and phantasy there may be, a residuum of genuine metal will undoubtedly remain after the smelting. To seek to understand the process whereby a result is achieved does not necessarily mean that the result is explained away. A thing is explained away only when the whole of its being and doing can be explained in terms of something else, and nothing remains which is peculiar to itself. If a ghost can be resolved into a turnip, a sheet, and a broomstick, it has been explained away, but if we have to introduce the word ectoplasm, it has not. We must then begin the study of ectoplasm, which is a thing peculiar to supernormal phenomena.

We must distinguish, first of all, between etheric and astral psychism. There is a subtle form of matter, today being extensively investigated by physicists, which has long been known to occultists, and which forms the basis of much super-normal phenomena. Occultists refer to it as the Etheric sub-planes of the physical plane, recognising various sub-classes into which it can be divided, and spiritualists call it ectoplasm. The emanations of this form of existence are being extensively studied by the physicist, who bids fair to meet the occultist on his own ground before very long. Instruments have been designed which will register these emanations, and many of the statements of psychics regarding their perceptions have been verified. It appears, therefore, that the type of psychism which is able to see the emanations radiating from living bodies depends upon an increase in the sensitiveness of the eye, and not upon any super-normal faculty of the mind. These emanations are of a wave-length which exceeds the normal reception-power of the eye, and therefore pass unnoticed by it, just as many ears cannot hear the high shrill note of a bat's squeak. Increase the range of perception, and the hitherto unperceived vibrations are picked up.

Though etheric sight can be both explained and confirmed by modern physics, psychic vision remains in a different category. For although the photographic plate will confirm etheric sight, the complex vision pictures seem individual to the seer, and although there may be sufficient agreement to show that two seers may both be trying to render the same experience, there is never, so far as my own investigations extend at any rate, precise agreement in all details, as there would be if two photographers took a photograph of the same object. How are we to explain both the agreement and the disagreement?

Let us first of all try to understand something of the psychology of normal vision, and see how the mind works in relation to the impressions that come to it through the eye.

Rays of light are reflected from an object on to the eye and focused through the lens upon the retina. The cells of the retina, which are

sensitive to light, react to it, and the reaction is carried as an electrical impulse along the optic nerve to a certain set of cells in the brain. There it is perceived as a sensation of a particular type, just as the sensations carried by the auditory nerve to the ear are perceived as sound, and sensations from the nerves of the surface of the body are perceived as heat, cold, and touch.

Curious as it may seem to those untrained in science, sensation exists solely in the brain. The burnt finger feels nothing in itself. Cut off its communication with the brain by severing the nerve fibres that serve it, and it could be charred to a cinder without sensation. Operations on the lower parts of the body are often performed under an anaesthetic injected into the lower part of the spinal cord. The patient is fully conscious of all impressions reaching the nerves which enter the spinal cord above that point, but the lower parts of his body are without sensation or power of movement, and he can watch his own flesh being cut as impersonally as if it belonged to someone else.

A general anaesthetic, such as chloroform, acts on the brain-centres, however, and therefore all consciousness and power of movement is cut off, but those nerve-impulses which do not connect with the brain, but serve the involuntary muscles of heart, lungs and intestines, go on as usual.

From these considerations we see that the Ego is dependent for its impressions of the physical plane, and for its activities thereon, on the machinery of the brain and nervous system, and that if any part of this very complex and beautifully contrived machine be thrown out of gear, consciousness is cut off from that aspect of the physical plane. It is also important to note that each type of nerve-fibre is adapted to carry, and each centre in the brain is adapted to receive, a certain type and range of stimuli only. There is no accommodation between the nerves to carry each other's messages. Sound, however loud, will not make a blind man see. Light, however bright, will not make a deaf man hear. A stimulus is only perceived when it falls upon the appropriate sense organ. In the absence of that organ, that particular stimulus does not exist so far as that person is concerned.

A deaf man will be oblivious to the sound which throws a normal man into a paroxysm of fear. A musician with cultivated aesthetic gifts will be exalted by sounds which make no particular impression on the uneducated. A psychic will be uplifted or distressed by that of which the man of average nervous sensibility is blissfully unaware. Nevertheless, the stimuli, whether observed or not, are about all three all the time. Increase the sensitivity of the perception and the stimuli will be perceived.

Finally, in this respect, it is to be noted that any stimulus applied to a nerve-fibre will produce the specific sensation associated with the action of the stimulus. For instance, an electric shock to the eye produces a sensation of blinding light; so, it is recorded, does the severance of the optic nerve by the surgeon's knife. The action of any corrosive chemical on the skin produces a sensation of burning although no heat be present.

A lunatic, unable to correlate his ideas correctly, declared that the fires of hell were within his chest when suffering from pneumonia. These incidents throw much light on the psychic's vision, as will be seen later.

The stimulus received from the not-self produces a series of reactions which culminate in a final reaction in a certain area in the brain. That reaction we call sensation, and sensation we will define for our purposes, as the reaction of the ego to changes in its physical vehicle. The manner in which the translation of impulse from the physical to the mental takes place has never been explained by natural science, though it is not disputed that such a translation does take place. Esoteric science, however, has a formula by means of which it explains the translation of force between the planes of existence. That formula would no doubt permit of far greater elaboration than the present writer is able to give it, but it will at least enable us to do what the mathematician does in handling an unknown quantity or proportion, and represent it by a symbol which enables the transition from one aspect to another of the calculation to be made accurately and conveniently; if the symbol gives rise to no discrepancy, we may reasonably conclude that it is a true representation of that which it represents, and that if x or y were translated into figures, they would yield the truth.

A brief explanation of the esoteric doctrine of translation between the planes must here be given, in order that the reader may be able to follow the line of argument.

It is held by esoteric science, and in this it is in agreement with natural science, that all existence is but one or another form of force. Each type of force has its wave-length, or vibration-ratio. Different ranges of vibration-ratio give different types of existence. These different types of wave-length are perceived by sense organs that correspond to them, and these sense organs give rise to different types of consciousness in the sentient ego. The vibration of wave-lengths of a certain register are picked up only by the tactile nerves; those of another register by the olfactory nerves; those of yet another cease to be on the physical sub-planes of the material plane, but are of a rate of vibration which belongs to the etheric scale, and are picked up by the eye, which is attuned to that scale.

This brings us to the consideration of the not uncommon instance of people who invariably associate certain colours with certain musical notes; from this let us next pass on to the almost universal association of certain emotions with certain chords and rhythms. The esotericists would explain these phenomena by saying that there was a certain ratio-relationship between them. For instance, were the vibration-rate of the musical note in question, for the sake of argument, x to the second, the rate of vibration of the colour which corresponded to it would be x^2 to the second, and of the emotion which also corresponded to it, x^3 to the second.

Working on this formula, the esotericist assigns a vibration rate to all forms of existence. Each plane is covered by a certain section of the vibration scale. In order to transpose an object from one form of

existence to another, its vibration must be multiplied if ascending the planes, and divided if descending them, but always the exact ratio must be maintained. The method by which this is accomplished cannot be entered upon at the moment, for it is outside the scope of our argument, though an appreciation of its rationale is essential to that argument. Let it be realised, however, that there is a ratio-relationship between form, number, sound, colour, emotion, and idea. It is this ratio which forms the basis of the presentations of psychic vision.

CHAPTER 14.

The Real Nature of Vision.

It is a fundamental maxim in psychology that nothing can enter consciousness save through the gates of the senses. At first sight the mystic is inclined to dispute this statement, but a moment's thought will reveal to him its truth, and he will join issue with the materialist, not upon the maxim itself, but upon the number and nature of the avenues of approach to the ego.

In these pages, we are not attempting to prove the actuality of psychism to the sceptic; rather are we 'preaching to the converted' and trying to help them to arrive at a better understanding of the true nature of the phenomena of clairvoyance which we have agreed to accept as proven.

Our surest guide in such research is to consider what has already been arrived at concerning the psychology of vision in relation to the physical plane, and thence to extend our researches by analogy to the subtler planes.

Let us reduce our problem to its simplest form, and watch a new-born child learning to use its eyes. At first he can but distinguish between light and darkness; soon he begins to perceive form and colour and to associate them with pleasure and pain. But he cannot yet judge distance by perspective, and will stretch out his hands to grasp any object that attracts him, however far away. He is obviously and rapidly learning by experience. He perceives an object, and remembers it, so that when he sees it again, he recognises it. He also recognises as familiar anything which closely resembles it. What have these facts to teach us concerning the psychology of vision?

On the assumption of our previous hypotheses concerning translation between the planes, we should say that the composite vibration-ratio of the object perceived, simplified as it probably is by the inexperienced eye, is translated into its equivalent ratio on a higher octave, and thus a mental form is created. This mental picture forms part of the furnishing of the consciousness of the personality, which, like an empty house built of the innate qualities brought through from previous incarnations, awaits the fittings which shall render it a well-equipped dwelling for the Ego.

Each mental picture added to the collection forms the basis for the apprehension and classification of each succeeding impression. A new object is recognised as resembling in certain particulars that which was previously known, and differing from it in certain others. Thus mental classification takes place; and until it takes place we cannot be said to 'know' a thing, but only to perceive it. By means of the recognition of resemblance and difference, perception becomes conception, and an image takes its place in the mind.

A stock of images is rapidly built up in this way. The child, with the passage of time, becomes able to tell a horse from a dog, and also to classify together a white horse and a white dog, as distinguished from a black horse and a black dog.

The eye soon becomes accustomed to work by means of a kind of shorthand; it sees some salient feature with which it is familiar, and concludes that the other familiar features which it is accustomed to associate with it are also present, and the familiar mental image rises in consciousness in all its completeness; even though distance or a dim light has prevented it from being actually seen in detail by the eye, memory and imagination supply what is lacking.

It is very important for the clear understanding of the psychology of vision that we should understand that we actually 'perceive' but a very small proportion of what we visualise; we do not build a fresh mental image carefully and elaborately each time a ray of light falls on the retina; mind co-operates with brain, and the mental pictures spring up full-grown, like Minerva from the head of Jove. Experimental psychology soon demonstrates to us how much of our so-called 'seeing' is really a stimulation of memory, and we are not looking at the thing before us, but at the mental picture it has caused to rise in our minds. How many people have been surprised to perceive one day in a familiar object some detail that must have been there all the time, but which they had never seen before. People vary very much in this respect; the keen, alert-minded person actually sees much more of what is before him than does the dreamy one; the latter sees what he expects and misses altogether what he does not expect. The former depends more on his senses, and the latter on his memories.

We are now in a position to return once again to the consideration of the subject of our study, the nature of psychic vision, having informed ourselves concerning the nature of vision in general.

Let us take it as proven that there are individuals who can perceive stimuli that the average person cannot, just as the sensitive plate of the camera can perceive rays beyond the normal spectrum, which the human eye is unable to see. The stimuli perceived by these rare persons are of such a different octave to those which the physical senses pick up, that we feel justified in assigning them to another plane of existence. We are therefore equally justified in assuming that the mechanism of their reception may justly be classed as another sense organ.

Now, how does this sense organ operate? By observation of psychics we find that the principles of its operation are precisely analogous to those which govern the operations of the five physical senses with which we are already familiar. We may assume, then, that the stimuli are received by a sense organ adapted to their perception, and translated into terms of consciousness by the method of ratio-analogy we have already studied.

Are those impressions transmitted to the brain? Is there a centre in the cortex which is adapted to receive psychic stimuli, just as there are centres specialised for the reception of auditory and visual stimuli? This question opens up an enormous field of research and speculation; all that can be done in these pages is briefly to state my hypothesis in order to enable the argument to be pursued.

I am of the opinion that the brain is the organ of sensory perception and motor-co-ordination, and is therefore the organ of contact with the physical plane, but it is to the Ego that we must look as the seat of consciousness. When the Ego is withdrawn, as in certain forms of insanity, physical impressions, even such as the pain of acute appendicitis, may be unperceived.

We may then conceive of each state of consciousness (subtle body) having its own mode of reacting to external stimuli (sense organs and nervous system), and its own system of ratio-symbols for translating these impressions into egoic consciousness (brain). We can see, then, the Ego itself, the sole centre of consciousness, gathering up the impressions coming in through each of these sets of sense organs and brains, each reacting to its own type of stimuli, just as the physical brain gathers up and co-ordinates the impressions received from the different sense organs of the physical body.

In order to understand the nature of the substance of a plane, we must apply to it the same methods as physical science has applied to research into the fundamental nature of the substance of the physical plane. We know that the physical senses, unaided by instruments of precision, are not able to render more than a very superficial account of the physical plane, and that when the methods of exact science are applied to that plane, we find that the real nature of matter is very different from the appearance it presents to the untrained observer. So it is with the subtle planes. The actual nature of the substance and entities of these planes is not perceived by the untrained psychic any more than the real nature of the atom is discerned by the eye of the average man.

The astral plane undoubtedly presents to the consciousness of the psychic the appearances which have been so often described, but the occult scientist knows that these appearances are in the eye of the beholder alone, and do not represent actualities, save symbolically.

CHAPTER 15.

Consciousness of the Planes.

It is agreed by physicists that all that actually exists on the physical plane is force; matter in its different forms is simply the appearance which force, in its different aspects, presents to the senses. The same is equally true of the subtler planes of existence. They are simply different types of force with their various sub-divisions, and the impression we get of them is the effect they produce on our consciousness.

The type of existence of each plane is indicated by the name given to it. On the mental plane, mind-stuff is the basic substance; on the astral plane, emotion-stuff is the basic substance, or in other words, all thought exists on the mental plane and all emotion exists on the astral plane.

We use the word 'plane' for these different aspects of existence because it is the term that has been established by usage, but it is in many ways an unfortunate term and leads to misapprehension because it teaches us to think of the different types of existence as lying one above the other, like the layers of the atmosphere, whereas the different 'planes' are really but different modes of manifestation of force. Each 'keeps itself to itself' in that it only acts and reacts among its own type of existence and is unaware of all other types save when translations are made up and down the planes by the modes we have described. Consciousness, however, even the most rudimentary consciousness, synthesises the modes of existence rendered available for it by its composite nature, and reacts to them as an integration, not as units. If, however, consciousness desires to act upon its environment, it cannot deal with it as an integration, but must separate it into units. Hence the custom of the occultist who speaks of the 'planes' of the universe, and teaches his consciousness to think of them as separate worlds. As we think of things on the inner planes, so they are, and if he thinks of them as

separate, he disentangles his apprehension of them and is able to contact them separately. This was the discipline of the 'Lesser Mysteries,' which taught its initiates to conceive of the planes separately in order that they might be able to deal with individual factors. It is this doctrine which has been given out to the world by partially initiated students. The higher degrees of the 'Mysteries,' however, gave the key of a philosophical concept. It is this key which is lacking to the naive occultists who accept the Plane of Illusion at its face value.

A very large proportion of the people who are now studying occultism are quite incapable of grasping this philosophic concept. They get as far as a realisation of the existence of worlds which their eyes cannot see, and they immediately conceive of these worlds as being exactly like our own if they could see them. They do not realise that these worlds are not kept separate from our familiar earth by the occupation of a different position in space, but are separated from it by being of an entirely different mode of existence, and that if we chose to speak of them in terms of position in space, which, strictly speaking, we should not do, for it is misleading, we should be obliged to say that the different forms of existence were not only interpenetrating, but occupied exactly the same spot without necessarily affecting each other in the very slightest, and that they are not in the least mutually exclusive. Practical magic concerns itself with the means whereby these independent modes of existence can be rendered interacting or mutually exclusive. This can only take place in the crucible of consciousness, and it takes place normally wherever there is life. It is the projection of consciousness into the not-self which is one of the processes of practical occultism.

The initiate is distinguished from the uninitiated occultist' by the fact that he sees through the symbol to the reality it represents. The Hindu mystic resents the allegation of the missionary that he worships an idol. He declares that he does not, but seeks, by focussing his mind on a symbol, to contact the potency which that symbol represents and thereby to bring its influence into his life. It is not, he declares, the fault of his faith that the limitations of the uneducated cause them to present a naive concept of the Hindu philosophy to the questioning missionaries; no Hindu pundit would take their statements seriously. So it is with occultism. The word 'idol' comes from the Greek Eidolon which means an image; the initiate knows that the image perceived by the imagination of the psychic is on a par with the image worshipped by the Hindu. Both images are made by the worshipper to provide a focussing point for the contact of a force. To look upon the image as the reality is to be an idolator, whether you are a savage or an occultist.

CHAPTER 16.The Dawn of the Higher Consciousness.

We talk glibly of spirit and the spiritual, but can we give an account of it which is intelligible to others, even if we ourselves know what we mean by these words, which is very often not the case? Even the Oxford English Dictionary cannot do better than define it by negatives as that which is immaterial. When spirit is equated with God, we are not much better off as God is defined again in negatives as a superhuman being. We are working in a circle, and 'come out by the same door wherein we went'.

I propose to define spirit as synonymous with life and life as synonymous with spirit. Spirit is the pure essence of life, and life as it is known to us is spirit expressed through the machinery of a form. Spirit, then, is unembodied life, and life is embodied spirit. We have now something tangible on which to work, for we have but to examine the characteristics of upbuilding life to be able to deduce something of the nature of God, of spirit, and to go on from height to height as our powers of intuitive deduction shall enable us; and on the other hand, we have but to examine the phenomena of down-breaking life to understand something of the functions of Death and the Devil. We shall then see that Life and Spirit and Death and Devil are but complementary processes of the one cyclic rhythm. Nevertheless, we are not dualists contemplating an unresolved antagonism, but see both these pairs of opposites as modes of existence, which differ, not in essence but in direction, one is on the outgoing and the other on the returning arc of the circle.

Our surface-consciousness is habituated to the task of dealing with impressions received from the physical senses; it is only in comparatively rare souls that it is able to synthesise the impressions coming in dimly and faintly from the subtler senses hidden in the deeps of consciousness. Nevertheless it is possible to habituate it to these impressions by resolutely and persistently attending to them and by exercising our minds on all that is akin to their nature which other minds have translated into terms of brain-consciousness for us. A mind thus exercised and practised soon builds up a stock of images which corresponds to the impressions received through the subtler senses, and learns to perceive and interpret them with facility.

Such attaining must have a beginning. We have to take the mind from where it is at present, immersed in impressions derived from the sensations of matter, and teach it to perceive and focus impressions derived from much subtler forms of existence. Normally, it is only adapted to register the workings of the machinery of life. We have got to teach it to perceive life itself if we are to arrive at spiritual consciousness.

In order to achieve this consciousness we must train the mind to think of life apart from physical form and to realise that a consciousness, or organised system of reactions and memories, persists after bodily death. This lesson spiritualism has taught to the world, and offers evidence in proof of it for individual consideration by those who desire to transcend the limits of materialism. Next we may call upon the mind to consider, and if possible to experiment with, the phenomena of telepathy; then we can ask it to go on to the study of the power of the mind over the body, as exemplified by auto-suggestion, and to experiment with this too. Thus the mind is gradually weaned from its submergence in matter and its complete dependence upon the five physical senses. 'As the mind thinks, so is it'. If it believes itself to be limited to the perceptions of the five physical senses, so it will be; but if it conceives the possibility of the extension of perception to include states of existence not cognised by those senses, consciousness will be extended to include them. The first step in the opening of the inner faculties is the realisation that we have them.

But psychism is not of the kingdom of spirit, it still concerns the things of the mind. Nevertheless, the man who has realised the possibility of another mode of consciousness than that of matter will be the more ready to realise the existence of another mode of consciousness than that of mind. For mind is but another, though more subtle, vehicle of life, and not life itself. Life, as the Oxford Dictionary truly recognises in its definition, is distinct from form. That which we distinguish as forms is essentially not life.

How, then, are we to perceive life itself? In the same way that we distinguish the modes of existence on the other planes - by the reaction which the corresponding aspect of our own composite nature makes to it. We perceive material things by the reactions of our physical vehicle, and we perceive spiritual things by the reactions of our spiritual nature, which responds to their stimulus by manifesting the qualities of the essence it contacts. As we touch Love, so we are loving: as we touch Life, so are we living.

Habituated as we are to mind consciousness, we cannot conceive of any other form of awareness. For us, nothing is apprehended unless it is focused by the mind. But there are forms of consciousness which are both inferior and superior to mind consciousness. Emotional consciousness may consist of emotional reactions with no tincture of thought; it may be stimulated by the emotion of another with no word spoken, no sign exchanged. Normally, in intellectually developed people, such emotional reactions, belonging to a lower grade of evolution, are translated into terms of mind consciousness because the ego focuses on the plane of the concrete mind, but in times of stress they may sometimes be perceived in their primitive form, and are very instructive.

Equally with the impressions derived from the world of spirit; we are so accustomed to focus in the concrete mind that we cannot habituate ourselves to the idea of a form of apprehension which is not mental. Therefore

the things of the spirit are a closed book to us; it requires a long training to enable us to raise consciousness to the spiritual plane and to 'know even as we are known', and we have at first to be content to see 'as in a glass, darkly'. This glass is the subconscious mind, the Magic Mirror of the occultists. In it rise the thought-forms stimulated by the impressions received through the subtler senses. If we are receiving impressions from the plane of spirit, it may be that vision will result as we gaze into the magic mirror of our own subconscious mind. But no vision which is expressed in terms of sensory images can be a direct perception of the plane of spirit; it can only be a symbolic rendering, for there are no forms in spirit.

If we are content to remain looking into the Magic Mirror, we shall never rise into the higher consciousness. If we cultivate the Magic Mirror, we may sink into a lower form of consciousness which involves dissociation of the higher faculties. Nevertheless, the Magic Mirror may be our first link with supernal realities, the means by which a realisation of non-physical forms of existence is borne in upon us.

Once we have a realisation of such a reality (and this realisation can only be brought about by definite experience, however vague and fleeting, it can never result from intellectual conviction), we have won a foothold in the Unseen, and we can begin to explore in all directions; but without such a foothold, we have no means of making a start.

Nevertheless, the tendency of the mind to bring all things into a focus in concrete consciousness must be sternly resisted until the habit is broken, if we are to win an apprehension of spiritual realities. Although a better understanding of emotional states is gained if we intellectualise them and translate them into terms of ideas, the apprehension of spiritual states is prevented when we try so to intellectualise them, for we are debasing them in the attempt. Emotion is raised when it is translated into terms of mind, but spiritual consciousness is lowered and its true significance clouded.

If we want to develop spiritual consciousness, as distinguished from mental and astral consciousness, we must remember that ideas and sensory images play no part in it. Its nearest equivalent is in feeling, and it is in states of exalted feeling directed towards non-mundane objects that we find our best realisation of spiritual consciousness.

The esotericist distinguishes two planes of spirit, and such a distinction makes the concept much more apprehensible. He recognises the plane of pure Spirit, which is ineffable and formless, where 'All are one and One is all', and distinguishes from this the plane of Concrete Spirit, which consists of the qualities which Spirit manifests. This distinction between Spirit and its qualities is of great practical importance to the seeker after mystic consciousness, for although it is impossible for finite consciousness, the consciousness of the personality built up through

the experiences of the senses, to apprehend pure Spirit, it is within its power, when trained, to comprehend spiritual qualities, or in the language of esoteric science, to rise to the Sixth Plane, or Plane of Concrete Spirit. These it comprehends in proportion as it possesses them; hence the significance of the old saying, 'Lead the life and you will understand the doctrine'. For a consciousness habituated to the Plane of Concrete Spirit, that is to say, to the expression of the spiritual qualities in a Christ-like life, there is much evidence available that it is possible to rise to the plane of Pure Spirit and 'see God face to face'.

T H E S O C I E T Y O F T H E I N N E R

L I G H T

STUDY COURSE

PART I

Lessons 1 - 3.

Note. "Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science" by Dion Fortune is used as one of the text books because it serves to show where occult science and spiritualism meet and where they diverge, and because of the light it throws on certain phenomena. Spiritualism has developed since the book was written and quite possibly some aspects there classed as undesirable have been changed or modified.

- 1 -
STUDY COURSE Part 1.

Students are asked to conform to the following routine:-

1. To practise meditation daily.
2. To give a mental salutation to the Inner Plane Adepti (commonly known as the Masters) at noon.
3. To make a brief mental review of the day (from evening back to morning) the last thing at night.
4. To record briefly the pith of the daily meditation; the time of the midday salutation; and whether the evening review has been done or not.
5. At the end of each fortnight to submit, to the Secretary, this record or "meditation diary" for inspection by the supervisor, who will return it in due course with any comments deemed necessary.
6. To answer the questions set at the end of each lesson and submit them with the diary also for the supervisor's inspection and return.

The diaries are, of course, treated as confidential. The records of the daily meditations should be brief - from about 7-10 lines in length. Lists of subjects for meditation are to be found at the end of each lesson and the student should confine himself to choosing from these. It may be found fruitful to take some of them several times.

If a student is entirely unacquainted with any of the 'set' subjects it may be a waste of time for him to attempt meditation on them. If he feels this to be the case he should resolve to make good the deficiency in his knowledge by appropriate reading, etc. when he can.

To each lesson is allotted half a month - roughly two weeks. During this fortnight of study of a lesson the student should answer the questions set on it and submit these at the end of it. Thus the question answers and diaries should reach this H.Q. twice a month, once about the middle and once after the end.

Meditation and Diary Requirements.

The keeping of a diary is an explicit condition of membership of the Society. In order to make clear what the requirements are it is deemed advisable to place a statement of these on record for future reference and guidance. It will suffice to remind students that membership of the Society is reserved for those who comply with these conditions alike in the spirit as well as in the letter. Our Society is comprised solely of those who seriously undertake so to discipline, instruct and inform their own natures that the clear light of spiritual realisation may shine forth in their daily lives, and it is an essential condition of membership that meditation be regularly performed with this end in view. It is our opinion that he who has stereotyped and dedicated this habit becomes 'as a lamp set in a windless place that does not flicker'.

The practice of regular, daily meditation has the commendation of ancient philosophies. The experience of those who have faithfully followed this practice in a spirit of dedication, bears ample witness to its efficacy. Our members are required to devote one period daily throughout the year to this purpose (excluding one month's remission during the summer for those who desire it and one day a week).

It is desirable that if possible a definite time be fixed and adhered to. First, this prevents the meditation from being overlooked and missed; and secondly, the mind forms a time-habit very readily and tends to come into the right mood at the appointed time of its own accord.

With the requirements of such a discipline our members comply willingly because experience soon teaches them its value. Only the original records compiled at the time are of any value and only such should be submitted, for to fill in more than one day at a time is against both the spirit and the letter of the purpose of the diary. A satisfactory diary bears witness of the regularity of the performance of meditation, the assiduity of the practice the clarity of realisations obtained and the sincerity of purpose with which the practice is undertaken. These are the signs by which the serious student is known and by these signs will the diary be judged. Admission to Membership of the Fraternity is as much dependent upon satisfactory diary-work as upon the written examination. Similarly, progress depends among other things upon the continuing adequacy of the diary.

The period that should be devoted to meditation daily is a matter of temperament and circumstances. The guiding principle should be whether sufficient concentration, resolution and realisation are brought to bear upon the subject meditated upon, and whether within the limits of time imposed daily, results are reasonably to be expected if regularly pursued over a period of time. As a matter of experience, those who are unaccustomed to meditative practice find it difficult, especially at first, to

still the mind sufficiently to direct it towards the subject of meditation. Some require the qualities of fortitude, courage and endurance to persist steadfastly in the practice till it can be stereotyped into a habit. Others, however, long inured to the practice, bring to it concentration, inflexible resolution and certain conviction. These achieve results - and quickly. The quality of meditation is of greater importance than its quantity. Each must resolve the personal equation in terms of the importance of the results to be achieved, his opportunities and circumstances as well as his qualities of heart and mind and aspiration.

There is a veritable cloud of witness to which the student may appeal for counsel. In the Pythagorean School meditation was insisted upon 'on rising in the morning'. The writings of the imperial disciple Marcus Aurelius are themselves testimony to the efficacy of the practice. The Trappist monks devote many hours a day to the practice, whilst certain schools of mystical thought require as a minimum period the first hour of the day. Within the Society we require a minimum period of ten minutes.

The regularity of the work is of just as much importance as its profundity. In fact, one who does regular daily meditation, even if for no more than ten minutes, will make greater progress, and be considered a more satisfactory worker, than one who spends long periods in meditation at irregular intervals. Those who realise the excellences of the practice will soon extend the period, whilst those who fail to grasp the essentials of the matter will reveal it in the perfunctory performance of the diary. The great enemy in this connection is inertia - the enemy that has long held humanity in thrall. Nevertheless, the last word is not with the enemy unless the student is prepared to capitulate and surrender his indomitable courage and steadfast perseverance. Inflexibility of purpose and will remain the guiding stars of human conduct and behaviour - "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also".

The time and place of meditation are also of importance. It is usually easier to meditate in a place which is used regularly for that purpose.

The main meditation work should be done, if possible, before noon. The morning exercises are meant to train the mind in the technique of meditation. The evening review is designed to tune the subconscious mind so that it may work in the desired way during sleep. Most find that the best time for meditation is immediately after rising and before food has been taken, though there is no objection to a cup of tea. The mind is refreshed by sleep and undisturbed by the day's activities; something of the atmosphere of a retreat is to be found at this hour of the day and half an hour spent daily in meditation at this time is worth more than long periods of intensive work scattered at irregular intervals through the week. We recommend that this should be the hour chosen for the daily meditation, if it be in any way possible to do so. It is not advisable to

try to meditate before rising, as this usually results in dropping off to sleep again, but rugs should be used to maintain the necessary warmth while sitting in the meditation attitude. Those who find this time unsuitable after a thorough try-out should discover for themselves what is best and keep to it.

A good attitude for meditation is sitting upright in a straight-backed chair with the feet on a foot-rest of such height that there shall be no sense of strain. The attitude should be neither tense nor reclining, but poised. This is achieved by adjusting the height of the foot-rest to the length of the leg. A foot-rest is readily improvised from books or a small box.

Freedom from bodily strain obtained by poise is to be preferred, in meditation attitude, to freedom from bodily strain obtained by relaxation, because when complete relaxation is attained, meditation is apt to end in sleep; whereas, if sleep supervenes in a poised meditation-attitude, the poise is lost and the student awakened at once.

Meditation should not be done in a glaring light, as that tends to make concentration difficult. If the room cannot easily be darkened, a piece of dark material may be tied across the eyes. Noise can be readily overcome by the use of ear-plugs.

You will find that noise has little power to distract you when you are experienced in meditation; and it should be your aim to arrive at the point when you are reasonably indifferent to noise. The beginner, however, will find the ear-plugs a great help.

On this part of the Course, the object of the meditation discipline is, besides laying the foundations of the meditation habit, to get the student to train himself to concentrate on and think systematically about a given subject for a few minutes, to follow a train of thought steadily and without mind-wandering, and it is for each to discover for himself his own best way of doing this.

An important part of this discipline is the subsequent recapitulation and recording of the 'realisations' obtained; that is to say, the writing down of the pith of the ideas developed during the meditation. This should be done immediately; indeed, it should be regarded as the last step of the meditation for it serves to 'anchor' the realisations obtained. It should not be left until later in the day though, naturally, the student may, if he finds it more convenient, make his record in the form of rough notes, to be written up into a fair copy later.

It does not matter if these 'realisations' are little or no different from the ideas the student would have had if he had been thinking about the chosen subject in the ordinary way; the aim of this discipline is to acquire a technique and the realisations should become deeper as the student acquires facility.

It is not desired that personal or private matters should be recorded in these diaries. The aim of the work is, as already stated, for the student to acquire a technique of

meditation and thus to begin his education in the use of little-understood powers of the mind. Until dominion is obtained over the wandering thoughts progress is unlikely.

Since it is also desired to lay the foundations of a life-long habit, it follows that regularity in the carrying out of the meditation discipline is extremely important, and in the assessment of the work regularity is therefore taken in consideration as well as the quality of the work. To miss an occasional day does not matter as long as it does not lead to a prolonged break but when a day is missed the student is asked to indicate, in his diary, the reason as otherwise it is difficult to assess regularity. It is quite permissible to regard Sunday as a "day off".

It should be clearly realised that keeping a diary-record does not consist in writing a short essay each day, but in performing a definite period of mental concentration upon a certain type of subject and recording the results. The record of the results should note the time occupied by the meditation, whether concentration was easy or difficult, and the nature of the 'breaks' or intruding thoughts that occurred to interrupt it.

For instance, a diary might include the following notes. 'Meditation interrupted by barking of dog', or 'meditation steady and deep', or 'some difficulty in gathering up the thread of thought again', etc.

These exercises are designed to strengthen and co-ordinate the conscious mind and establish it on a sound basis of efficient thinking in terms of concrete thought. Until this has been achieved, any attempt at the development of super-consciousness or psychism is very undesirable as it leads to dissociation of personality and the general loss of grip on life and hypersensitiveness so often seen among psychics.

Students who already possess some degree of psychism, either natural or acquired, may be disappointed to find that it diminishes when these exercises are practised. This is due to the fact that consciousness is being firmly anchored to the physical plane which is an essential preliminary to the safe pursuit of practical occultism. Ill health due to psychic causes tends to clear up under this discipline.

Owing to this closing down of his psychic faculties, the student will find that he may be no longer in touch with those inner plane contacts with which he is accustomed to work. This breach is only temporary, however, and at a later stage the student can decide whether he wishes to renew these contacts or not.

All occult schools agree that it is not possible for a student to be trained in more than one system at a time. This is not due to any prejudice or jealousy on the part of the representatives of these schools, but is simply a fact of experience. When a student is in touch with two sets of psychic

influences, one will close as the other opens.

Students who are not psychic must not be disappointed that our training does not immediately produce extension of consciousness. It is not intended to do so. In fact it is deliberately designed to close down temporarily whatever super-normal faculties the student may possess so that he may make an entirely fresh start in his development.

The highest form of super-consciousness and the most reliable form of psychism is of the nature of hyper-developed intuition. Clairvoyance or the seeing of visions, and clairaudience or the hearing of voices are obtained by a knowledge of certain technical methods of using the subconscious mind and are of the nature of a dream produced at will.

The initiate who understands the technique of these methods knows that whatever is seen or heard is going on within his own mind, just as are the things he experiences in a dream. If it seems to him that he sees with his physical eyes or hears with his physical ears things which do not belong to the physical plane, it may mean that a portion of his consciousness has become split off and it is unwise for him to attempt any practical work in occultism until the dissociated portion has been re-absorbed.

This splitting-off is sometimes due to an over-sensitive temperament and sometimes to wrong methods of development, but in any case it is very harmful. If persisted in the dissociation spreads further and further through the mind and the whole personality can become disorganised.

The student who is accustomed to this form of psychism may find the concentration exercises difficult at first, but it is very necessary that he should persevere with them. As he attains mastery over his conscious mind the rift will close up. When complete harmonisation and a clear-cut concentration on the physical plane have been obtained (and not before) it is possible to acquire a technique which enables the psychic faculties to be opened and closed at will.

It is essential to be able to close the psychic faculties and return to normal consciousness; if this cannot be done and if psychic consciousness overflows into everyday life, the student is unfitted for the tasks that life imposes and is obliged to live the life of a hermit to maintain his mental and physical health. High grade initiates sometimes undertake such retreats for the purpose of accomplishing special work but in no case can such experiments be recommended for the beginner.

Practical occult work depends for its successful accomplishment primarily upon the power of concentration. The student must be able without effort to maintain steady clear-cut concentration over considerable periods before he can attempt any practical work. The aim of the exercises prescribed in the Study Course is to give this power of concentration which is the foundation on which all else is built. The first place in which the power

of concentration is tested on the physical plane; until it has proved of worth there, any attempt to open up the inner planes is undesirable.

It will be seen from this that the method of training given in the Society of the Inner Light cannot result in unbalance or dissociation of personality. It is based on sound psychological principles and the exercises are carefully graded. Quite apart from any psychic and occult development obtained, it will be found that the exercises enhance and develop the normal mental capacity and make the student more fitted to cope with life.

No special type is aimed at in the discipline given by the Society. The truest development is obtained only when a man or woman becomes a perfectly balanced and highly developed specimen of his or her own type.

At no point in the training of a student is any attempt made to dominate him or to influence him, and he is at liberty to withdraw whenever he wishes to do so.

It is important to make the Sign of the Cross or some such holy Sign at the beginning of meditation and also at its close.

The evening review consists of a brief and rapid survey of the day, from evening to morning. Note^{*} what you have done well and what progress you have made, as well as your shortcomings, and meditate on the progress you intend to make next day. Do not dwell upon the negative aspect of things, such as the shortcomings, but rather upon the constructive aspect - the things you intend to do and to achieve.

It is a good plan to carry out this exercise in bed with the light out, and actually go to sleep while doing it even if only a little is done; the mind, tuned to the keynote of aspiration, will carry on the work subconsciously during sleep, and may yield remarkable results.

With a little practice you will find it quite easy to survey the events of the day in the reverse order. You will also find that reviewing them in the reverse order breaks the currents of thought that have been running all day, and quickly puts you to sleep. Do not dwell on any point, but review rapidly and steadily like a cinematograph film being run off backwards, with an accompaniment of comment, judgment, resolution and aspiration; do not resist sleep, for the aim is to go to sleep with the mind turned towards aspiration, but continue the process, gently and without effort, watching the mind-pictures as they unfold, until sleep comes; which it will usually do very speedily when once the mind has been habituated to this exercise.

The midday salutation is performed by turning the eyes in the direction of the sun at noon, if circumstances permit, and mentally saluting the sun as the visible manifestation of the source of all life. Think of God as ~~made~~ manifest in nature;

* a mental note, of course, is meant by this.

listen in imagination to the rhythm and swing of the solar system as it circles around the sun; think of yourself as part of nature - as holding your own position in this vast machine and feel your relationship to all the other parts. Then greet the Inner Plane Adepts as your guides and your friends. A brief mental salutation is all that is required and this can be given in almost any circumstances, though it may not always be possible to look towards the sun at noon.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE KEEPING OF THE DIARY

SPECIMEN

DATE: 19th May, 1963.

TIME: 7.15 a.m. to 7.30 a.m.

SUBJECT: '.....'

REALISATIONS:
(7-10 lines of brief, carefully
expressed notes)

TIME OF MID-DAY SALUTATION TO THE INNER PLANE ADEPTI:^ж

TIME AT WHICH EVENING REVIEW WAS CARRIED OUT:^{жж}

N.B.

ж: THE MASTERS, or INNER PLANE ADEPTI as the Society prefers
to call them.

Some students do not seem to be quite clear on the concept of the Inner Plane Adepti. The Inner Plane Adepti are beings who have evolved beyond the need for incarnation and have achieved relative perfection, i.e. they are fully evolved human beings, but instead of entering into the Divine Union which is the final goal of evolution they have elected to remain within reach of the earth sphere in order that they may serve humanity upon its evolutionary journey. By thinking of them we make an initial contact, and this contact is capable of development as the pupil advances. Therefore when you make your salutation think of the Inner Plane Adepti as your elder brethren, the "Company of Just Men Made Perfect", organised into a graded hierarchy in the service of God and Man and Earth.

жж: Bare statement - no comments required.

The keeping of proper diary-records is as essential to advancement in the grades of the Society of the Inner Light as the passing of examinations. A record of each student's work is kept from the day of his enrolment, and is considered in relation to his advancement. In order that those who correct the diaries may be able to form a just estimate of the work a student is doing it is desirable that the diary should be kept according to the method explained in the accompanying paper of instructions.

In keeping your diary remember that the person who corrects it may be correcting a number of other diaries also and that careless or illegible writing adds greatly to his labours.

Please use a loose-leaf file for diary work, and send up for correction only the pages belonging to the month. Begin the record on the first day of the period and end it on the last.

The pages should be securely held together by a paper clip, a blank page should be placed in front of them on which is written your name, address, the month to which the record belongs, as follows:

X.Y.Brown (Mrs),
10 High Street,
London, N.W .3.

January, 1963.

This applies to students - not to initiates who receive other instructions in due course.

Do not address your diary or question answers to your supervisor but to the Secretary.

The best size for diary paper is quarto (the size of this sheet); if small-sizes paper is used, it is difficult to correct; if a larger paper is used it is apt to get torn.

Let your notes be brief and concise.

Write legibly in ink - or type if you can.

Do not send bulky books or birding-cases.

Enclose a stamped envelope addressed to yourself for the return of your diary or question papers after correction.

If the student is in the habit of doing other devotional and meditation practices, it is not necessary that these should be recorded in the diary submitted to the Society of the Inner Light.

Remission of diary discipline.

If circumstances, such as holidays, travel, or times of stress make it impossible for students to keep a regular diary-record for a period, they should write to the Secretary asking

for remission from the diary discipline for a period, or until further notice. It is particularly desired that students will not merely omit to send their diaries for a time

One month's remission during the Summer.

For those who take remission during either July or August the procedure is automatic. This means that in either case - after sending in the June record - nothing further should be sent in until the beginning of September when the work submitted should be in respect of either July or August. To allow of a break for teachers only one month's work should be sent in in September even if remission has not been taken.

As will have been clear from the foregoing instructions, it is more convenient if students will begin their recorded work on the Course either on the first of a month or in the middle - say the 15th or thereabouts.

In order that supervisors may be notified, students are asked to let the Secretary know when they propose to start work.

It is not always realised by the neophyte that the subjects taught in these lessons are - to a great extent - very abstract in their nature, and so are far from easy to picture clearly.

STUDY COURSE Part 1

LESSON 1

Chapter 1

The Nature of the Mystery Teaching

The Mystery Teaching deals with the nature of the invisible reality behind appearances; of its origin, the course of evolution it has pursued, and the course it may be expected to pursue. In addition to this "Esoteric Cosmogony", as it may be called, the Mystery Teaching also has a knowledge of the higher aspects of consciousness and the little-known powers of the human mind.

Out of this knowledge of the invisible reality behind appearances and the little-understood powers of the human mind there is developed an applied science (which is sometimes called Theurgy) of working objectively with spiritual power.

Theurgy must be carefully distinguished from Thaumaturgy (the 'production of marvels'), or in present day language 'psychic phenomena'.

The practical work of the Mysteries consists mainly in spiritual development by psychological means. This does not mean the production of psychism, but of a highly developed intuition by means of which the invisible realities are apprehended. It also results in obtaining remarkable powers over the mind itself, and notably over the subconsciousness. Properly used, these powers harmonise the temperament, purify and strengthen the character and enhance the intellectual capacity. This increased capacity is not due to any artificial development of supernormal powers but to the freeing of powers which takes place when the soul is in harmony with the cosmos.

These results are obtained by a technique of mind-training so that the mind can then be used under direction of the will to produce results that would be impossible to the average individual whose control of himself and his faculties is little developed.

The vast accumulation of knowledge both spiritual and psychological which we call the Mystery Tradition has been built up by the skilful use of the Mystery technique by trained minds. By means of the powers developed by their training, initiates extend their observation and experience beyond what is conveyed to them by the five physical senses, developing other senses that are able to contact the subtler forms of existence which underlie and determine the nature of all that appears to us on the physical plane.

The value of contacting the subtler planes of existence is that thereon do we find the causes underlying all effects, and when we understand these we are much better able to deal with the problems of life. The initiate is not interested in psychic phenomena to demonstrate the existence of the unseen worlds and the survival of bodily death. Psychic phenomena are only incidental to his work, which in the early stages is the development and harmonisation of character and consciousness.

Esoteric science knows by long experience that there are modes of consciousness in addition to those which we normally use, that there are other modes of perception than the five physical senses and other types of logic than those in general use today. It is by the cultivation of these other modes of consciousness, these other means of perception and these other kinds of logic that esoteric science enhances human capacity and extends knowledge beyond the plane of material existence.

The trained initiate of the Mysteries is one who understands the technique of these three methods, whose mind is skilful in their use and who can bring the results of all three to a focus in consciousness and countercheck them by exact methods and experiment.

The ancient philosophers had not the instruments that we have for developing scientific knowledge. They did not, therefore, only observe Nature and draw conclusions from what they observed, as many scientists do today, but they also looked deep into their own souls and meditated upon the nature of life, and then checked their meditations by what they observed in life around them. This is the deductive method of logic. It starts from first principles and draws certain conclusions which are then checked against experience. This method is quite different from the methods generally used by modern scientists and philosophers who use the inductive method of logic, which consists in making observations and drawing conclusions therefrom about the nature of the first principles which explain them.

Both are legitimate logical methods. The deductive method gave the Greeks their philosophy; the inductive method gave us modern science. The best results are obtained when the two are combined - the deductive method, working from first principles, giving a lead to research by showing it in what direction to look; and the inductive method making data available and counter-checking the results. Moderns, however, to their great loss, have largely abandoned the deductive method. In this latter method the Mystery training re-educates us.

Each method requires certain conditions to be observed for its successful use. The inductive method requires wide and accurate observation of details. The deductive method makes a start long before sufficient observations have been collected

to enable the inductive philosopher to draw any conclusions. It sets out with what may best be termed a working hypothesis concerning the nature of what it is investigating and checks this against observation, seeing whether it is justified or not.

The deductive philosopher depends for his successful work upon the accuracy of the instruments employed, just as much as the inductive scientist does: but in the case of the deductive philosopher, the instruments he has to make use of are not exterior to himself but are the powers of his own mind. In order to work accurately and successfully, therefore, he trains his mind very carefully and brings it to a much higher state of development than the mind of the average man. The method of the Mysteries aims at bringing about this highly developed mental power. Different persons vary in their natural aptitude for the training, just as they vary in their musical ability. But though not everyone can hope to sing in grand opera, practically every one can enjoy the pleasures of community singing. The Mysteries have something to give to nearly everybody according to type, but not every one will go on to adepthood in one life.

Another method of using the mind, which is developed into a system in the Mysteries, is reasoning by analogy. There is a traditional saying in the Mysteries, drawn from an ancient Gnostic inscription, 'As above, so below'. This is but another way of saying that certain principles run through all nature, both visible and invisible. Consequently, if we observe a natural law to work systematically on the physical plane, we conclude that it also applies to mental, moral and spiritual things. Likewise, if we observe a spiritual or moral law that works systematically, we conclude that it will apply also to the realm of matter and the affairs of this world.

This logic of analogy can be very misleading and must be used with discretion; but it can give very valuable hints about the directions in which exact research will prove profitable and therefore it should not be neglected.

Inductive logic is accurate but limiting; it may be so limiting that it prevents research from ever making a start, or blinds its eyes to the obvious because the links in the logical chain are not clear. Deductive and analogical methods are not so accurate and cannot be relied on without counter-checking, but they are exceedingly fruitful in suggestions and by their use we can construct a speculative scaffolding which enables a structure of exact knowledge to be built.

The use of deductive and analogical methods does not depend upon observation (and therefore cannot be counterchecked immediately) but upon the smooth and accurate working of the mind itself. If we have any prejudices or inhibitions or repressed complexes the mind will be biassed and will not yield accurate results. We must also be very honest-minded so that we know the limits of our knowledge, and never go beyond reasonable deductions from the evidence available. When we have

reached that limit, we must have sufficient self-control to be patient and to wait for more information to be forthcoming. The wise man is always ready to say, "I do not know."

It is the aim of esoteric philosophy to give us an outlook upon life and an attitude towards the world that shall make us intellectually courageous, for this is the source of freedom from prejudice. This freedom will make us intellectually humble, for it is the basis of open-mindedness. These two things, courage and humility, are primary intellectual virtues and without them the pursuit of truth is ineffectual.

The early training is the same for all students, laying the foundations of a disciplined mind and a general grasp of the esoteric philosophy. Beyond this point, in order to meet the need of different types of temperament, there is a choice of three Paths: one of these will be most congenial but knowledge of and sympathy with the other two are also to be sought.

(1) The Devotional Path. Upon this Path the terminology and symbolism vary with the temperament. The teaching gives an interpretation of theology, and the training aims at the practice of the higher states of prayer, of meditation, and of contemplation. This Path is suited to the metaphysical temperament. Its aim is the perfection of character by the Way of the Cross, and the unfolding of the highest faculties.

(2) The Hermetic Path. Upon this Path the training is designed to give the mind power over itself. Its aim is the perfection of character through understanding. This Path is suited to the temperament that requires a philosophical interpretation of life, and is interested in study and research, both psychological and historical, and leads on to metaphysical understanding.

(3) The Orphic Path. Upon this Path the symbolism and terminology are drawn from the ancient myths and folk-lore. Its training is designed to bring consciousness into harmony with Nature. It aims at the perfection of character through the harmonisation of feeling and the realisation of the immanent Deity. It is the Path of the artist and Nature-mystic.

In the end all Paths unite in the 'One Temple in the Highest', and the above descriptions are only approximate.

It is well known that in ancient times the secrecy of the Mysteries was strictly guarded and many modern societies pursuing the same studies have followed the same methods. It is desirable, therefore, to give an explanation on this point.

Some persons maintain that the tradition of secrecy should be strictly followed. Others are of the opinion that nothing which is good and useful should be concealed, but that everything should be made freely available to all comers. The Society of the Inner Light has a viewpoint along the following lines.

The Mysteries consist of a body of knowledge and techniques derived from experience. When persons not associated with the Mysteries have had similar experiences and published the results, or have arrived at Mystery teaching by means of natural science or philosophy and have written freely concerning their views, there seems little point in requiring any further secrecy with regard to these particular subjects. Many things which were once known only to initiates are common knowledge since the new psychology and the new physics began to make such great strides.

Now that there is no longer persecution for opinion, there is no longer any point in keeping secret the Mystery philosophy and various writers have spoken freely on the subject of recent years.

There are certain things in the Mystery system, however, which it is not in the general interest should be given out indiscriminately. These concern the practical workings and are kept secret for two reasons. First, because the knowledge can confer powers, and these powers in unscrupulous hands are capable of abuse; second, because the practical work of the Mysteries is not fool-proof; and incautious persons can burn their fingers and the fingers of others as well.

Upon admission to the deeper workings, the candidate is bound to secrecy concerning the practical workings and undertakes not to use the powers of the human mind for evil purposes, not to use the occult powers for gain, nor to hire for money the powers of another. This debars initiates of the Mysteries from practising as - or having recourse to - professional astrologers, psychics, mediums and any who make money out of such services or who teach the Mystery techniques, initiates being thus forbidden to pay money for such services. Thus is the axe laid at the root of an abuse, and the purity of the Mysteries preserved.

The Mystery Tradition has no limited political doctrine. It teaches the duties of a man towards his fellows and the underlying principles and leaves him free to carry these out according to his circumstances and to express them in political activities according to his individual judgment of the needs of the time. The needs vary as the times change.

The traditional ethics inculcate respect for properly constituted authority and loyalty to the ideals of the race into which a man happens to be born.

The attitude of the Mysteries to religious bodies is: "Thou shalt not blaspheme the Name by which any man knoweth his God. Whoso cannot understand this command is unworthy of instruction."

It should be clearly understood by the student of esoteric philosophy that no race or faith should claim the exclusive possession of the truth. The higher we go in mystical realisation, the more clearly do we see the underlying unity of all religions in their spiritual essence.

Within the Mystery Tradition is a wide range of viewpoint and technique. After the preliminary work of learning the terminology, understanding the philosophy, and training the mind, specialisation can begin.

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

LESSON 1

Subject.

Mystery Teaching.

The little-known powers of the human mind.

Theurgy.

The technique of mind training.

Modes of consciousness.

The method of the Mysteries.

Inhibitions.

The Three Paths.

The secrecy of the Mysteries.

The Mystery system.

Tolerance.

LESSON 1

Questions.

1. What is meant by the term 'an Esoteric Tradition'?
2. What is Theurgy? Distinguish it from Thaumaturgy. Discuss the relationship between Theurgy and the method of the Mysteries.
3. What do you understand by the Three Paths? Describe them briefly. State to which of the three you feel most strongly attracted and explain why this particular Path interests you most.
4. What are the reasons which make a midway position between absolute secrecy and the indiscriminate dissemination of knowledge desirable in these studies?
5. Discuss the ethic of using the powers conferred by a Mystery School training to gain (a) Money,
(b) Power. (10 lines)
6. Why is mind training necessary?
7. Choose and write down seven key sentences.

Notes (applying to all lessons).

1. Answers to questions should be brief. About 4-7 lines unless a greater length is asked for. Answers should be given in the student's own words, not by copying the sentences of the lessons.
2. The object of the questions is:
 - (a) To draw attention to important points.
 - (b) To help the student to form a clear mental picture of the teaching given.
3. The student should strive, as he reads the lesson, to grasp clearly each item of the teaching, so that he can express it in his own words.
4. Be brief but clear in writing down your version of the teaching.

LESSON 2

Chapter 2

The Origins of the Mystery Tradition in the West.

The Mystery Tradition in the West has three well-marked stages of development, and these three stages correspond to the three levels of the mind - the subconscious or instinctive, the intellectual or conscious, and the superconscious or spiritual.

The primitive aspect of the Tradition consists of myth and folk-lore. Primitive man tried to understand the world about him and to explain its mystery. He knew nothing of scientific causation. If he saw a thing move he concluded that it moved as he moved, because it was alive; this is the 'Animistic Phase' of religious development. When his religion is in the animistic phase man explains natural phenomena by attributing a soul to every object that appears to him to be at all active.

Out of this develops the next phase of religious development, the 'Anthropomorphic Phase'. When a man, whether he be a primitive ancient or an uninstructed modern, is doing his religious thinking on this level, he explains all the happenings of life and nature by saying that a being or beings, of the same nature as himself but upon a larger scale and invisible, are causing them to happen.

Working on the hypothesis that everything has a mind like our own inside it and that invisible supermen are causing everything to happen, primitive man built up myths and legends to explain the happenings, and these formed the basis of primitive religion. These myths concern the things which greatly perplex primitive man, and greatly matter to him. They can be further divided into three broad categories.

First, the earth-cult of fertility. It was very important to primitive man that his flocks and herds should flourish and that he should have children to maintain the strength of the tribe; consequently, he tried to get into touch with Nature so that whatever he did as an agriculturist should be done in the right way.

Secondly, it puzzled him to know what happened to the dead, and so he developed an Underworld, or Chthonic, cult from the belief that the dead went down into the earth.

Thirdly, when he became a little more developed, he began to puzzle about the origin of life and the universe and the Sky cult developed, to culminate in star and sun worship.

This was how we can imagine primitive man to have looked at life, and we can see, in the light of the studies we have already made, that he was using the inductive method of reasoning, and that, allowing for the limitations imposed upon him by the

crudities of his language and outlook, he was not so very far out. He had, at any rate, got a fairly accurate grasp of first principles.

He had realised that behind appearances there is an invisible reality which is more akin in nature to mind than to matter; therefore his animistic theory, though crude, was not substantially incorrect. Science is coming back to it again today.

His concept of the man-like gods is very interesting and instructive when we come to analyse it. We find that as soon as man develops out of a merely savage state and begins to look beyond the next meal, he ceases to create in his imagination innumerable little gods for every tree and stream, and begins to picture to himself the greater gods. If we examine these greater gods we find that they represent the different things that fill man with awe. So we get the Creator-god, because the very fact of existence is an amazing thing, requiring explanation. The Creator-god is associated with 'space', because everything must have come originally out of nothing. Fertility is also a marvellous thing; the power by which living things, animal, plant and man increase and multiply is all-important; and so we get the cult of the Great Mother, as an Earth-goddess. Then we get the gods of War, of Love, of Wisdom, of Destruction, of Preservation and, finally, the all-important god who comes to put things right upon earth after they have gone wrong owing to the wickedness of men.

So we see that the gods and their myths correspond to the needs of the soul, whatever their origin; they are literally the projections of the mind of man. They correspond to very important spiritual truths and psychological factors.

The mind of primitive man probably worked in the same way as our subconscious minds work today; and our subconscious minds work in the same way as the mind of primitive man probably worked, that is to say by means of pictures in the imagination, in the same way as a small child's mind works.

In the West the average man has almost lost the use of the subconscious mind today; it is only the artist and the genius who make any use of it, and they generally use it blindly, so that it often gets out of hand. That is one reason why it is said that genius is akin to madness. In nervous disturbance the subconscious mind often gets out of hand and gives trouble.

If we know how to handle the subconscious mind, however, we can not only get it under control but can do some wonderful things with it. A very important part of the technique of the Mysteries consists in learning to manage the subconscious mind. This is easy to do if we go about it in the right way. We must remember that the subconscious mind thinks in pictures, not in words, for it is like the mind of a very young child;

if we try to reason with it in words, it is like talking to a deaf man - we make no impression. But if we show it pictures, as if it were a child, it can take them in and soon begins to respond. Then we can train and develop it.

Students of the Mysteries know by experience, and modern psychologists are beginning to discover, that it is the traditional myths of the childhood of man that appeal most to the subconscious mind; consequently, when we want to appeal to it we base our techniques upon these ancient myths, because, although we do not think that Apollo or Isis were actual persons, they correspond to great psychological truths. Moreover, because these myths form part of the cultural heritage of our civilisation, there is something deep down in us that responds to them in a way that it does not do to modern fairy stories, however beautiful.

The galloping hoofs of the horses of the Valkyrie, the mourning of Isis and the booming of the Kephra-beetle in the dusk, the Great God Pan with his shaggy goat-hooves - of such nature are the things that wake the imagination in us, each according to his kind. It is also held that many myths contain hidden truths deliberately expressed in such a form for the simpler minds of the laity by an instructed priesthood in early days.

An Esoteric Tradition consists of the sum-total of the mystical experience of given types of civilisation or culture. The Western Tradition had its more immediate origin in the Mysteries of those great civilisations which grew up round the shores of the eastern half of the Mediterranean Sea, but its remote origins according to tradition were in Lemuria and Atlantis. These Mediterranean civilisations were built up by a series of peoples that invaded, held, and were then in their turn driven out of those countries which we call Egypt, Arabia, Asia Minor and Greece; and during the period from 2000 B.C. to 700 A.D. there were laid the foundations not only of the Western Mysteries in their more 'modern' form but also of the Christian Church.

A great deal that is puzzling in the rites of the Church can be explained when we understand the part played by Chaldea, Egypt and Greece in our spiritual heritage; especially when we remember that gods were usually localised and belonged to districts rather than to the inhabitants of those districts, for though the nations might change, the gods as a rule did not do so and were sometimes adopted into the Church and represented as primitive saints and martyrs.

Chaldea gave us the Qabalah, which in the Mysteries is held to be the key to much of the Old Testament, the Apocrypha and the Apocalypse.

It was under the influence of the Mystery cults of Asia Minor and the teachings brought back by Greek students from the great theological colleges of Egypt that the Greeks developed their Mysteries. St. Paul is thought by some authorities to have

been an initiate of the great metaphysical and mystical centre of Tarsus.

After the persecution in Jerusalem, the leaders of primitive Jewish Christianity were driven out and began to form centres among the Jews of the Dispersion living in the great towns along the Roman trade routes. Among their early non-Jewish converts were initiates of the local Mystery cults in Alexandria, Antioch and Damascus. These men, trained in the Greek and Graeco-Egyptian Mystery schools, soon set their stamp on the organisation of the Christian 'house-churches' which sprang up in all the great commercial cities.

It seems more than probable that the once powerful Mysteries of the Christian religion had their real origin in the schools of Alexandria. Here was the famous 'Chair of St. Mark', who was the pupil of St. Paul and the companion of St. Peter and St. Barnabas. Alexandria, until the 5th century A.D., was looked upon as the principal teaching centre of Christianity and the home of the great Christian Gnosis - a term which was in early Christian times in high repute, and which was not used as a term of reproach and an accusation of heresy until later.

In this Christian Gnosis, which was a development of a still more ancient pre-Christian Gnosis, it is believed was preserved the teaching which Our Lord gave to the disciples apart 'in the upper chamber', and which is not recorded in the Gospels, though we are told that it conferred certain powers or 'signs following'.

In the course of its development through the centuries, the Mystery Tradition received many influences and went through many phases.

Tradition has it that the Egyptian culture was derived from the 'Lost Continent of Atlantis', but it cannot be looked on as established upon any historical basis and must be regarded as a tradition.

Chaldea was the ancient home of the Jews. Abraham was a Chaldean. Chaldea had its own Ancient Wisdom, and it was from this Wisdom Tradition of the Chaldeans that the pure spiritual monotheism of Israel arose. The Hebrew tradition was always intimately associated with the Egyptian and Babylonian traditions, despite the fulminations of some prophets. We are told that Abraham 'went down into Egypt'; likewise Joseph. Moses was born there, and was 'learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians'. Later, St. Joseph took the Holy Child and his Mother and 'fled into Egypt'.

It is hardly possible that the Israelites could have lived for so many generations in Egypt, even as slaves, without being influenced by the Egyptian culture. Later, in their captivity in Babylon, they must have come into close contact with the Babylonian culture. We read that Daniel was 'the master of the magicians'; and the teaching and imagery of Ezekiel, a figure of great importance in the history of Hebrew religion, show

clearly the influence of contemporary Babylonian religion and culture on the prophets of the 'Exile'.

When Christianity began to spread, there developed in connection with the public lecture halls of the once famous university of Alexandria a number of Mystery Schools teaching a mystical form of Christianity. The teaching of these Mystery cults was a logical development of the teaching of Philo of Alexandria and of that Graeco-Egyptian Gnosis which has come down to us in the Hermes-Trismegistic literature, and of the Gnosis of the Nazareans or Ebionites, those communistic primitives who broke away from the church that supported St. Paul. The Christian Gnosis was also strongly influenced by the Essenes and their method of life.

This Gnosis, representing the Mystery element in Christianity, soon found itself in conflict with the orthodox Church organisation. Leaders of the Church were at that time engaged in a life and death struggle with the government of the Roman Empire, for their avowed object was the ushering in of 'a new order'. They were politicians rather than theologians, and as men of action they despised the mystics as a class. Also they had control of the purse of the Church. Learning had decayed during this period of political insecurity and turmoil; religious prejudice had become exacerbated to such an extent that the volumes of the great library of Alexandria were used to feed the furnaces of the baths and bake-houses of the city. The exoteric activities of the Mystery schools vanished from the religious history of that time because they were driven underground by persecution, the activities of the esoteric cults are unrecorded save in change references.

During the Dark Ages culture was almost lost to Europe, and such fragments of science as it possessed were borrowed from the Arabs, the heirs of the Chaldean tradition. The Templars in Palestine came into touch with the fragments of the Esoteric Tradition of Israel preserved by hermits among the mountains of Lebanon. These hermits are reputed to have been the disciples of those Essene communities that once had had their monastic colonies on the banks of the Dead Sea, and had been driven out thence. They were held in high repute as mystics. A tradition declares that it was to the Essene community that Our Lord was taken at the age of twelve when his spiritual powers were recognised by the Rabbis as they heard him teaching in the temple at Jerusalem, and it is supposed that he remained there until he took up his mission at the age of thirty. The Therapeutoi of Egypt were another school of mystics similar to the Essenes, who made a special study of the healing art.

The Mystery Tradition was brought back to Europe by the Knights Templar, Crusaders and pilgrims, only to be stamped out once again by persecution. Later, when the Reformation broke the temporal power of the Church and the Renaissance freed men's minds, the Mystery Tradition sprang up again in a sporadic

fashion; it developed into the study of 'alchemy', but it did not attain to the organisation of a cult.

Into a world just beginning to think for itself and reaching out after mystical experience and spiritual realities, was thrown, like a stone into a pond, the mysterious Manifesto of the Brothers of the Rose-Cross, the "Fama Fraternitatis." Whence it came, no one has ever been able to find out, beyond what it says of itself that Christian Rosencreutz travelled to 'Damcar' in Chaldea, and there received initiation and brought back to Europe the forgotten arts and lost secrets of the Mysteries. It is this mysterious Manifesto which forms the 17th century focussing point of the Western Esoteric Tradition. Little, however, is known about it, save through intuition.

In addition to what may be called the classical Mystery Tradition which is the spiritual heritage of all the white races, a nation always has its own folk-lore based on the myths of its national heroes. Eastern Europe has the Slavonic folk-lore; Southern Europe feels the influence of the Etruscans, the predecessors of the Romans; Northern Europe has the Norse sagas of the gods and heroes; the Celts have their own fairy faith and tradition of the druids and bards.

The 'British' race, being of mixed origin, has for its folk-lore a blend of Celtic and Norse tradition, and individuals incline to one aspect or to the other according to the predominance of the different elements in their ancestry. The branch of that race which has made its home in North America has also fallen heir to the Red Indian and Maya traditions, the Red Indian influence prevailing in the East and North, and the Mayan in the West and South. The Mayan is the more highly developed and stronger influence. This happens where the native race dies out; as long as it remains alive as a functioning culture, it retains its traditions, and others do not fall heir to them.

Superimposed upon the folk-lore of the British Isles is the Arthurian Legend, which is a blend of Pagan as exemplified by Merlin, and Christian as exemplified by the Grail. Through this legend our folk-lore makes direct contact with the earliest Christianity. The legend in its original purity, before adaptation to Christian influences, is not now generally known.

Note: The paragraphs concerning primitive man and his "reasoning" should not be taken too literally; they are meant to give a type of background and are useful for that limited purpose. Obviously, the mental processes of primitive man (if he had any) can only be guessed at, not known.

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

LESSON 2

Subject.

Primitive Man and his Mind.
Anthropomorphism.
The Invisible Reality.
The Earth Goddess.
Myths correspond to the needs of the soul.
The management of the subconscious mind.
The Great God Pan.
The historical and traditional background
of the Mysteries.

LESSON 2

Questions.

1. Discuss the history of the Western Tradition.
(15 lines)
2. Who were the Gnostics; Knights Templar; Essenes;
and the Brotherhood of the Rose-Cross?
3. Discuss the following: "Myths are the expression
of the spiritual heritage of racial experience".
4. To what Esoteric Traditions has North America
fallen heir?
5. What is the relation of the Grail legends to
the folk-lore of these Islands?
6. Choose and write down 7 key sentences.

LESSON 3

Chapters 3-5

Chapter 3

First steps in the Qabalah

Esoteric philosophy has certain concepts concerning the nature of God and the origin of the universe. These concepts bear the same relationships to detailed knowledge as a diagram bears to a photograph. They are schematic and symbolic. The untrained human mind is not capable of understanding spiritual things. It is accustomed to concrete images; it does not know how to deal with spiritual abstractions. The ideas which are used as explanations of purely spiritual things must not be taken literally. They are only approximations. They are like the symbol x which is used to represent an unknown quantity. At the beginning of the calculation we do not know what x represents, but it enables the calculation to be made because it bears a definite relationship to other numbers in the problem. At the end of the calculation we learn what x must have stood for all along. If we had not made a start with our calculation, accepting the idea that x was an unknown factor, we should never have been able to reach the point when we were in a position to discover what x really was.

So it is with the metaphysical philosophy of the Mysteries. The data with which we start are all of the nature of x . It is not in the power of the human mind at its present state of evolution to conceive the Absolute. Minds, however, differ in their power to conceive abstract metaphysical ideas. Consequently, the same spiritual teaching is not helpful to everybody. To one person it may be incomprehensible because it is beyond him; to another it may be redundant because he already knows it. Esoteric philosophy avoids these dangers. It has no fixed doctrine; it has a set of symbols arranged in a definite relationship and a technique for using them.

In most systems the symbols are the gods and goddesses of a pantheon, and their significance is indicated by the myths that tell of their adventures and relationships. The simple-minded find moral teaching in these parables; the metaphysician finds a science; the mystic a philosophy. As Our Lord said, speaking to his disciples, 'To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to others in parables'.

The Western Esoteric Tradition does not use a polytheistic system as its basis for preliminary study; it uses the Qabalah, which is more in keeping with Western thought because it is monotheistic, the different potencies being represented as aspects of the One God, not as subsidiary gods.

The part of the Qabalah with which we are especially concerned is what is known as the Tree of Life. It is a diagram consisting of ten spheres arranged in a special pattern. They are called the Ten Holy Sephiroth.

These ten Sephiroth are named as follows:-

1. Kether - the Crown.
2. Chokmah - Wisdom.
3. Binah - Understanding.
4. Chesed - Mercy.
5. Geburah - Severity.
6. Tiphareth - Beauty.
7. Netzach - Victory.
8. Hod - Splendour.
9. Yesod - the Foundation.
10. Malkuth - the Kingdom.

It is conceived that each of these Ten Holy Sephiroth is an emanation of a particular aspect of the Divine Power. These different aspects of the function of the Godhead are indicated by the Ten Holy Names of God.

It will be recalled that God is called by various names in the Bible. Sometimes He is called the Lord; sometimes the Lord God; sometimes the God of Hosts, or the Father. These different expressions are the translation of the ten Hebrew Holy Names of God, which are as follows:-

1. Eheieh - I Am.
2. Jah - the Lord.
3. Jehovah Elohim - the Lord God.
4. El - God.
5. Elohim Gebor - the God of Battles.
6. Alcah va Daath - God made manifest in the sphere of mind.
7. Jehovah Sabaoth - the Lord of Hosts.
8. Elohim Sabaoth - the God of Hosts.
9. Shaddai el Chai - the Spirit of Life, or
the Foundation of Life.
10. Adonai Malekh,) - the Lord of the Kingdoms of Earth.
Adonai ha Aretz)

There are also associated with the Sephiroth ten astronomical titles. These are:-

1. The sphere of Space. Primum Mobile. First Swirlings.
2. " the Zodiac. Nebula.
3. " Saturn.
4. " Jupiter.
5. " Mars.
6. " the Sun.
7. " Venus.
8. " Mercury.
9. " the Moon.
10. " the Four Elements: the alchemical Elements of
Earth, Air, Fire and Water.

The God-Name represents the spiritual nature of the emanation; the astronomical name represents its mundane nature.

There are also ten Holy Archangels assigned to these spheres, and ten Orders of Angels. We need not, however, concern ourselves with these at present.

These Ten Holy Sephiroth should be considered as the ten files of a card-index system. For instance, everything to do with destruction would go under number 5, Geburah, Mars, and be recognised as the working of the God of Battles; everything concerning the Creator, the First Cause, under Kether.

It will be observed that the Ten Holy Sephiroth are connected together in the diagram by a zig-zag line. This is called the Lightning Flash, and indicates the order of their development; for they are said to have emanated one from another, thus indicating the different phases of evolution.

This diagram, when filled in, is the key to unlock the door of the Temple. The student constantly acquires additional data to add to it. His reading will also furnish him with increasing material once he has grasped the method of its use. His meditation will give him constantly increasing insight.

It is the great virtue of the Western Esoteric Tradition that it does not provide the student with a hard and fast body of doctrine to be learnt and believed, but with a technique that enables him to carry out his own investigations and penetrate into the spiritual mysteries.

The aim of the present course is to give the student a general outline of the Mystery teaching and an understanding of Mystery methods. He must be content to receive them with an open mind, regarding them as subjects for speculation.

Chapter IV.

The Planes of the Universe.

The following teaching should be regarded rather as explanatory of the technical terms employed in Esoteric Philosophy than as a reasoned exposition of the teaching.

The manifested universe consists of four planes, 'worlds', or types of existence. These do not occupy different positions in space, but are different modes of manifestation, just as water can exist in a solid form as ice and a gaseous form as steam, as well as in its usual liquid form.

These four Kingdoms are called in the Western system, the Archetypal Plane, the Mental Plane, the Astral Plane, and the Physical Plane. These constitute the Manifested Universe.

Behind the Manifested Universe is the Great Unmanifest. Esoteric Philosophy does not conceive of a personal Creator forming and controlling the universe, but of manifestation crystallising out of the Great Unmanifest periodically when certain conditions prevail in the Unmanifest which causes this condensation into form to take place.

Such a condensation passes through definite phases of organisation and development until it reaches its limit of complexity and then it begins to unify back again into first principles and once more becomes spiritual and unmanifest. It is said of such a process that God incarnates in the universe.

The different planes or kingdoms represent the different stages through which this process of evolution passes.

The Archetypal Plane consists of primary principles.

The Mental Plane consists of the 'substance' into which these principles can be best moulded.

The Astral Plane consists of 'substance' of which images can be made by the mind or the will and given power by the emotions.

The Material Plane consists of the Four Elements, known as Earth, Water, Air, Fire and a fifth state which is called by esotericists Aether. The first four (which are commonly called the Four Elements) are modes of activity of one original Element.

The Earth, Water, Air and Fire of the Wise are not the substances commonly known by those names, but the basic principles of these forms of the organisation of force.

Each plane is said to consist of a subtle and a dense aspect. Different esoteric systems use different classifications to describe these planes of the Manifested Universe, a sevenfold division being the most usual. This is obtained by dividing the subtle from the dense aspects of the Archetypal, Mental and Astral Planes, and counting the Material Plane as one plane. Once the student has grasped the principle of the classification, however, he will have little difficulty in understanding its nomenclature and employment in the different esoteric systems.

Chapter 5

The Creation of the Universe

If the reader has appreciated the significance of the previous lessons, he will have learnt the first words of the Language of the Mysteries, and instruction can now be conveyed to him in this language, with which he will gradually become increasingly familiar. It must be remembered that all the explanations given in terms of the Tree of Life are like counters in a game of cards - of no intrinsic value in themselves, but ultimately to be exchanged for coin of the realm when the game is over.

Let the student look at the diagram of the Tree of Life. He will see that behind Kether, the First Sephirah, is a dotted line; this is the Veil of the Unmanifest. It is the horizon of comprehension. Beyond it the intellect cannot penetrate. A horizon, however, forms a circle of which the observer is the centre. As he advances, it recedes. So it is with us as we grow in spiritual knowledge. Grade by grade, the Veil of the

Unmanifest is pushed further and further back as we develop. The great thing in using this technique is to hang that Veil just wherever it is convenient for us to do so, and not to strain after things which are beyond us but to make use of our powers of spiritual understanding just as far as they will go. The way opens up as we proceed.

We have no means of knowing directly what is behind that Veil, but we can make a guess at it from the nature of what appears in front of the Veil. These guesses are counterchecked by experience.

In order to give the student something to work with, we shall make certain dogmatic statements upon which he can meditate and thus learn to use the technique of the Tree. He is not expected to understand them, not even to accept them; but merely to practise with them upon the diagram of the Tree till he begins to grasp the way it is used. One cannot do more than this for him at his present stage of training. To learn the use of the Tree is like learning to ride a bicycle; it is a knack which cannot be taught, but must be learnt by experience.

Kether is the first Emanation. Behind Kether is the Veil of Negative Existence, or the Unmanifest. The nature of Negative Existence is unknown to us because our existence is positive, or manifest existence; therefore we have nothing with which to compare Negative Existence, and cannot expect to understand it. Yet we know it must be there, because manifestation must come from somewhere.

In an old glyph, the earth rested upon the back of an elephant which stood upon a tortoise, which was supported by an eagle which hovered in space.

This brings us back to the primary idea that manifestation originated in Space. It will be remembered that Kether is called the Sphere of Space.

Let us then equate Kether with the beginning of things, whatever the nature of that beginning may be. Whatever we find to be true of Kether will be true of the beginning of things. As we learn first one thing, and then another about Kether, our knowledge about the beginning of things will gradually fall into place.

Kether is called the Sphere of Space. From Kether emanated Chokmah, the Second Sephirah. Chokmah is called the Sphere of the Zodiac, the circling belt of heaven: or in other words, Motion. From Chokmah emanated Binah. Binah is the Sphere which suggests the 'idea' of form.

We have now, by using, not the reason, but the imagination, arrived at the idea of creation as consisting first of the idea of Space; secondly, the idea of Motion; thirdly, of the idea of Form. If we think of movement as proceeding in a curved line we see that if that curve is continued far enough, it will become a circle and arrive back where it started. A spinning circle of force has stability, like a spinning top.

Now let the student look back and see the chain of ideas by which we have advanced so far. He will observe that it is not

an argument, but is more like a psycho-analysis. This is the way advanced metaphysical thinking has to be done, because we are reaching out beyond the grasp of the conscious mind. We are as it were setting the subconscious mind to work and making it do our thinking for us. The imagination is throwing pictures on the screen of consciousness, and proceeding from one picture to another by means of analogy, a method that has already been explained in a previous chapter.

We are now in possession of three ideas, Space, Motion, Stability. Let us take the two basal angles of the triangle, as arranged on the Tree of Life, Chokmah and Binah, Motion and Stability. These are seen to be a Pair of Opposites: Active and Passive, Positive and Negative. In the language of the Qabalah, Chokmah and Binah are called Abba, the Father, and Aima, the Mother. This is an example of the principle of Polarity or the 'Pairs of Opposites', which runs through the whole of manifestation; 'Male and Female created He them'. It is indicated on the Tree by the arrangement of the Emanations in three columns, the two side columns being 'active' and 'passive', and the middle one the equilibrium between them. This principle is shown in the groupings of three Sephiroth - but does not mean that any one Sephirah taken by itself is positive, negative or neutral. We are merely indicating here relationships of groupings of three Sephiroth.

It will be observed that in thus picturing the beginning of things we have not committed ourselves to any speculations about atoms or electrons, but have conceived certain fundamental principles which are not of the material plane at all, yet which are satisfying to the mind. Let the student look back and observe how far he has already travelled beyond his normal limitations of thought, how far he has already penetrated into the Unseen, and take heart. He already finds himself where many have never penetrated.

The student is now in a position to see how the poetical myths of the ancients arose, for he himself has just been led to try his hand at myth-making. The ancient myth-makers meditated with the imagination, as he has been led to meditate, and they arrived at the same results. Remember that when the mind is working correctly according to its nature, it apprehends truth. Let us now check up one of the ancient stories of creation, and see whether it confirms our hypothesis.

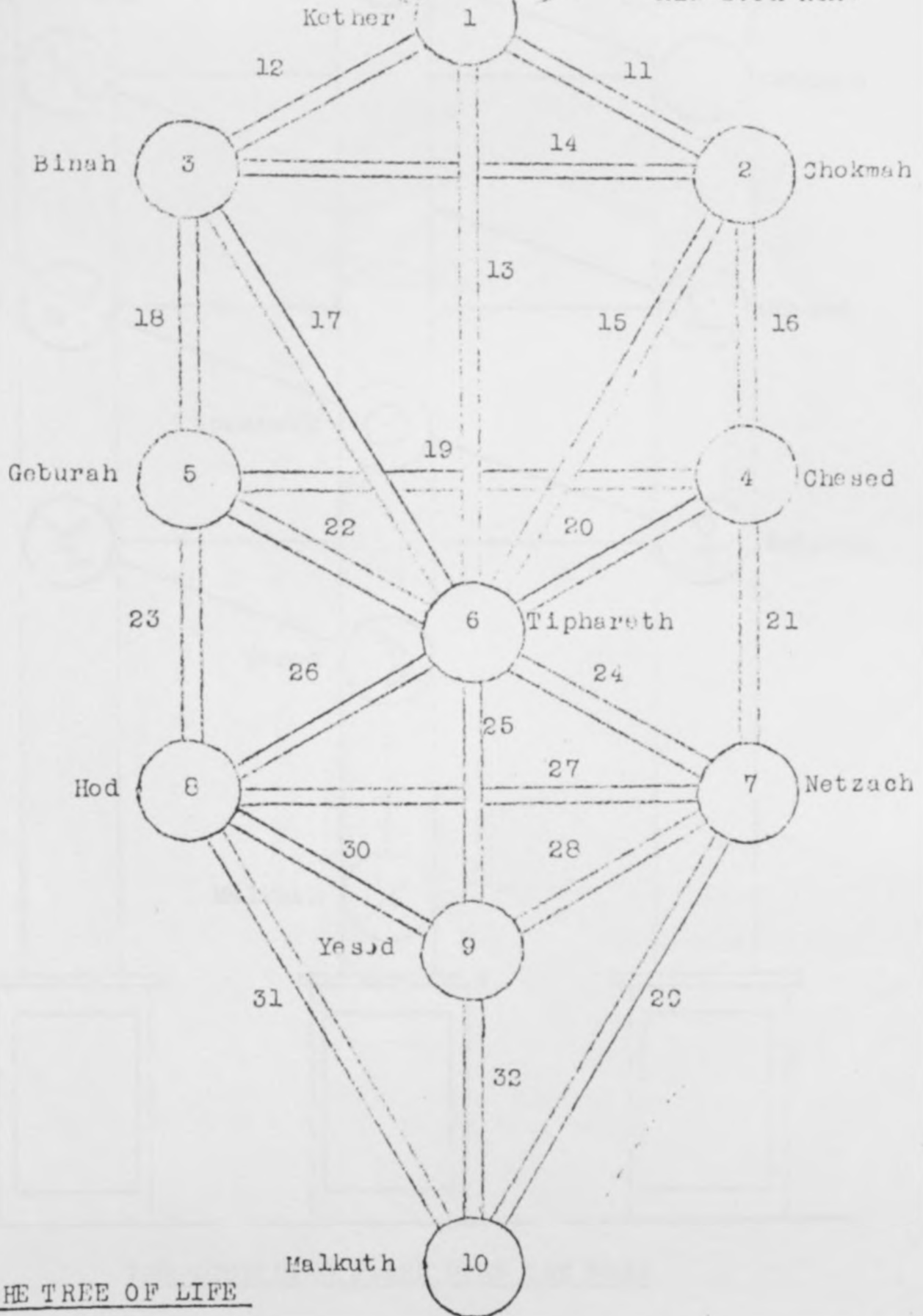
'In the beginning the earth was without form, and void, (Space). And the spirit of God moved (Motion) upon the face of the waters, and He divided the waters from the waters. (the Principle of duality). And He made the firmament (Stability - Form)

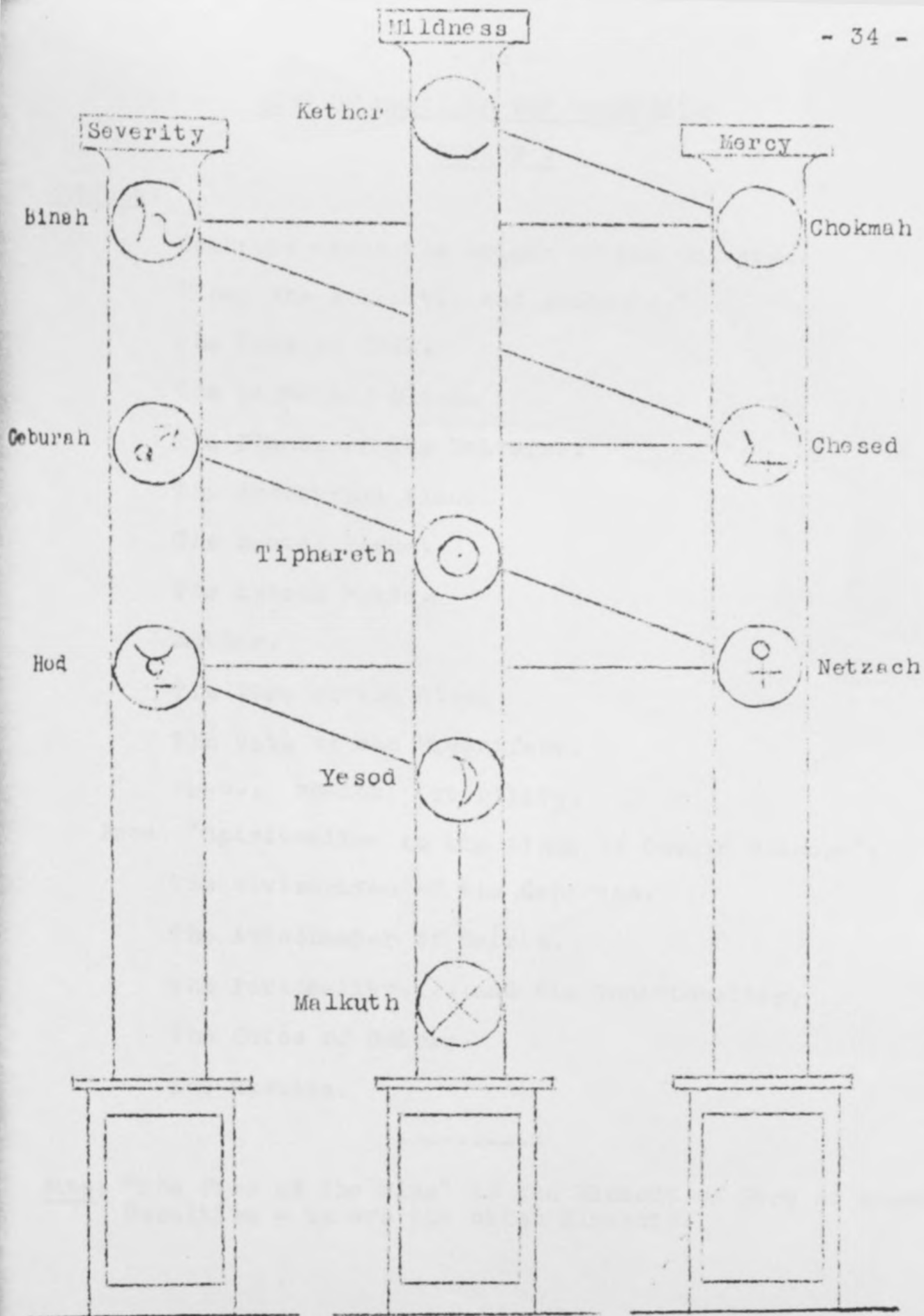
If the student has studied the previous pages correctly, he may or may not have learnt something about the nature of Creation, but he should have got the sensation of having picked up the trail of truth and being on the way to track it down.

He should have got a certain thrill and satisfaction out of it, as something in his mind responded to the method. This is the most he can expect at present; but as he gets used to working in this half-light of understanding, it will gradually grow clearer. As often as he falls off the bicycle of this new way of using the mind, he must get on again. Presently he will get the knack of using it. No one can teach this to him; it only comes by practice, and often comes quite suddenly. The great thing is to be content with glimpses, and not to inhibit them because they are only glimpses. Presently they will come clearly into focus as the mind acquires skill.

How can we test the truth of our conclusions? We cannot, at the present stage; we must be content to take them as speculations and hypotheses. It will be observed, however, that sometimes we experience a feeling of pleasure in our speculations, and sometimes we feel a sense of uneasiness and bewilderment. When we feel the sense of pleasure, it shows that the mind is working in accordance with its nature, which is to apprehend truth. When we feel discomfort, we know we are not fully on the trail. This is the technique of the higher consciousness. It will be observed how little relation it bears to what is popularly called psychism; yet, when brought to a fine pitch of perfection, it can do everything that psychism can do, and a great deal more.

The orthodox scientist, who is accustomed to use his reason and judge the results by observation, may not like this method of thinking, which leaves the reason alone, uses the imagination, and judges the results by the emotion they give rise to. Nevertheless, it was this method which enabled the philosophy of Greece and the metaphysics of India to be built up. It is, moreover, a method that every original thinker and discoverer makes use of to a far greater extent than he realises. It has been said that initiation should enable us to produce genius at will. It will be seen from the foregoing that there is something in this statement.





THE LIGHTNING FLASH UPON THE TREE

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

LESSON 3

Subject.

Concepts about the origin of the Universe.

"They are schematic and symbolic."

The Tree of Life.

The Lightning Flash.

The Planes of the Universe.

The Archetypal Plane.

The Mental Plane.

The Astral Plane.

Aether.

The Fire of the Wise.

The Veil of the Unmanifest.

space, motion; Stability.

From "Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science":

The vivisection of the departed.

The Antechamber of Osiris.

The Personality.....and the Individuality.

The Gates of Osiris.

The Masters.

Note: "The Fire of the Wise" is the Element of Fire as known to Occultism - as are the other Elements.

LESSON 3

Questions.

1. Discuss the dictum that "The concepts of esoteric philosophy are schematic and symbolic."
2. What is the Tree of Life?
3. Draw up a neat table showing the inter-relation of:
(a) the Names of the Ten Sephiroth;
(b) the Ten Divine Names;
(c) the Astronomical Titles.
4. Draw a picture of the Tree of Life and place on it the information given in this lesson.
5. How many 'types of existence' are there in the manifested universe? Name them according to the Western system.
6. Choose and write down seven key sentences.

LESSON 4

Chapters 6-7

Chapter 6.

The Evolutionary Personality

It is necessary that the initiate should have a thorough understanding of his own nature. To this end he must study Esoteric Psychology. As Esoteric Psychology draws no fundamental distinction among spirit, mind and matter, but recognises them all as different modes of manifestation of the energy emanating from the Unmanifest, there is no line of demarcation drawn between Esoteric Psychology and Esoteric Physiology. All aspects of the nature of man, his spiritual, his intellectual and his physical life, are studied under the heading of Esoteric Psychology for the reason that, in actual practice, they cannot be separated but are interacting.

According to the Western system Esoteric Anatomy analyses the nature of man into four sections:-

The Spiritual Nature.

The Intellectual Consciousness.

The Astral Consciousness.

The Physical Body.

The Eastern system analyses the nature of man into seven sections. These are obtained by distinguishing between the form and force aspects of the Spiritual, Intellectual and Astral aspects of consciousness. While this distinction is philosophically justifiable because these two aspects can be traced in the evolution of each plane of manifestation, for all practical purposes, once these two aspects are evolved and functioning, they cannot be separated. Therefore the Western Tradition uses in its classification the divisions that have to be observed in actual working.

The Spiritual Nature of man consists of the Divine Spark, or Monad. This Divine Spark is of the same nature as God; therefore, relative to our universe, it is unmanifest. It possesses in a latent form certain abilities, just as the oak is present in the acorn in a latent form. The Divine Spark develops these qualities and abilities by means of the experiences of evolution and it is immortal and indestructible.

The Divine Spark has a rhythmical sleeping and waking life in the same way that the human Personality has; during its waking aspect it descends into 'incarnation', during its sleeping aspect it 'withdraws' from incarnation, and assimilates and digests all the experiences it underwent during its previous 'incarnation', thus building up traits which are inherent in the next

life. 'Between' it and the Incarnationary Personality is the unit of evolution which lasts for an evolution and is called the Evolutionary Personality.

This Divine Spark is the real, the actual, and the indestructible life of each person. It is his point of contact with the Unmanifest, which is the great reservoir of cosmic energy; and through this point of contact, the cosmic life flows into our being.

The Intellectual Consciousness may best be described as subjective consciousness; that is to say, it is the mind aware of itself, conscious of its own processes. This state of consciousness resembles that of the mathematician absorbed in a calculation and oblivious of his surroundings. The Intellectual Consciousness works on the material provided for it by the sensations of the senses, but sensation is no part of its organisation, neither does it concern itself with the images to which these sensations give rise in Astral Consciousness. It is the link between the unmanifest or spiritual nature of man, and his lower nature which lives in the realms of form; but it is more akin in its nature to spirit than to matter.

At the end of an incarnation the abstract essence (but not the actual memories) of all the experiences that have been undergone during an incarnation is absorbed by the Intellectual Consciousness which is thereby modified and developed. It is this evolving Intellectual Consciousness, organised around the Divine Spark, which constitutes that Evolutionary Personality which is called by various names in the Mystery Tradition. It is sometimes regarded as something external to the human Personality. It is an integral part of ourselves, and we are prevented from being aware of it only by the limitations of our brain-consciousness. The Holy Guardian Angel is often said to be the same as the Evolutionary Personality - but we do not agree.

The term Intellectual Consciousness, as one of the four sections of man's esoteric anatomy, equates with the Mental Plane referred to in Chapter 4. It is necessary to make clear that these Planes are subdivided into Abstract Spiritual, Concrete Spiritual (the Archetypal Plane of Chapter 4), Abstract Mental and Concrete Mental, Upper and Lower Astral. The Abstract Mental level of the Mental Plane belongs to the Evolutionary Personality, the Concrete Mental to the Incarnationary Personality or Personality.

The Astral Consciousness consists of images held in the imagination. These images are derived from the sensory experiences of the physical plane. All consciousness on the astral level takes the form of images derived from the experiences of the physical senses. Different types of images predominate with different types of temperament. Some people think mainly in picture images; others think mainly in words heard subjectively, and the picture images are subordinate. Some specially

gifted people can depict to themselves the sensations derived from other physical senses with a considerable degree of clarity, and can imagine a smell or a flavour or the kinaesthetic sensations which tell us about the position and tension of the parts of our body.

Astral Consciousness is more akin to matter than to spirit. The Incarnationary Personality, which is the unit of incarnation as the Evolutionary Personality is the unit of evolution, consists of the physical body formed 'inside' the matrix or mould of the astral consciousness, plus the concrete mind.

The Physical Body, which appears so solid to our senses, actually consists of an organised framework of electric currents in the meshes of which the molecules of dense matter are held as in a rack. It should be clearly realised that our 'physical' bodies do not really consist of the matter which composes them, and which is constantly being discarded and replaced, any more than they consist of our clothes, but are in reality the magnetic framework in which the ever-changing material molecules are held. These molecules of water, of chemical salts, of minerals, are just as external to us as our clothes are. That is why, when looking on a dead body, one realises intuitively that there is no one there. The person has gone; and the molecules of matter, no longer held in position by their invisible framework of magnetic force, soon break down and fall apart.

This electric framework is called the 'etheric double' in esoteric terminology.

While we distinguish these four modes of existence, it must be clearly realised that under normal circumstances the functioning unit consists of two of these modes co-operating. It is only when the spiritual and mental are functioning together that evolution of the entity can take place. When the spiritual has no mental aspect, it is in a state of unmanifestation. When the astral is separated from the physical, the physical body is in a state of complete unconsciousness kept alive only by its own autonomous activities.

In the average man, the Incarnationary Personality is positive and active, and the Evolutionary Personality is negative and passive. In the advanced initiate, however, this polarity is reversed, and the Incarnationary Personality is reduced to negativity whilst the Evolutionary Personality comes into function actively and controls the Incarnationary Personality as a rider controls a horse.

Chapter 7.

Life, Death, and Evolution

Esoteric Philosophy teaches an entirely different conception of life and death from that usually held in Western countries in

modern times. It teaches the same concepts as were held by the ancients and as are held by the East today. One of its key doctrines is the doctrine of reincarnation.

To understand this, we must remember that one of the primal principles of manifestation is the Law of Rhythm or Alternating Polarity. This law can be recognised in the rhythm of sleeping and waking, and in the absorbing of food and building of it up in tissues followed by the breaking down of the stored substances in the tissues when activity takes place - anabolism and katabolism.

Our spiritual nature, or essential life, likewise has its rhythm or alternating polarity. Sometimes it is positive, and sometimes it is negative; sometimes it is objective, going forth to seek experience on the plane of form, and sometimes it is subjective, meditating upon what it has received.

But there is another rhythm by which we are affected. This is the Cosmic Rhythm - the Days and Nights of God - in which the whole universe comes into manifestation, evolves organised form, acquires capacities through the experiences gained in form, frees itself from the bondage of form while retaining the acquired capacities, and finally withdraws once more into Unmanifestation, to repeat the cycle on a higher arc for it always starts each new cycle from the evolutionary point where it left off in the last. These phases occupy many millions of years, and can best be described in terms of astronomy and geology. Souls begin their evolution with the beginning of the manifestation of a positive phase, and are withdrawn again into the Unmanifest at the end of a phase.

The Divine Spark in each one of us is immortal, issuing forth into manifestation at the beginning of an evolution and withdrawing again enriched by experience at the end of it, to issue forth once more when the Day of Manifestation comes round again. The Evolutionary Personality of each one of us starts, however, with each Day of Manifestation, and its essence is absorbed by the Divine Spark and its substance is disintegrated at the end of the evolution. It is therefore only the spark of pure spirit in each one of us that is immortal; the Evolutionary Personality, which consists, as we have already seen, of the spiritual nature plus the abstract mind, is millions of years old and has millions of years of life in front of it, but it is not immortal. Its nucleus, however, is immortal as we have already seen, and a fresh Evolutionary Personality builds up in the course of each cosmic evolution.

The Evolutionary Personality has also its positive and negative phases, its days of objective activity and its night of subjective meditation. These we call 'life' and 'death' (and after-death). For incarnation the Evolutionary Personality is in a positive phase, and builds up a vehicle of form which we call the Incarnationary Personality, by means of which it obtains experience in the planes of form. Between incarnations the Evolutionary

Personality is in a negative, subjective, phase and it meditates upon the experiences it has been through during its years of manifesting on the planes of form, thereby developing and evolving.

The Incarnationary Personality is built up on the basis of the Evolutionary Personality just as the Evolutionary Personality is built up on the basis of the Divine Spark. The Incarnationary Personality is the unit of incarnation just as the Evolutionary is the unit of evolution. Each Incarnationary Personality endures for an incarnation just as each Evolutionary Personality endures for an evolution. It is the Divine Spark alone that is timeless and indestructible; the Evolutionary Personality, though immortal relative to the Incarnationary Personality (for it cannot be destroyed during an evolution as long as the Divine Spark remains in manifestation), nevertheless disintegrates at the end of an evolution as the physical body disintegrates at the end of an incarnation. It is said that certain of the highest types of souls, however, are able to accomplish the withdrawal into the Unmanifest during a day of manifestation, just as adepts are able to live in the Evolutionary Personality during the day of incarnation.

When the Evolutionary Personality prepares for an incarnation, it begins to use an astral mode of mentation; that is to say it begins to practise thinking in concrete images instead of the abstract ideas normal to it. The result of this is to organise what psychologists call the personality complex out of these images; this is the basis of incarnation and the foundation of personality, determining temperament.

The next task is to provide this rudimentary astral consciousness with a physical vehicle of as suitable a type as possible. To this end, the astro-mental entity which is now bent on incarnating, seeks the conditions which can best express its nature. It must be realised that on the Mental Plane time and space do not operate as they do on the Outer Plane (or physical world). Time depends on consciousness and space on affinity. There are certain laws on these subjects that are known to initiate by experience. These cannot be considered in detail in these pages. It must suffice to say at the present time that according to their affinity with conditions do souls come into incarnation. When suitable conditions are available for a soul, it wills to manifest in them and its life on the physical plane begins as an unborn child. In due course it takes up its independent existence, and the building up of the Incarnationary Personality begins.

The nature of the Evolutionary Personality, which is the product of the experiences of many previous incarnations, forms the basis of the temperament of the Incarnationary Personality; it also determines the lines along which the life will lie in the present incarnation, in the following way:-

We know that if a small child has a drastic experience of any sort, even if it does not remember the actual incident, it will tend to shrink from anything related to that experience. Psychology knows that it must look to these early, forgotten experiences for the explanation of many otherwise unaccountable traits in character. Popular wisdom recognises the same idea, and embodies it in the proverb: "A burnt child dreads fire". Esoteric philosophy teaches us to look beyond infantile memories to previous incarnations for the roots of the bigger, more generalised characteristics of the nature. It is the sub-conscious memory of the vital experiences of past lives which causes us to pay attention to, or to ignore, the different kinds of experiences that press in upon us from our environment. This subconscious bias towards life exercises a selective influence upon our acceptance of experience; some experiences profoundly influence us, while others go 'like water off a duck's back', leaving no impression.

Secondly, those things we have strongly desired in past lives we strive towards in each successive life and brood over during the periods of subjective consciousness between incarnations, until finally the point is reached when our desires achieve their aim. Whether that aim is good or evil for the soul is another matter; we achieve that aim quite independently of its rightness or wrongness. If it should be an evil aim, however, the disastrous consequences of its achievement gradually teach us to desire something better. We do not hear an actual voice saying: "This is the way, walk ye in it", but life shepherds us with unremitting pressure into the right path. When we consent to tread it, we are at peace and find the way opening before us. As long as we resist we are at cross purposes with life, and life resists us.

It is this selective capacity of our own natures, working either with or against cosmic law, which is really what in the East is called Karma and in the West is called Fate, not any influence directed upon us from without, and we can influence our Karma profoundly by modifying our natures.

The future is in a man's own hands in proportion to his power to master his mind. Those who are trained and disciplined by initiation learn to obtain this control in the course of a few short years and thenceforth start to become rulers of their own destiny. But while it may not be possible to determine a destiny in a single life, it is said that this is always possible in a cycle of three lives.

Note: The terms "Incarnationary Personality" for the unit of an Incarnation and "Evolutionary Personality" for the unit of an evolution are called in 'esoteric' writing generally Higher and Lower Selves. In this Society we make a distinction among the Immortal Spirit, the 'vehicles' lasting for an Evolution, and the 'vehicles' lasting for an incarnation or earth-life.

LESSON 4

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

Subject.

"Know Thyself".

Man is a fourfold being.

Divine Spark.

The Intellectual Consciousness.

The Astral Consciousness.

The Etheric Double.

Cosmic Rhythm.

The selective capacity of our own natures.

LESSON 4

Questions.

1. Compress into 15 lines the main features of Esoteric Anatomy.
2. Discuss the conception of Life, Death and Evolution that is set forth in this lesson. (12 Lines)
3. What is the relationship between the Evolutionary Personality and the Incarnationary Personality?
4. Explain the term "Astral Consciousness".
5. To what extent is the future in a man's own hands?
6. Choose and write down seven key sentences.

LESSON 5

Chapter 8.

THE INCARNATIONARY PERSONALITY

At any given moment in his life a human being consists of:

- (a) the sum-total of the experiences of his previous incarnations in essence organised around the Divine Spark which is the nucleus of his being; this forms the basis of temperament and determines the bias of his destiny;
- (b) the experiences of his present life up to date and his reactions thereto. These experiences include not only the things that happen to him from the outer world, but all that goes on in his inner world; that is to say, the way he takes things and how he feels and thinks about them, for it must be remembered that the real Self is no more identified with the mind than the body is identified with the clothes it wears.

It is a matter of experience that just as man has mastered his environment by means of engineering and other applied sciences, so he can master his inner kingdom by means of the practical applications of esoteric philosophy. It follows, therefore, that it is important to obtain mastery over the mind by means of mind-training. Having considered the nature of the human being as a whole, and its evolution and development through past ages, let us now consider the manner in which an Incarnationary Personality is built up through experience of the material world in the course of an incarnation.

Perception is not a single, simple act; it consists, first, of the impression produced on a sense organ; second, of the representation the mind makes of that impression; and third, of the interpretation we put upon it.

If we observe a new-born child we shall see that this process is not automatic but has to be learnt. A very young child will stretch out his hand to grasp the sun as readily as it will to grasp the toy held out to it. It has not learnt to interpret the significance of perspective; it has no sense of foreground and background. It learns to judge distance only by experience.

It also learns to interpret one impression in the light of another. The old saying: "A burnt child dreads fire" is an illustration of this truth. A child soon learns to recognise a thing it has seen before; it also learns to recognise points of resemblance in different objects and to attribute to the newly-recognised object characteristics which it has learnt by experience to exist in a similar object with which it is familiar. For instance, having learnt that one fire burns, a normal child does not need to be told that all fires will burn it.

Gradually the child builds up a stock of images in his mind, and as every new object is perceived he 'places' it by comparing it with what he already knows, and observing resemblances and differences. For instance, he learns to tell the difference between the cat and a chair, though both have four legs. Then when he meets a dog for the first time, he recognises that it is more akin in nature to the cat than to the chair; that it is a cat-with-a-difference, not a chair-with-a-difference.

It is in this way that all new knowledge is added to experience; we come to understand things by comparing them with what we already know, and noting the difference and observing in what that difference consists. The scientist conducts his investigations in exactly the same way that the baby does. The mind works in the same way, whatever material it may be working upon; whether it is the mind of a baby learning to understand his cot, or of an astronomer learning to understand the stars, or of the esotericist learning to understand the subtler planes of existence. If we understand this we are able to check the findings of psychism by means of psychology and are not obliged to take everything on trust. It is this knowledge of the technique of checking psychism by means of psychology which marks the difference between the trained and the untrained psychic.

The ideas that are stored in the mind do not remain as separate units without influence on each other. They become associated together in what are called complexes. A complex is a group of associated ideas which recall each other. That is to say, if we think of an idea, all the ideas that may be associated with it tend to come into consciousness also.

Ideas become associated together in several different ways, some of which are logical and reasonable, and some illogical and irrational. The subconscious mind is very given to irrational associations of ideas, and this makes its workings very confusing until we understand them; analytical psychology has taught us to understand these irrational workings of the subconscious mind but it does not know how to control them. The knowledge of control of the subconscious mind is one of the possessions of esoteric science.

Ideas become associated together in the following ways.

Rational.

1. Because they are related to each other as cause and effect.
2. Because they refer to the same subject.

Irrational.

1. Because they entered the mind together. For instance, in a well-known advertisement, a white swan is depicted perched on top of a red pillar-box. After having our attention called to this advertisement, whenever we see a pillar-box we tend to think of a swan. The advertisers take advantage of this quality of the mind to advertise their pen.
2. Because there is a superficial resemblance, e.g. airships, sausages and dachshunds.

It is by the study and cultivation of the less obvious powers of the mind that we are able to train the mind to a very high pitch of development and awaken in it abilities that the unenlightened might consider to be supernatural. To call them supernatural, however, is a misuse of terms, for nothing supernatural can exist in Nature. Everything is natural when we understand it, and can be made the subject of scientific investigation.

It is necessary that we should understand the different modes of consciousness which are normal to the mind, in order that we may not fall into the error of believing that all that is out of the ordinary is inspirational. Unless we have a clear understanding upon this point, we are liable to constant confusion and self-deception.

1. Conscious thinking.

We habitually use several different ways of thinking. There is, for instance, our ordinary way of thinking, more or less logical and reasonable, in which we take account of cause and effect. If we observe ourselves, we shall see that this kind of thinking is conducted as it were by talking to ourselves. Most people think in words when they use the conscious mind, because the conscious mind has been developed by means of language, for it is obvious that before man could talk, his ideas must have been very simple; and he could hardly be said to have had any ideas at all, but only feelings, like a very young child. This method of thinking logically in words, we will call conscious thinking.

2. Superconscious thinking.

We shall also see, if we observe ourselves, that there is another way in which the mind works, and the more highly developed it is, the more it makes use of this method. This second way of working consists in thinking in ideas instead of words; each idea requiring a number of words to translate it into conscious thought.

Let us try to make this clear by an illustration. Suppose an idea strikes us which explains some problem we have been puzzled over. We shall find that the sudden sense of illumination and understanding comes all in a flash, and then we begin to think the thing out and discover its meaning and extent. This illumination would be called an intuition in our terminology, and the kind of consciousness that conceived it would be called intuitional thinking.

Mathematicians and philosophers make a great deal of use of abstract ideas.

The esoteric philosopher, however, knows by experience that the mind itself is capable of thinking in these ideas under certain conditions, and he develops and makes use of this ability because he finds it very valuable. It is this capability to think in abstract ideas, this ability to have a form of consciousness

which transcends thought, which we call the use of super-consciousness.

It is an exceedingly important form of consciousness because it is the basis of religious experience and of original thinking of all the more advanced kinds in philosophy and science. It is because superconsciousness is not generally understood that religion is so often barren or at best satisfying only to the emotions, and that philosophy so often bears no relation to life but is a mere theory of knowledge.

It will be observed that the foregoing definition makes of superconsciousness something very different from psychism, and relates it to the inspirations of genius. This is the correct way to understand it. The inspirations of genius can be true seership, and psychism is but a means to an end.

3. Subconscious thinking.

Let us now try to understand sub-consciousness. We have already compared the mind of primitive man, before language was developed, to that of a very young child; what is popularly called the subconscious mind simply consists of this primitive way of thinking. It is not any particular part of the mind, but it is something which is left over not only from the childhood of the individual but also from the childhood of the race.

Now this primitive way of mind-working, as it existed before language was developed, was conducted in pictures in the imagination, just as picture-writing preceded the development of an alphabet, and the subconscious mind still works in this way in each one of us. We find that when the subtler senses beyond the physical senses begin to work they make use of this primitive way of thinking to represent their impressions. This is the basis of the psychology of psychism. We shall never understand it unless we understand the subconscious mind, because all psychic impressions enter consciousness via subconsciousness, where they undergo translation into terms that the conscious mind can understand.

The technique of the higher consciousness.

Most people are familiar with what are called flashes of intuition, flashes of inspiration, and the sudden awareness of another person's mood without any word said. It is such natural powers of the mind that are trained and developed by the Mystery technique.

If we observe ourselves we shall find that these flashes generally come most strongly at a moment when our attention is withdrawn from the things that are happening around us, during a period of emotional exaltation. It follows, therefore, that to obtain them constantly and clearly we need to be able to withdraw our attention from external things at will.

This is best done by concentrating the attention on some mind-picture which relates to the things of the spirit, not to the happenings of everyday life. But concentration is by no means

the easiest thing to achieve, so the student of the Mysteries starts his career by learning to concentrate, and to this end he is given certain mental exercises to perform (which have nothing spiritual or psychic about them), until he can do them easily and skilfully, and be sure of being able to build up a clear-cut mental picture in his imagination and to hold it before his mind's eye for a considerable time without any other thoughts even attempting to intrude. This is as much a matter of practice as learning to ride a bicycle.

There are great numbers of symbols which relate to spiritual and psychic things, and when these are used for the purpose of building up these mind-pictures, consciousness gets flashes of intuition concerning the things these symbols represent. A knowledge of these symbol-systems constitutes one of the tools of the initiate. In actual practice, however, it is not enough to know the symbols if one cannot achieve the steadiness of concentration necessary to build them up into pictures in the imagination and hold those pictures before consciousness. Therefore the foundations of an initiate's work have to be carefully laid in thorough mind-training.

The simplest, and at the same time the most profound, symbols are geometrical, and are used to direct the mind towards purely spiritual concepts. For instance, the point represents the first coming into manifestation of existence out of non-existence. The line represents movement as the beginning of manifestation. The circle represents the beginning of the universe. Meditation upon these forms trains the mind in abstract thought and has a very marked effect upon it.

The next type of symbols are those objects which serve as the representations of spiritual influences. The Calvary Cross, for instance, represents Christianity. The Swastika, or Hammer of Thor, represents the Elemental forces of Nature worship. Each of these objects depicts the quintessence of the system it represents. Meditating upon them 'tunes' the mind to the spiritual forces that found expression in these systems.

The third type of symbol is a personification, by means of a particular type of personality, of a particular type of force. For instance, War may be represented by the figure of an armed man in his strength, known by such names as Mars, Ares, etc. according to the pantheon used. Motherhood may be represented as the Virgin and Child or the Cow-goddess with the lunar crescent between her horns.

The fourth type of symbol is a ritual, or symbolic drama, in which a given mode of activity is expressed by means of action and speech after the manner of a charade.

As has already been noted in a previous chapter, the subconscious mind thinks in pictures. In fact, it consists mainly of picture-consciousness. When the conscious mind works with

symbols it is using a method that the subconscious mind can understand; and understanding it, can co-operate with it. Thus is consciousness extended beyond its normal limitations.

Pictorial symbols are the language of subconsciousness. Of these, the first type we have described may aptly be called the alphabet; the second type consists of the letters of the alphabet associated together to form words. The third type represents the grammar of sentences and the fourth a treatise written in the language of the Mysteries.

The technique of this method of using the mind constitutes the Yoga of the West. Ideas are called into consciousness by means of symbols. For a symbol to be effectual, it must have a profound significance for us. The symbols which have the profoundest significance are those that form part of our racial tradition. Symbols can also be rendered full of significance by meditating upon them. For instance, the person who has used the Point or the Circle as meditation-symbols to help him to conceive the beginning of creation, will be reminded of the spiritual experiences that came to him through these meditations if he looks at a symbol inscribed with these signs, and his mood will immediately approximate to that which he was in when he obtained these experiences. It follows, then, that the most potent of all symbols for each person are those racial ones upon which he has meditated.

It is not necessary at the present stage of his training that the student should work systematically with these symbols; the psychology of symbol-working is, however, explained to him in order that he may understand the method that is being used in his training and see why he is set to study certain things, and so profit thereby more fully than he could if he worked in the dark.

As the Western Esoteric Tradition is a composite tradition, as has been indicated in a previous chapter, a multiplicity of different types of symbols is available. For instance, there are the Christian, the Egyptian, the Qabalistic, and the Greek. Later on, the student may care to study the Eastern systems for the light they throw on the philosophy of mysticism. All these different systems deal with the same fundamentals.

It will be found in practice, however, that one of these symbol-alphabets will be more congenial to the student's temperament than the others. After a certain stage in his training is reached he will probably prefer to specialise upon this system. It is necessary, however, that he should be familiar with the other systems because each system specialises in a particular aspect of spiritual training, and if he specialises too soon, he will become too limited and one-sided in his understanding of spiritual things. A general education must always precede a specialist education if true culture is to be achieved.

LESSON 5

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

Subject.

What a human being consists of.

Perception.

New knowledge.

Association of ideas.

The different kinds of consciousness.

Intuitional thinking.

Superconsciousness.

Subconscious thinking.

The technique of the higher consciousness.

Symbols.

The foundations of an initiate's work - mind-training.

Choose a symbol mentioned and meditate on it as instructed in the lesson.

Ritual.

The Yoga of the West.

LESSON 5

Questions.

1. How is an Incarnationary Personality built up?
2. What do you understand by a 'complex'?
By what laws is it governed?
3. Discuss the different types of consciousness.
(12 lines)
4. Discuss the information given about symbols
in this lesson. (10 lines)
5. Why is it unwise to mix symbol systems in the
early days of your training?
6. Choose and write down seven key sentences.

LESSON 6

Chapter 9.

The Origin and Structure of the Cosmos

The Cosmos and the Solar System are not the same thing. This fundamental concept of esoteric science must be clearly grasped by the student at the outset. The Cosmos contains many universes, of which our Solar System is one just as our Sun is one among many stars, and just as these stars may have their attendant satellites forming a planetary system, so may they hold evolving life and unfolding consciousness, though this life and consciousness might well be of a type so different from our own that we well might have difficulty in imagining it.

It must also be clearly realised by the student that the word God, as used by the esotericist, refers to the Creator and Sustainer of a universe, and is synonymous with the word Logos. Just as other universes must have been created and are being sustained, so they have their God, or Logos, and these Solar Logoi are brethren in their own sphere.

The Logos, transcendent Being that It is, must in no wise be confused with the Great Unmanifest, the Root of All Being. In the study of the Sacred Books, and especially of the Bible, experience should enable the reader to discern whether the writers are referring to the Solar Logos or to the Great Unmanifest under the name of God, which is used indiscriminately by uninitiated translators. It is because of this loose use of the term God, that we sometimes avoid it and use the terms Great Unmanifest and Solar Logos to denominate the two concepts confused by uninitiated thought: there is, too, the Cosmos as a 'God'; this can be known as the First Manifest.

In the following pages of this lesson, let it be borne in mind that it is the Great Unmanifest, the Root of All Being, that is referred to, and that the Solar Logos and Its universe are not under consideration, therefore the explanations do not refer to any form of existence known to our finite experience, and are capable of being received by us only under symbolic forms. It is these symbolic forms alone which are here offered to the reader, for none others are available; therefore he must not make the mistake of thinking that actualities are being described, any more than the writer of the Song of Songs must be misunderstood when he tells us that his beloved is a rose of Sharon and a lily of the valley. So it is with the symbols we employ to denominate cosmic realities that transcend our conceiving. A reminder is given, a glyph is offered for meditation, and in due course, as the student unfolds his consciousness, he will obtain a realisation of the significance of the glyph. Meanwhile it acts

as the letters in an algebraic calculation, which, interspersed among the numbers, represent proportions or even unknown quantities, and thus enable a calculation to be made.

The Great Unmanifest, the Root of All Being, is described as the Primordial Stillness, and the symbol which is given to the student for his meditation in order to train his mind for the realisation of this, the supreme concept of occult philosophy, is the idea of interstellar space, the depths of the night-sky between the stars. In actual fact, these spaces are far from void, but as they appear to the unaided eye they convey to the imagination a near concept of the Great Unmanifest. The Great Unmanifest simply Is Not, in terms of any quality known to consciousness; yet It contains the Root of All Being. Let not the student, however, make the mistake of conceiving of the Great Unmanifest as infinitely complex, but rather let him conceive of all manifested being as extremely simple when resolved to its elements. It is a task of occult science to reveal the simplicity of these elements.

No attempt can be made to describe the nature of the Great Unmanifest; it is, and must ever remain for our finite consciousness, x , the unknown quantity in our algebraical calculation; yet the use of x enables a calculation to be made. The most pregnant phrase on the subject for the writer was said by an adept, who, using the word God to refer to the Great Unmanifest, said: "If you want to know what God is, I can tell you in one word: God is pressure". This is a metaphor which will repay meditation by those to whom it appeals.

Esoteric Science teaches that the Cosmos Itself is born out of the matrix of the Great Unmanifest, and holds that the First Manifestation was Motion. Motion, Inertia, and Reaction, are the Primal Trinity of whose interaction all subsequent development is but an elaboration. Esoteric Science does not tell us What moves in this primordial motion; in fact, it hints that Nothing moves, and bids us conceive of pure motion, apart from a thing moving. It also tells us that Inertia is the corollary of Movement; all movement has to overcome inertia, and it is this drag of Inertia upon pure Motion that causes it to describe a curve. A curve, however slight, results in a circle, vast in proportion to the slightness of the curve, hence the cyclic nature of all manifestation. If no development takes place, the recurring circle thus described becomes a unit of static force, for all its energies being completely balanced within itself it exercises no influence upon its environment except the influence of inertia, unless force be imparted to it from without and it be set in motion as a unit in addition to its spinning momentum within itself.

The primordial Movement of Space obeys the cyclic law, and in the course of innumerable aeons returns upon its own track, and continues indefinitely this steady spinning movement throughout the 'Ages of the Ages'. We have no concept of the immensity

of cosmic time, but a thousand years is indeed as a day in these phases.

This steady spinning motion (Ring-Cosmos) sets up a secondary area of force, which in its turn acquires a rotary movement (Ring-Chaos) so that there come into existence two rings of force, one within the other, spinning at right angles to each other. The inner and first-formed of these two, through its interaction with the later-formed, acquires a secondary movement wherein it turns over and over forming the Ring-Pass-Not. So we find that the primordial type of manifestation has assumed the form of a gyroscope, the most stable organised motion known to kinetics. Thus is the Cosmos delimited within Primordial Space and Manifestation is in being.

These spinning circles of force set up secondary stresses within their sphere, and these manifest as currents flowing outwards from the centre to the circumference and rebounding from the circumference to the centre. These are known as the Cosmic Rays, and esoteric science teaches that they are twelve in number. In the angles formed by the approximation of these Rays, as they converge upon the centre, further stresses are set up, and where these intersect, spinning whorls of force come into being, like the miniature whirlpools that can be seen moving upon the surface of the water where two rivers meet. These centres of gyrating force are called the Prime Atoms.

These Prime Atoms form associations among themselves of different degrees of complexity and become Composite Atoms. The centrifugal influence of the revolving sphere balanced by the centripetal influence of the attraction to the centre determines their position and they settle down to circular revolutions round the centre with the appropriate radii thus determined - the radii varying in proportion to the complexity of the Atoms. Thus are formed the cosmic atomic planes, each of which is distinguished from the others by the composition of the Atoms composing it, extending from the centre to the circumference in order of complexity.

Finally there are evolved Composite Atoms so 'large' that they are liable to be swung beyond the sphere of the attraction of the centre; this, however, is not permitted, for the bounds of the cosmic sphere are set by the Ring-Pass-Not which exercises a repellent influence upon the approaching Atoms, so that they rebound from this impassable barrier and are sent back towards the centre again. When these Atoms reach the Central Stillness, they are again swung out by centrifugal force and are again repelled by the Ring-Pass-Not. Thus do they pass up and down the paths of the different Cosmic Rays, the experience of each journey modifying them and giving them greater reaction-capacity.

When they have made the circuit of all the Rays they have completed their course; they no longer go forth from the Central Stillness, but congregate about it. Thus the Central Stillness

is gradually extended till all movement of the Travelling Atoms ceases and the whole Cosmos becomes static, having achieved perfect balance and organisation of all its parts. This we call the Night of God and Eastern terminology calls it Pralaya.

Such a static condition does not continue indefinitely; however, for the eternal spin of the Rings of Manifestation² never ceases. Movement generates movement, and the Cosmic balance is presently upset, compensatory movement begins again and another Day of Manifestation dawns.

The Travelling Atoms, moving out from the Central Stillness, by their bulk draw about themselves Atoms of the planes through which they move; when they reach their radius of equilibrium, they settle down to a steady orbit round the Central Stillness, each one surrounded by successive envelopes of the substance of the planes through which they have come. No further Cosmic evolution is possible to them for they have experienced all its phases, and they now begin an interior development, organising the substance of the planes which forms their 'atmosphere' until the adjustment of reciprocal stresses is achieved according to the same principles as have been seen to operate in the Cosmos itself; for these principles, being of universal application, operate in all relations between the parts of a mass, whether that mass be a planet or a molecule.

* i.e. Rings Cosmos, Chaos and Pass-Not.

Note: This Chapter and the succeeding one are dealt with in more detail in the "Cosmic Doctrine", but study of this is not yet advised as not only is it abstruse but the student has sufficient in these lessons to occupy him.

LESSON 6

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

Subject.

The Cosmos contains countless Universes.

God.

The Great Unmanifest.

"God is pressure".

The Three Rings.

The Immensity of Cosmic Time.

The Day of Manifestation.

LESSON 6

Questions.

1. Explain the difference between the Cosmos and the Universe as given in this lesson.
2. Explain the terms: 'God'; 'Logos'; 'Solar Logoi'.
3. Explain the terms: 'The Great Unmanifest'; 'Solar Logos of our System'. Give symbols for each.
4. Give in your own language a word picture of the teaching given in this chapter. (20 lines)
5. "God is pressure". What does this convey to your mind?
6. Choose and write down seven key sentences.

LESSON 7

Chapter 10.

The Origin and Evolution of the Solar System

We have considered hitherto the organisation of cosmic units as it appears objectively; we must now consider it as it may be conceived to appear subjectively. Movement is the basis of manifestation, and mind its completion, and between the two there is an unbroken gradation. Tangential movement is a simple form of reaction; consciousness a complex one. Looked at objectively, the Cosmos is movement; looked at subjectively, it is consciousness.

A Great Entity, clothed in Its robes of the atomic matter of the planes, knows Itself as consisting of certain innate characteristics derived from the nature of the Prime Atom from which It evolves plus the experiences It has gone through in the course of Its circuit of the Rays. It is further conditioned by the effects and reactions of the Cosmic substances gathered about It. Out of these factors is built up that which we know as a solar system.

A Great Entity, having firstly achieved stability of internal organisation, has again reached a static point, as It did after It had made the circuit of the Rays and came to rest in the Central Stillness. For Its evolution to proceed, a new departure must be made. It, therefore, having attained fully organised subjective consciousness, aspires to objective consciousness. But there is nothing within Its sphere of which It can be conscious. It is, however, conscious of Itself; that is to say, there exists, in addition to the Great Entity Itself, the Great Entity's concept of Itself, which It projects as a thought-form.

Now, the Atoms of the Cosmic Planes are each of them entities on their own account; that is to say each is an actuality like the Great Entity and not a thought-form. These enter into the thought-form of Itself which the Great Entity has projected, like a reflection in a mirror, and proceed to organise themselves upon the lines of the scheme therein revealed to them, thus advancing their own evolution, as was their design, and also, giving a certain modicum of reality to that which is primarily but an image in consciousness.

This teaching of the Secret Wisdom will be found the basis to elucidate much which appears to be contradictory in the organisation of the universe. Esoteric Science teaches that the Creator is the Great Unmanifest, and that that with which we have relations as our God is the God of our system, Itself brought into existence by a Creative Fiat, with Its nature determined by Its innate constitution, influenced by the experi-

ences of Its existence, and conditioned by Its Cosmic environment. In order to understand the nature of this God we must distinguish clearly in our minds between the Solar Logos, the Creator and Sustainer of our universe, and the Great Unmanifest, out of Which issues the Cosmos. Our most serious philosophical and theological difficulties arise from the confusion of the two. Esoteric science never so confuses them, and neither, it is said, does the Bible in the original, wherein the Guardians of the Law, enlightened Qabalists as they were, had their distinguishing terms to denominate and differentiate these transcendent Existences.

We should not think of our Logos as immutable, static, complete. Although these attributes can truly be predicated of the Great Unmanifest they cannot be applied to the Solar Logos, and it is one of the truths of esoteric science that It is evolving with, by, and through Its universe, and that It is subject to the cyclic influence of certain Cosmic tides of which the Zodiac serves as the clock.

To this universe, the Solar Logos is all in all; but in the Cosmos, It is one among many brethren. The Great Unmanifest alone is the Root of All Being.

In the evolution of the universe we see the same principles at work as in the evolution of the Cosmos. In the Logoidal thought-form the atomic thought-forms sort themselves out into planes. The matter of the universe itself is not an actuality but an infinity of mental pictures in the consciousness of actualities, these actualities being those Cosmic Atoms that were drawn into the sphere of influence of the Great Entity in Its progress down the Planes at the end of the Night of God. Trough this projected universe, however, actualities move; these are analogous to the Travelling Atoms of the Cosmos, and are referred to as the Divine Sparks. These Divine Sparks are the Cosmic Atoms referred to previously as entering into the thought-form of Itself projected by the Solar Logos, and it is their tidal motion, from the centre to the circumference and the circumference to the centre, which gives rise to what are known as the Life-Waves.

The first Life-Wave flows out as a swarm of Divine Sparks, and having got as far as what is known to us as the Upper Spiritual Plane of the manifested universe, it builds the scaffolding as it were of the new universe, completes its work and moves onward to a further plane. The second Life-Wave in due course issues forth; it follows in the track of its predecessor, it falls heir to all that has been already achieved and so its progress through the Upper Spiritual Plane is upon a partially-made road, and it goes swiftly to the point where the preceding evolution left off.

Then the second Life-Wave passes through from the Upper Spiritual Plane to the Lower Spiritual Plane; it completes and

so to speak fills in the detail of the work of the first Life-Wave. Then it turns back once more to the Logoidal sphere.

Comparable processes are repeated by successive Life-Waves, each availing itself of the work of its predecessor, and each advancing beyond the last high-water mark until the lowest of the planes is passed and the current of existence sets finally back towards the Logoidal sphere till all Logoidal manifestation is absorbed in the consciousness of the Logos whence it issued forth.

Each Life-Wave inherits the work that has been done by its predecessors and then undertakes original work of its own, and advances to new territories before it turns back up the planes and unfolds that which it has stored up during the outgoing arc of evolution.

This short outline is designed to do no more than give a concept of the background against which human evolution takes place; it should enable the reader to realise relationships, to get a sense of perspective and see the root principles upon which our individual lives are based. 'The Cosmic Doctrine' deals with the subject much more fully.

We are now approaching that section of our subject which deals more immediately with our own evolution and shall therefore accord it a more extended treatment than has been given in the previous sections. These fundamental cosmic concepts were necessary for an adequate understanding of esoteric cosmogony, but the method of approach to them can be difficult for beginners. In these pages, therefore, we give only enough, and that necessarily in a dogmatic fashion, to render what follows comprehensible and show its dependence upon and relationship with the Cosmic Reality. We shall now proceed to the study of the manifested universe in which man, a spiritual being, lives and moves, and also other beings, some spiritual, some on the way to becoming spiritualised, and some but the 'creations of the created' doomed to fade with the fading of the Day of Manifestation. The evolution of the universe proceeds as a whole according to the concept held in the Logoidal Mind. Its basic principles are derived from the Cosmic organisation, for this organisation conditions the existence of its Creator, the Solar Logos. The intricacy of its details, however, is peculiar to itself. Out of innumerable possible combinations and permutations, one only is reached and stabilised at each stage of development. An inherent necessity there indubitably is, but a necessity with a considerable range of choice. The initiate does not believe in a blind fate but in an increasingly intelligent adapting of means to ends as the development of the World-Soul proceeds.

As we have already seen, successive Life-Waves move out and down the planes, each Life-Wave organising the amorphous substance of the plane on which it performs its special work. As it recedes like a falling tide from any one plane it leaves behind it the thought-forms that it has organised, and these are

used as the moulds and frames of organised substance when the next Life-Wave flows out into manifestation.

Each plane is organised and its character determined by the Life-Wave that works out its evolutionary task upon that plane. Each phase of evolution, therefore, has a special affinity with a plane. This is a point to be borne in mind, for the perfected beings of an evolution who elect to remain within the sphere of a plane for the service of the succeeding Life-Waves are the initiators who admit to that plane and who awaken the faculties corresponding to that plane in the 'vehicles' of the initiate.

Each Divine Spark of the first Life-Wave builds itself an instrument for the purpose of contacting the plane on which it functions, or, more briefly, a body of the substance of that plane. The Divine Sparks of the next Life-Wave find the mould of that body still available, the magnetic stresses which are its framework persisting indefinitely once they have been organised, and speedily build up new forms by drawing the atomic substance of the plane into the existing mould which organises it into a vehicle ready for the use of the descending Divine Spark.

The Divine Sparks of the second Life-Wave, finding that a vehicle of abstract spiritual substance forms itself about them automatically as soon as they come on to that plane, do not pause there but proceed to the next plane. Thereon they have to build and the process takes time and is not without friction as the different and unorganised stresses are brought into organisation and equilibrium. When this work is achieved, the Divine Sparks of the second Swarm return to the Logos bearing with them the fruits of their manifestation - that is to say, the reaction-capacities which they have acquired in the course of their experiences in struggling with the unorganised substances of the plane on which they carried out their evolutionary task - and leaving behind them, in their turn, the organised systems of stresses which they built up when they were making their own vehicles of manifestation upon that plane. A similar process is repeated when each subsequent Life-Wave flows forth; the substance of each plane organises itself about each outgoing Divine Spark as it comes down the planes to take up its evolutionary task, so that when it arrives at its appointed place it has the substance of each plane in its make-up. Its vehicles, however, are not yet in a state to function; it is only by actual experience on its appointed plane of manifestation that the subtle substances in its composition awaken to activity. When the Divine Spark arrives at its plane of manifestation it is but a potentiality; it becomes functional only through experience.

It is the aim of the Logos to bring the projected thought-form of Itself, which is our universe, first to a state of consciousness, next to a state of self-consciousness, and final-

ly to a state of reciprocal consciousness with the Logoidal Mind, so that It 'knows, even as It is known'. We see this process in all degrees of completion. The liberated soul, freed from the wheel of birth and death, has attained a state of Divine Consciousness, and as soon as there is perfect reciprocity of consciousness with the Logoidal Mind, there is complete synthesis, and Divine Union takes place. In other language, he 'enters the Light and goes not forth again'. When the whole universe attains this state, it too enters into union with the Logos, the Day of Manifestation ceases, and the Sleep of the Gods begins, during which the Great Entity absorbs by meditation the fruits of the solar evolution just past. Through aeons this absorption goes on, all existence enjoying the supreme bliss of perfect harmony - heaven. Then, when the Great Entity has absorbed all the essence of the experience of the creation brought by evolution to perfection, Its desire for progress causes It again to project a thought-form of Itself, but this time the thought-form is of a more highly evolved Self, for the Great Entity is now a Cosmic Being plus the experiences of a manifested universe.

Thus evolution goes on. A Day of Manifestation dawns during which a universe is projected, waxes to its noon and withdraws up the planes to its evening. It is to a Great Entity exactly what an incarnation is to an Evolutionary Personality. The analogy is exact, it is no arbitrary and fanciful parable which is thus expressed. If the preceding pages have been studied carefully, the reader will have grasped certain principles which he will see applied again and again to every aspect of existence from the Cosmos to the animalcule, for all existence is built up on the same principles, that which has gone before conditioning that which comes after. As evolution proceeds by successive Days and Nights, outflowings and indrawings, each following the track of its predecessor till in its turn it breaks trail for itself, it follows that each successive Life-Wave builds on the foundation of its predecessor, which, in its turn, was indebted to its own predecessor. Therefore the original ground-plan is never lost however high the superstructure may be raised. The Cosmic Principles determined the nature of the Logos, the nature of the Logos determined Its concept of Itself and Its concept of Itself is our Solar System.

Everything in our universe has to be tuned to the keynote of the Logoidal concept, has to be harmonised with the fundamental determinant of existence, and therefore we find the Cosmic Principles repeated in every conceivable variation, for they condition every form of existence both in its ultimate constitution and its subsequent development. As all evolution is working towards equilibrium it necessarily follows that discord is only a temporary condition, for the World-Soul will not rest from its task until equilibrium is achieved and all tuned into

perfect harmony. There is always disharmony for a period when a new evolutionary impulse oversets the compensating stresses of organised existence. The ultimate triumph of harmony is assured because the idea of readjustment is implicit in the oversetting of the existing balance to allow further development.

LESSON 7

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

Subject.

Movement is the basis....mind its completion.

A Great Entity.

God is not static.

Travelling Atoms.

The first Life-Wave.

It is the aim of the Logos....

The origin of disharmony.

From "Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science",

How inadequate is the average clairvoyant's
explanation of his vision.

The psychology of clairvoyance.

The stepping-stones of the symbols.

Schizophrenic tendency.

The Higher and Lower Selves.

Trance conditions.

LESSON 7

Questions.

1. What is a Great Entity?
2. Discuss the difference between the Solar Logos and the Creator of the Cosmos.
3. What is a Life-Wave?
4. Discuss the phrase "The ultimate triumph of harmony is assured".
5. Summarise the teaching on evolution given in this chapter. (20 lines)
6. Choose and write down seven key sentences.

LESSON 8

Chapter 11.

The Group Soul

In order to understand the nature of the Group Soul we must consider the very dawn of manifestation. There we must distinguish between noumenal and phenomenal existence, between pure Being and the thought-form of the manifested universe projected from the mind of the Logos. Pure Being is cosmic; it is of a different nature from the manifested universe which we know, and it is distinguished from manifested existence by being eternal and self-existent. The manifested universe is not self-existent but is sustained by the mind of the Logos. It is not eternal but will be absorbed into the Logoidal consciousness when that consciousness becomes introverted at the end of the Day of Manifestation.

The thought-form of a universe, when first emanated from the consciousness of its Creator, is rudimentary; it might best be described as the raw material of an evolution. Through this amorphous sea of pre-matter play noumenal forces which have a real existence for they are eternal and self-sustaining; these we call the Cosmic Forces. In this sea of pre-matter there float points of noumenal existence which we call the Divine Sparks or Monads; these are the nuclei around which are built up the individualised existences of all beings that have immortal souls. We might not inaptly liken the state to a mass of frog-spawn, wherein little black specks of potential life are embedded in the mass of nutrient jelly which they will absorb in the process of their growth.

This formless, undifferentiated mass of existence, of an inconceivable vastness and antiquity, forms the beginnings of our universe and all its multiform life. But as the Cosmic Forces play through it and the Mind of the Logos broods over it changes begin to occur, and these changes affect different parts differently. Bearing in mind that this basic substance of existence is mind-stuff before it is matter-stuff we can see that we have herein the basis of differentiation, of individualisation. The mind-stuff becomes stored with memories, and with different memories in different parts, so that the different areas, metaphorically speaking, become differentiated one from another and, owing to their difference, they will react differently when subjected to the next experience of external stimulus and thus tend to become more and more different as time goes on.

We might aptly term this amorphous sea of pre-matter the primary Group Soul, the underlying substratum of all manifested existence. Everything which exists in our universe has at the

very foundation of its nature a stratum in common with all the rest. This is a very important point in practical occultism, to which we shall refer later.

Let us now consider the manifested universe, with the first developments of evolution beginning to show themselves, under the simile of a cross-section of a relief map of a mountainous country. We see that the modelled representations of the various mountain ranges all rest upon a common basis - the thin layer of modelling clay which covers the whole foundation board of the map. That thin layer of clay is continuous over the whole map, and some small, worm-like creature, burrowing in it, could traverse the map from end to end and climb peak after peak at will. Whatsoever can move in that lowest layer of clay can have free passage to all parts of the map - mountain, valley or plain.

Likening the primary Group Soul to the foundation layer of the map-clay, we may liken the different group souls to the different mountain ranges represented on the map, and the genera and species within the group souls to the individual peaks in the ranges. But the group soul is not the only unit to be considered in our evolving universe; there are also the Divine Sparks. These, being distributed through the amorphous sea of pre-matter, get caught up in the individual peaks and ranges as they develop. A group soul may contain but a single one, or it may contain myriads, but no development will go far that does not contain one at least of these Divine Sparks; for though reaction is a characteristic of matter, memory is a characteristic of mind, and without the retention of the fruits of experience no extensive modification is possible.

We have thus far looked at the group soul from the macro-cosmic point of view; let us now look at it from the micro-cosmic point of view. Each one of us started our existence in this universe like the speck of life in the frog-spawn - a Divine Spark in the amorphous sea of pre-matter. We were drawn up into the evolving and differentiated group soul which all the time retained its connective base in the primary Group Soul; and we were further drawn up into the individual peaks of the mountain ranges, which give us genera and species.

Thus we have a substratum of our being which we share with all manifested existence. The next level of our nature is common to all animals, but not to plants, minerals and the non-human evolutions; the next level we share with all the mammals; and the next with the natural order which the zoologists call the Primates. Then come the peaks of the mountain range, and we distinguish the peak of humanity from the peak of the apes or the peak of the lemurs. We further distinguish our own crag upon that peak from the crag of the Negro races or the crag of the Chinese; and then come the finer distinctions that finally classify us into the Celtic, the Nordic, or the Latin subsection, and we find ourselves definitely associated with others

who have a certain temperamental and physical type in common. This is the biological foundation of our being. We might liken each group-unit to a pyramid of which the individual is the apex and the sloping sides broaden down through genus and species till finally they merge in the universal base of the primary Group Soul of all manifested existence.

There is a level in your subconsciousness and your neighbour's subconsciousness which is common to you both but in which human beings of another race cannot share. There is yet a deeper level which is common to all human beings, and yet a deeper which is common to all living creatures, but the deepest of all we share with all manifested existence, animals, plants, and rocks; and they and we share the ultimate stratum with the non-humans which have no physical body at all.

All existence is thus united into an indissoluble whole. No part of it can be affected without the influence of the changed conditions spreading and demanding compensatory adjustments from the whole in order that equilibrium may be maintained. The whole universe acts and interacts, no unit can isolate itself nor escape its share of the stresses that rend the parts and yet stabilise the whole.

Among the problems that have always perplexed scientists there are several that become comprehensible through the hypothesis of the existence of group souls. The migration of birds, the wisdom of solitary wasps described by Fabre, the discipline of the hive - all these find their key and explanation in the group soul. Creatures of a lowly development are personalised but not individualised; they have no separate consciousness or intelligence but share in the corporate consciousness of their species. They thus have access to all the experience which evolution has brought to their race, but at the same time have little power to make individual adaptations to circumstances. This explains their extraordinary abilities and limitations.

We must habituate ourselves in this respect to the realisation that there are individual beings, units of consciousness, whose physical bodies are not united by continuity of tissue. The bees of a hive are not individuals, but organs; it is the hive that is the individual. In a flock of swallows finding their way with marvellous skill over sea and land there are not a number of Divine Sparks evolving through experience, but one Divine Spark, the Archetypal Swallow, the 'angel of the species'.

There is no individual karma among the personalised creatures; at the death of a unit its consciousness is merged without distinction in the group soul, its experience absorbed by the group angel, not garnered for its individual development. It is held by some occultists that individualisation takes place only through domestication and the companionship with individualised beings.

Just as the adept is the initiator of the Elemental kingdom,

enabling its members to develop the spark of spiritual consciousness which alone can render them immortal and able to survive the Cosmic Night, so is the average man the initiator of the animal kingdom, enabling its members to become individualised and grow to free-will and self-consciousness.

The group soul also plays a very important part in practical occultism, especially in initiation. Each 'god' is a form for a force that has presided over the development of some aspect of human evolution and can be at this day the channel of the particular force which was utilised in that phase. When we contact the god, we contact the raw material of that particular faculty; we also contact the free, unappropriated force still available. It is as if we have sunk a well-shaft down through our own nature, penetrating level after level of the deepest subconsciousness until we arrive at the stratum which was developed under the presidency of the god. Arrived there, we sink the shaft no further but proceed to brick it round to prevent leakage into it from any strata save the one chosen; this is achieved by certain devices of ritual. Into our well can now flow the free forces of that level or aspect of nature upon which we have elected to concentrate, and there are devices of mind-work by means of which we pump those forces up to the level of consciousness.

No ceremony, however beautiful and impressive, can do any more than titillate the surface of consciousness unless it has its roots in the group soul of the race, for it is thence that there wells up the power which it is designed to invoke. The shaft is sunk through a man's own consciousness into the racial deeps in which he is a participant, and thence there wells up the energy or wisdom of the Archetypal Man of his stock. It is these subliminal, primordial forces which ritual is designed to invoke; the forces of superconsciousness are invoked by meditative methods in silence and solitude, and by rituals which become possible after much development in the individual.

LESSON 8

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

Subject.

Group Soul.

A Day of Manifestation.

The beginnings of our universe.

Build the paras. on page 66 and the first para. on page 67 as a mental picture and then draw it as a diagram and put in the names.

Group soul of animals, etc.

The adept is the initiator of the Elemental Kingdom.

The average man is the initiator of the Animal Kingdom.

The gods of a race are part of its Group Soul.

The Archetypal Man.

From "Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science",

The processes of trance and hypnosis.

Subconsciousness is mind minus ego.

Spiritualism in the light of the facts of hypnosis, suggestion and telepathy.

The inhabitants of the unseen.

Liberated souls.

LESSON 9

Chapter 12.

The Group Mind - Artificial Elementals

The term 'Group Mind' is sometimes used loosely among occultists as if it were interchangeable with 'Group Soul'. The two concepts are, however, entirely distinct. The Group Soul is the raw material of mind-stuff out of which individual consciousness is differentiated by experience; the Group Mind is built up out of the contributions of many individualised consciousnesses concentrating upon the same ideas.

The key lies in the direction of the attention of a number of people to a common object about which they all feel strongly in the same way. Direction of attention to a common object without emotion does not have the same effect.

Let us now consider the problem in its occult applications. What is this strange oversoul that forms and disperses so swiftly when a number of people are of one mind in one place? For an explanation we must consider the doctrine of artificial Elementals.

An artificial Elemental is a thought-form ensouled by Elemental essence. That essence may be drawn directly from the Elemental kingdoms or it may be derived from the person's own aura. A thought-form built up by continual visualising and concentration, and concerning which a strong emotion is felt, becomes charged with that emotion and is capable of an independent existence outside the consciousness of its creator. This is a very important factor in practical occultism, and the explanation of many of its phenomena.

Exactly the same process that leads to the formation of an artificial Elemental takes place when a number of people concentrate with emotion on a single object. They make an artificial Elemental, potent in proportion to the size of the crowd and the intensity of its feelings. This Elemental has a very marked mental atmosphere of its own, and this atmosphere influences most powerfully the feelings of every person participating in the crowd-emotion. It gives them telepathic suggestion, sounding the note of its own being in their ears and thereby reinforcing the emotional vibration which originally gave it birth; there is action and reaction, mutual stimulus and intensification, between the Elemental and its makers. The more the crowd concentrates upon its object of emotion, the stronger the Elemental becomes; the stronger it becomes the stronger the mass suggestion it gives to the individuals composing the crowd that created it; and they, receiving this suggestion, find their feelings intensified. Thus it is that mobs are capable of

deeds of passion from which every individual member would normally shrink with horror.

A mob Elemental, however, disperses as rapidly as it forms because a mob has no continuity of existence; the moment the stimulus of common emotion is removed, the mob ceases to be a unit and disintegrates. That is why undisciplined armies, however enthusiastic, are unreliable fighting machines; their enthusiasm evaporates if it is not continually stimulated; they split up into their component parts of many individuals with diversified interests, each activated by the instinct of self-preservation. To build up a group mind of any endurance, some method of ensuring continuity of attention and feeling is essential.

Whenever such continuity of attention and feeling has been brought about, a group mind, or group Elemental, is formed which with the passage of time develops a type of existence of its own, and ceases to be wholly dependent upon the attention and emotion of the crowd that gave it birth. Once this occurs, the crowd no longer possesses the power to withdraw its attention or to disperse. The group Elemental has it in its grip, the attention of each individual is attracted and held in spite of himself and feelings are stirred within him even if he does not wish to feel them.

Each new-comer to the group enters into this potent atmosphere and either accepts it and is absorbed in the group, or rejects it and is himself rejected. No member of a group with a strong atmosphere, group mind, or Elemental (according to which term we prefer), is at liberty to think without bias upon the objects of group concentration and emotion. This is one reason why reforms are so hard to bring about.

The more knit-together the organisation that needs reforming, the harder it is to move, and the stronger must be the personality that attempts the task. Yet once that forceful personality has begun to make an impression he speedily finds that a group is gathering under his leadership, and that this in its turn is developing an Elemental and the momentum he has originated has begun to push him along. When he flags in his leadership the movement he created forces him forward. The solitary individual may turn aside and pause in moments of doubt and discouragement, but not the leader of a strongly emotionalised group; as soon as he slackens his pace he feels the pressure of the group mind behind him and it carries him forward during his hours of weakness and darkness. It may also, if his scheme has been unwisely conceived, carry him away and dash him to pieces on the rocks of a misjudged policy, a policy of which he would have seen the unwisdom if he had considered the matter rationally. There is no stopping the momentum of a movement which is moving along the lines of evolution; the group mind of the participants forms a channel for the manifestation of the

forces of evolution, and the momentum developed is irresistible. But however potent the personality, however vast the resources, however popular the catch-phrases, if the movement is contrary to cosmic law it is only a matter of time till the whole group rushes madly down a steep slope into the sea. For in such a case it is the very momentum that is worked up which is the cause of its destruction. Give a false movement enough rope and it will always hang itself, falling by its own weight when that has grown sufficiently top-heavy to overbalance it. This factor of the Group Mind is a very important key to the understanding of human problems, and explains the irrationality of men in the mass.

The occultist carries the practical application of the doctrine of group minds much further than does the psychologist. In it he finds a key to the power of the Mysteries. Considered with an understanding of crowd psychology, it becomes obvious that the method of the Mysteries and of the secret fraternities of all ages is based upon practical experience of its facts. What could be more conducive to the formation of a powerful group mind than the secrecy, the special costume, the processions and chantings of an occult ritual? Anything which differentiates a number of individuals from the mass and sets them apart forms a group mind automatically. The more a group is segregated, the greater the difference between it and the rest of mankind, the stronger is the group mind thus engendered. Consider the strength of the group mind of the Jewish race, set apart by ritual, by manners, by temperament and by persecution. There is nothing like persecution to give vitality to a group mind. Very truly is the blood of the martyrs the seed of the Church, for it is the cement of the group mind.

The potency of ceremonial does not rest only in its appeal to the entity invoked but in its appeal to the imaginations of the participants. An adept, working alone, will work a ritual in picture consciousness on the astral plane without moving from his meditation posture, and this ritual will be effective for the purposes of invocation. But if he wants to make an atmosphere in which the development of his pupils will advance as in a forcing-house, or if he wishes to raise his own consciousness beyond its normal limitations, transcending his own will-power and unaided vision, he will make use of the powers of the group Elemental developed by ritual.

This group mind, or ritual Elemental, acts upon the participants in the ceremony; they are lifted out of themselves and are more than normal for the moment. A group Elemental, formed of the appropriate emotion, is just as capable of raising consciousness to the level of the angels as of lowering it to the level of the beasts.

When our emotion goes out strongly towards an object we are pouring out a subtle but nevertheless potent force. If that

emotion is not a mere blind outpouring but formulates itself into the idea of doing something, and especially if that idea causes a dramatic picture to rise in the mind, the outpouring force is formulated into a thought-form; the mental picture is ensouled by the outpoured force and becomes an actuality on the astral. This thought-form itself now begins to give off vibrations, and these vibrations tend to re-inforce the feelings of the person whose emotion gave rise to them and to induce similar feelings in others present whose attention is directed to the same object.

It will be seen that the doctrine of the group mind is now being associated with the doctrine of auto-suggestion and these two psychological concepts are extended by association with the concept of telepathy. Take these three factors together and we have the key not only to the phenomena of mob psychology but also to the little realised power of ritual, especially ritual as it is performed by an esoteric group.

Let us now consider what happens at such a ritual. All present have their attention riveted upon the drama of the presentation. Every object within the range of their vision is symbolic of the idea that is being expressed by the ceremony. Consequently a highly concentrated and highly energised group mind is built up.

As we have already seen, when one thinks of any object with emotion force is poured forth. If a number of people are thinking of the same object with emotion, their attention concentrated and their feelings exalted by the ritual, they are pouring into a common pool a large measure of subtle force. It is this force which forms the basis of the manifestation of whatever potency is being invoked.

In religions where the gods or the saints are freely represented in pictorial form the imaginations of the worshippers are accustomed to picturing them as they have seen them represented - whether it be the hawk-headed Horus or the Virgin Mary. When a number of devout worshippers are gathered together, their emotions concentrated and exalted by ritual and all holding the same image in imagination, the outpoured force of all present is formed into an astral simulacrum of the Being thus intensely pictured; and if that Being is the symbolic representation of a natural force, which is what all the gods are intended to be, that force will find a channel of manifestation through the form thus built up; the mental image held in the imagination of each participant in the ceremony can suddenly become alive and objective and all will feel the inrush of the power that has been invoked.

When this process has been repeated regularly over considerable periods, the images that have been built up remain on the astral plane in exactly the same way that a habit-track is formed in the mind by the repeated performance of the same

action. In this form the natural force remains permanently concentrated. Consequently, subsequent worshippers need be at no great pains to formulate the simulacrum; they have only to think of the god and they feel his power. It is in this way that all anthropomorphic representations of the Godhead have been built up. If we think for a moment we shall see that the Holy Ghost is neither a flame nor a dove; neither is the maternal earth-aspect of Nature either Isis or Demeter. These are the forms under which the human mind tries to apprehend these things - the lower and less evolved the mind, the grosser the form.

Those who have a knowledge of the little understood aspects of the human mind, whether Egyptian priest, Eleusinian hierophant, or modern occultist, make use of their knowledge of this rarer kind of psychology to create conditions in which the individual human mind shall be able to transcend itself and break through its limitations into a wider air.

LESSON 9

LIST OF SUBJECTS FOR MEDITATION

Subject.

Group Minds.

Give a false movement enough rope and it will
always hang itself.

In it he finds a key to the power of the Mysteries.

The potency of ceremonial....imagination of the
participants.

A ritual Elemental.

Auto-suggestion.

Image-building.

From "Spiritualism in the Light of Occult Science",

The Angelic Hierarchies.

Elementals.

Nature Spirits.

Thought-forms.

The real nature of Vision.

Consciousness of the Planes.

The value of Spiritualism and its place in
modern religion.

LESSON 9

Questions.

1. Explain the difference between a Group Soul and a Group Mind. Give an example of the functioning of each.
2. What do you understand by an artificial Elemental?
3. Discuss the teaching on mob psychology given in this lesson. (15 lines)
4. Discuss: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." (10 lines)
5. Discuss: the use of ritual. (15 lines)
6. Choose and write down seven key sentences.

LESSON 10

Chapter 13.

Mind Training

The mind in its three aspects, conscious, subconscious and superconscious, constitutes the three tools with which the occultist does his work. Mind-training, therefore, is the basis of the practical work of the Mysteries. It must be realised, however, that it is mind-training in this threefold aspect which is intended and not simply the training of the conscious mind, working through reason and directed by will, though this constitutes the first stage in the task.

The conscious mind must be brought under perfect control. That is to say, the student, by constant and long-continued practice and discipline, must be able with ease and certainty to maintain his attention unswervingly fixed on a given subject, without any alien ideas intruding. He must also be able to build up in his imagination a mental picture, vivid and clear-cut and in proper perspective, and hold it before his mind's eye for definite periods without wavering.

The conscious mind of the occultist also needs to be equipped with certain furniture of intellectual knowledge, and he therefore studies, in brief outline at least, the general scope of natural science; astronomy, geology, physics and chemistry also have significance for him, and their general principles should be understood. Some knowledge of ancient and mediaeval history also is useful, and detailed knowledge of the mythology of at least one pantheon.

It is useful to have practical training in either mathematics or logic in order to develop his reasoning faculty and give him an understanding of the methods of philosophical proof. Much trouble is caused in occult work by students being unfamiliar with the principles of evidence and not knowing what is necessary to verify a fact, or whether a case is properly proved or not.

The subconscious mind is the realm of memory pictures. Herein are said to be stored the superimposed impressions of all past incarnations, the memories of all repressed experiences in this incarnation, and the impressions of all sensations that have been registered by the senses but have failed to reach the focus of consciousness.

It is also the realm of the instincts, where they function in their pure form, unadulterated by the influences of reason or idealism.

The sensory consciousness of the subconscious mind, by means of which it contacts the not-self, consists of the lower

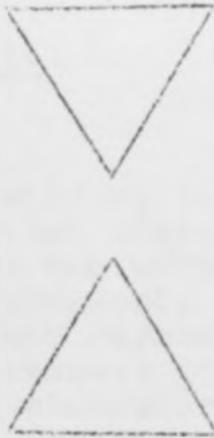
psychism. This is very intimately associated with the instincts. In the normal human being this level of consciousness should have passed away; if it survives, it is a vestigial organ and like all atavisms, readily becomes diseased. Its spontaneous presence must always be considered as a psychopathology, and never used as a basis of occult development. The mind of the student must be clearly focussed in objective consciousness before any attempt is made to develop the occult powers. The development of these powers on top of an atavistic form of psychism is the cause of most of the difficulties that occur in occult training. A person in a highly sensitive or psychic condition is unfit for ritual initiation and should not attempt it until consciousness has returned to normal.

When harmonious poise on the physical plane has been achieved, it is then possible to extend the threshold of consciousness both upwards and downwards; but at all times the student must rigorously maintain the barriers between the different levels, and allow no leakage of the content of one level of consciousness into another. That is to say he must always be clearly aware to which level of consciousness any impression belongs, and be able to maintain the barriers between the levels intact. If this is clearly realised, it will save the student much trouble.

The subconscious mind contains not only the personal recollections of the individual but also the racial images and the cultural ideals. In deeper levels we find aspects of consciousness which correspond with the epochs of the evolution of the solar system. It is with these images that the initiate works when he avails himself of symbolism in meditation or makes use of ceremonial and invocation.

It is by establishing psychic contact between the mind and the archetypal beings described previously, and bringing their forces through the subconscious channels of the instincts and employing the driving-forces of these re-inforced instincts in sublimated forms under the control of the will and reason, that effective ritual work is done.

As the subconscious mind belongs to the past of evolutionary time, so superconsciousness belongs to the future. Superconsciousness consists of rudimentary capabilities, or of capabilities belonging to the Evolutionary Personality, of which the Incarnationary Personality of the average individual is not sufficiently evolved to be aware. When the discrepancy between the Evolutionary and the Incarnationary Personalities is very great, there is little possibility of communication between them save in times of crisis; but when the Incarnationary Personality is sufficiently developed and purified to approximate in type to the nature of the Evolutionary Personality, communication begins to be established, and the awareness which perceives spiritual things comes into conscious operation.



1.



2.

Task for Lesson 10

Elucidate the significance of the above two glyphs as used to illustrate the development of the higher consciousness, using one triangle in each to represent the Incarnationary and the Evolutionary Personality.

- N.B. (a) One week only should be given to the above.
- (b) No question paper is attached to this Lesson.
- (c) No meditations are to be sent in but the time should be devoted to the above glyphs, so that the written elucidation contains in fact the summary of the meditations.

LESSON 11

Chapter 14.

Character-Training

It will be clearly realised after the study of the previous lesson, that character-training and the harmonisation of the forces of the subjective self are most important aspects of occult development; for how can we hope to bring the great cosmic forces into harmonious function through the blocked and distorted channels of an inharmonious personality?

The character-training of the initiate has strength and serenity for its aims. It will be observed that we do not speak of goodness, purity, meekness, wisdom, or any other specific virtue in this connection, because it must be clearly realised that the practice of no single virtue is ever going to lead to full achievement; it may in fact, readily degenerate into an abnormality, or even become a vice if practised in season and out of season without due regard to good sense and balanced proportion.

The human being is compounded of varying proportions of the 'pairs of opposites'. It is the relative proportions of the various pairs of opposites which determine temperament. We all have them. Inharmony of character is caused by the presence of undue proportions of different factors.

The occultist in his self-discipline aims at achieving a just balance among the different factors in his own nature, not at the indiscriminate development of certain factors popularly believed to be better than others. No one of a pair of opposites is better than the other intrinsically. They are the two arms of a balance, but in individual cases there may be need for the development of one aspect and the curbing of another until equilibrium is achieved. It is a purely individual matter and each case must be judged on its merits and adjusted with a view to equilibrium and harmony according to the type of the temperament and its relative strength and vigour. But in any case such an equilibrium of forces should be aimed at that the will can readily turn the balance in favour of one or another of the pairs of opposites as occasion requires; swinging without effort from one to the other and back again without the need of any severe curbing of impulses or urging of reluctances being necessary. The real Self must be completely and unquestionably master of the house, and no impulse may usurp that sovereignty.

The initiates of the Western Tradition have always taught that human life is rooted in nature. Theirs has never been a philosophy of negation, because the racial destiny of the white races is concerned with the mastery of matter. Equally have

they taught that the goal of evolution is in spirit. Humanity at the present epoch is balanced between the two and the initiate of the lower grades cannot run on ahead of evolution and upset that balance in his own nature without disastrous consequences, any more than he can ignore his innate spirituality and revert to the brute without degradation.

In order that we may develop the higher aspects of our natures it is necessary that we should understand the lower; there must be no aspects of human life which are sealed books to the initiate. This does not necessarily mean that we should pass through in person all the experiences of the lower, because many of these aspects have passed away in the course of evolution and are no longer manifested except as pathologies. It means, however, that there must be no dissociations or repressions in the consciousness in the initiate, but that his realisation and imagination must be able to range from the lowest to the highest, from the primeval to the ultimate; and he must recognise not only his kinship with all forms of life and experience, but the latency in his own nature of all that has gone to the building of the species.

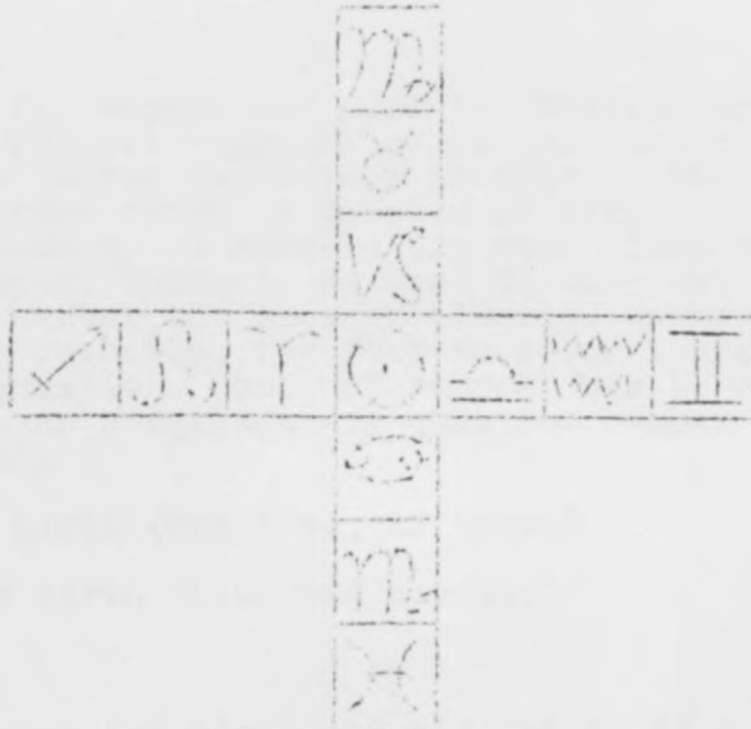
He must range in contemplation over every aspect of human experience and history, and have reached that equilibrium within his own nature which shall enable him to do so without compulsive reaction to the images invoked. If he so reacts, he knows that he shares in the problem and has not yet solved it. Until all such compulsive reaction has been overcome by self-analysis and self-discipline, he cannot bring through in safety the great Elemental forces which are the source of the power of the magician.

Purification is stressed in manuals of character-training and initiatory discipline. Let it be realised, however, that purification does not mean the elimination of any aspect from the nature, but the maintenance of each and every aspect 'pure', that is to say, unadulterated and uncontaminated by any other aspect. The ego can then take all these different ingredients of the personality and compound the required prescription, sure that the ingredients, which have to balance exactly, will be present in the proportions expected, and not in some unforeseen proportion owing to the presence of one as an impurity in another.

If any factor in human nature, from the most primitive to the most recently evolved, is lacking, the condition is pathological, not supernormal. The initiate must see life steadily and see it whole and live it as fully as he can with due regard to the welfare of others.

Earth Triplicity.

Fire Triplicity.



Air Triplicity.

Water Triplicity.

Task for Lesson XI.

Write a brief account of your conception of the significance and teaching of this glyph in relation to character-training.

N.B. (a) One week only should be devoted to the above.

(b) No question paper is attached to this Lesson.

(c) No meditations are to be sent in but the time should be devoted to the above glyph, so that the written elucidation contains in fact the summary of the meditations.

QUESTIONNAIRE

FULL NAMES:

Applicants for supervised work and tuition are required to answer the following questions as this can be of very real help to the Course Supervisor in guiding the student's work. All information given is treated as strictly confidential. For reasons of space answers are best given on a separate sheet of paper. There is no need to copy out each question but please number the answers clearly. Answers should be kept as brief as possible, say four to seven lines per question or part of a question. Some, of course, can be answered in much less. Place an x against any question number if you do not wish to answer it.

1. Date of birth (and time, if known)
2. Place of birth (town and country)
3. Sex.
4. Nationality (At birth and also state if naturalised)
5. Nationality of parents.
6. Number of brothers and sisters, and if older or younger.
7. What was your religious upbringing as a child?
8. Did either of your parents die or separate before you were twentyone? If so, at what age were you?
9. Have you ever suffered any serious illness or accident? If so, give details and state if it has resulted in any lasting disability.
10. What type of education were you given as a child, and when did you leave school or college?
11. What academic or technical qualifications or further education have you received, if any?
12. What is your job or profession? Give brief details of any others you have followed in the past.
13. Are you married or single, widow, widower, separated or divorced? Give approximate dates.

14. Give sex and date of birth of any children. If divorced or separated, are they in your care.
15. Have you any particular hobbies or non-vocational interests ?
16. When did you first become interested in occult subjects ?
17. Why ?
18. What is the extent of your reading or studies in esoteric subjects. ?
19. Have you ever had any occult or psychic experiences ?
20. What esoteric groups or societies have you been or are you still a member of ? Give approximate dates. If you left, what was the reason for doing so ?
21. What do you hope to gain by taking this course ?
22. What factors in your early life (before 21) do you consider to have handicapped you in later life.
23. What are your present ambitions ? What factors appear to be blocking your way to fulfilment of these ambitions.
24. Do you ever seem to have been persistently dogged by any one particular type of problem or cycle of misfortune or bad luck ? Give brief details.
25. Have your relationships with a) your parents, b) your children - if any, c) the opposite sex been, on the whole, happy or unhappy ?
26. Does religion play an important part in your life ? If you attend a place of worship occasionally or regularly give brief details
27. What good qualities do you find most lacking in a) your close acquaintances, b) people in general, c) Yourself ?
28. What do you consider to be your strongest personal qualities.
29. If you could influence God to make one change in the condition of the world, no matter how fundamental or wide-sweeping, what would it be ?
30. Have you ever suffered neurosis, addiction, nervous breakdown or depletion, mental illness ? Give details.

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHT

STUDY COURSE No.2.

This Course consists of eight lessons based on Part 1 of "The Mystical Qabalah" by Dion Fortune, and ~~"The Psychology of C.G. Jung" by Jacobi is included for supplementary reading.~~

A detailed knowledge of the subject matter of the first seven chapters of the Qabalah is expected of the student, but a general knowledge only of the text book is required.

SYLLAPUS OF PAPERS.

1. Lessons for sixteen weeks:

<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Para.</u>	<u>Subject.</u>
1	1		The Training Path of the West.
2	2		The Choice of a Path.
3	3		The Method of the Qabalah.
4	4		The Unwritten Qabalah.
5	5		Negative Existence.
6	6		Otz Chiim. The Tree of Life.
7	7	1-20	The Three Supernals.
8	7	21-34	The Second Triangle.

2. Concentration Exercises.

3. How to record your Meditations.

4. Instructions for answering Questions and preparing Diagrams.

5. Subjects for Meditation.

6. Questions on Lessons.

General instructions and information concerning discipline are as in Part 1.

2.

CONCENTRATION EXERCISES.

1. The training given by the Society of the Inner Light consists in:
 - (a) The teaching of the cosmic philosophy;
 - (b) The training of the mind.
2. The training of the mind aims at:
 - (a) Acquiring control of the conscious mind;
 - (b) The extension of consciousness.

The first task of the student is to acquire a high degree of control of the conscious mind so that it is the obedient servant of the Higher Self. To attain this end he must practise regularly just as does a pianist. Strong and supple hands and a sensitive touch are the foundation of a pianist's technique. Equally, a strong and supple mind and sensitive perception are the basis of the training of a student of the Mysteries.

The exercises which develop the mind and bring it under control are graded from the simple to the complex. In order to obtain results the first simple exercises must be done regularly and carefully. Elementary as they may appear, their regular performance will enable the mind to be brought under control with the minimum of difficulty and the maximum of efficiency. The meditation record forms an interesting indication of the progress that is being made.

Students generally find that they make rapid progress at first owing to the enthusiasm of novelty; but they must be prepared for a period of struggle when the novelty wears off. This is an early test. If it is successfully passed the growth of skill soon reawakens enthusiasm and is a constant source of interest. Results, moreover, are not long in appearing in an increasing steadiness and capacity in daily life.

The control of the mind depends upon the power to concentrate. Concentration consists in paying attention to one thing to the exclusion of all others.

There are two kinds of attention:

- (a) Voluntary
- (b) Involuntary.

We pay involuntary attention to a thing when it attracts and holds our attention in spite of ourselves - like the pain of an aching tooth or a worrying thought.

Voluntary attention can be achieved:

- (a) by formulating very clearly in the imagination the thing we wish to attend to;
- (b) by patiently and firmly rejecting every other thought the moment it appears in the mind and recalling the attention to the thing we wish to think about.

The imagination is a very important and very neglected power of the mind. Most of our thinking is done with the help of the imagination. We usually think either in pictures or we think in words. In the higher states of consciousness we think in ideas; and these have to be translated into words before they are fully realised.

In training the mind on parts 2 and 3 of this Course, therefore, we do exercises to train the Pictorial Imagination, and the Auditory Imagination.

When you have mastered the exercises in the Study Course you should have learnt the basic principles of mind-power. The are as follows:-

- (a) The power to follow a train of thought steadily.
- (b) The power to visualise clearly.
- (c) The power to imagine yourself doing things, and to feel and see in the imagination.

Note: Although it is permissible to imagine real scenes in the exercises, all the persons pictured must be imaginary.

HOW TO FILL IN THE MEDITATION RECORD SHEET FOR PARTS 2 & 3.

Fill in your name and address, the month and the year, in the spaces provided for them. If you fail to do this the teachers have no means of knowing to whom the record belongs.

In column 1 are a row of figures from 1 to 31. These represent the days of the month and each line, right across the sheet, is allotted to a day, and contains the record of the work done on that day. From these records a graph can be worked out to show the exact progress a student is making.

Column 2 is headed "Time". In this you enter the times at which you began and ended your meditation, thus:- "8.15-8.45". At the end of the period enter the total in hours and minutes at the foot of the column.

In column 3, headed "Place", state where you did your meditation: "In bedroom", "On train", or wherever it may be.

In column 4, headed "Ex.No." put the number of your mind-training exercises on that day; leave a blank if you have not done it.

Column 5, headed "Breaks" is subdivided into four divisions, headed "M.W." for Mind-Wandering; "N" for Noise; "E" for Emotion; and "T" for Total. Have beside you when meditating a piece of paper marked with these four columns - M.W. - N. - E. and T. Every time a genuine break in the meditation occurs due to mind-wandering, place a stroke under the heading "M.W.". Every time the meditation is interrupted by noise, place a stroke under the heading "N" and every time some emotionally-tinged thought, whether of anxiety or pleasurable anticipation, intrudes, put a stroke under "E". At the end of each meditation count up the strokes under each heading and enter each total in the appropriate columns in the record sheet and enter the

STUDY COURSENo.2.THE MYSTICAL QABALAH.

Part 1.

Instructions on answering questions and methods of study.

1. The object of these questions is to draw attention to important points. They should be answered in the student's own words (not by copying the appropriate sentences out of the lesson).
2. In every lesson the student has been asked to draw the "Tree". There is a special reason for this. One of the best ways of learning the "Tree" is to draw it again and again. This question should never be missed nor done carelessly, and a new Tree should be drawn for each lesson.
3. A convenient size and way of drawing the "Tree" symmetrically is as follows:-

From the centre of the circle which represents Kether to the centre of Malkuth eight inches. Tiphareth is half-way between them. Yesod is midway between Tiphareth and Malkuth. With compass using Kether as centre and radius 2" describe the lower arc of a circle. With same radius repeat the process and in turn describe circles from the centres of Tiphareth, Yesod and finally from the point midway between the centres of Kether and Tiphareth.

The points of intersection of the circles gives you the position of the centres of the six remaining Sephiroth.

The glyph may, of course, be drawn to any size but the proportions remain constant, for the Tree is essentially a system of relationships.

4. Many questions can be answered in less than four to seven lines. Certain questions will require more, and then a limit is given to guide you in your answer.

STUDY COURSE No.2Exercises.

Note: Each exercise represents about three weeks' work, since the period of the Course is sixteen consecutive weeks.

Exercise 1.

Picture in your imagination a room familiar to you. Examine it in detail till you have gone all round the room.

Exercise 2.

The same as Exercise 1 but, having made a tour of the room in one direction, repeat it in the opposite direction.

Exercise 3.

Go for an imaginary walk through familiar scenes, picturing them in as much detail as possible. Turn round and retrace your steps to the starting point.

Exercise 4.

Build up in your imagination an imaginary room; picture it minutely. Repeat this exercise with the same room until it is familiar to you in every detail.

Exercise 5.Visual and Auditory Imagination combined.

Take a short story; read it carefully two or three times the day before the exercise is to begin. Then, for your exercise, imagine yourself an onlooker at the scenes described in the story. Try to "hear" the conversations.

N.B. It should be understood that the Exercises 1-5 of Part 2 replace the meditation requirements of Part 1. If, therefore, a student undertakes additional meditation work no record thereof should be submitted.

Chapter 1.

Questions.

1. What is the basis of the practical work of the Yoga of The West? Where has it come from? What is its meditation symbol? (10 lines).
2. What are the uses and abuses of a tradition? How are its secret teachings conveyed from generation to generation? (10 lines).
3. Summarize in 12 lines the Hebrew and Christian history given in Chapter 1.
- X 4. Place on the 'Tree' the closing clause of the Lord's Prayer.
5. Why are Eastern systems of Yoga training so often unsuitable for Western students?
6. In any system of psycho-spiritual development, what is the essential thing?
7. What are the 32 Mystical Paths of the Concealed Glory?
8. Comment on the sentence: "Cultures do not spring out of nothing".
9. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this Chapter.
10. Draw a diagram of the Tree and place on it the information given in this Chapter.
- X There is a misprint in the "Mystical Qabalah" on page 4 paragraph 12. The "Power" and the "Glory" are wrongly ascribed.

STUDY COURSE No.2.Chapter 2.Questions.

1. Why is a student who flits from system to system inefficient?
2. What requirements must a system of spiritual development which is meant for Europeans fulfil? (15 lines).
3. What does the word 'technique' as used in Chapters 1 & 2 mean?
4. Discuss the use made in this Chapter of the adage: "One man's meat is another man's poison". (10 lines).
5. What does the Western occultist seek in his operations? And why does he seek it?
6. What is your motive for seeking the powers of the "Tree of Life"? (10 lines).
7. What systems does the modern Western initiate include in the synthetic system with which he works?
8. Choose and write down six important sentences from this Chapter.
9. Draw the diagram of the Tree, and put upon it the information given in Chapter 2 about the Pantheons.

STUDY COURSE No.2.

Chapter 3.

Questions.

1. (a) What is the "Tree of Life"?
 (b) How does the student set about using it?
 (c) To what may it be likened?
 (15 lines in all).
2. What is your conception of the "Beings" who are said to have given the "Chosen People" their Qabalah?
 (not more than 10 lines).
3. What are the chief differences between the methods of the Qabalistic and the Hindu schools of metaphysics?
4. (a) How does an initiate use a symbol system?
 (b) In what way does his method differ from that of the uninitiated?
5. Comment on the technique which is hinted at in the following sentence: "By thinking about a thing, we build concepts of it". (10 lines only).
6. Explain why "the Qabalah is a growing system, not a historic monument".
7. What does the expression: "well-defined association-tracks in the Universal Mind", mean to you? (10 lines).
8. Comment on the phrase: "There is a subconscious connection between each individual soul and the World-soul..... share in the rise and fall of the cosmic tides".
9. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this Chapter.
10. Draw the Tree and place on it any further information you may have gained from this Chapter with regard to the Pantheons.

10.

STUDY COURSE No.2.

Chapter 4.

Questions.

1. In what way is the method of dealing with the Qabalah in these lessons unusual? Where is the interpretation of the Qabalah to be found?
2. What is meant by the Yoga of the West? Where does it come from? What is its authority? and what is its sacred language?
3. What do you understand by:
 - (a) The Four Worlds of the Qabalists?
 - (b) The Three Veils of Negative Existence?
(15 lines).
4. (a) Of what does each Sephirah consist?
(b) Whither do the Paths lead?
5. What is the Asiatic World, and how does it manifest?
6. What is the Serpent Nechushtan?
7. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this Chapter.
8. Draw the Tree and place on it the information you have gained from this lesson.

Nechushtan = נחשון copper image of the copper
serpent, of Moses.

STUDY COURSE No.2.

Chapter 5.

Questions.

1. (a) What is the Qabalistic method of using symbols?
(b) What is the object of this method?
2. (a) What do you understand by the Veils of Negative Existence?
(b) Name them.
3. Discuss the metaphysical limitations of:-
 - (a) The "ignorant man".
 - (b) The scientist.
 - (c) The philosopher.
 - (d) The initiate.
 - (e) Explain what you mean by the term metaphysics.
(in all 20 lines).
4. Discuss (a) "Symbols are to the mind what tools are to the hand".
(b) "Incubating a symbol".
(c) "Impregnation of the mind".
5. What is the method taught here of "working the Tree"?
6. Discuss - "Kether is the Malkuth of the Unmanifest".
7. What is Initiation? and what does it do?
8. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this Chapter.
9. Draw the Tree and place on it the information you have gained from this lesson.

STUDY COURSE No.2.

Chapter 6.

Questions.

1. What do you understand by the term "Otz Chiim"?
2. What is the psychological difference between the Sephiroth and the Paths?
3. Discuss the use of spatial terms when talking about the planes.
4. Discuss the sentence: "Here are the roots of Existence, hidden from our eyes".
5. What conception of God do you gain from the Qabalah?
6. Explain: "This new phase represents a change of mode of existence".
7. What does the expression - "Kether crystallises out of the Limitless Light" - convey to your mind?
8. What do you understand by the Three Supernals?
9. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this Chapter.
10. Draw the Tree and place on it the information you have gained from this lesson.

STUDY COURSE No.2.

Chapter 7 (Paras.1-20)

Questions.

1. (a) What is the Tree of Life?
(b) What is the method of the Mystical Qabalah?
2. Why should Kether not be considered as consciousness?
3. What is the root concept of the Qabalistic Cosmogony?
4. What do you understand by the terms Aima, Ama, the Isis of Nature?
5. What is the key to manifestation?
6. What do you understand by the "Path of the Arrow"?
7. How does the Tree unfold its secrets? (10 lines).
8. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this chapter.
9. Draw the Tree and place on it the information you have gained from this lesson.

14.

STUDY COURSE No.2.

Chapter 7 (Paras.21-34).

Questions.

1. What do you consider to be the best method to use in order to "get the hang" of the Tree? Give your reasons.
2. Give the alternative names and their meaning of:-
 - (1) The second Triangle.
 - (2) The third Triangle.
3. What do the first, second and third triangles respectively represent?
4. What do you know of:

- (1) Paroketh?
 - (2) The Abyss?

Π K δ P

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a cluster
asterisk
5. What are the astrological symbols of Netzach, Hod and Yesod? Of what are they respectively the spheres?
6. Why is the Holy Spirit assigned to Yesod?
7. In what way does Malkuth differ from the other Sephiroth?
8. What do you understand by a cosmic symbol? Give three examples.
9. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this Chapter.
10. Draw the Tree and place on it the information given in this lesson.

Essay Form for Study Course Part 2.

1. Set out your understanding of the teaching given in the first seven ~~xxx~~ chapters of "The Mystical Qabalah".
(Length to be under 1500 words)

2. Summarise the effect which these studies have had on your attitude towards life. What do you consider to be the reason for human existence on this planet? (Length to be under 500 words.)

Please keep the two Sections distinct, beginning Section 2 on a fresh sheet of paper.

Instructions.

1. The object of this essay is to discover if you have read the text-books and understood the teachings. If your essay is filled with long quotations or careful paraphrases the conclusion may be drawn that you have not digested either the lessons or the contents of the text-books. Use your own language, ideas and analogies.
2. The length of the essay should not exceed 2,000 words.
3. The headings given have been made as general as possible in order to give you the chance of expressing yourself in the manner most natural to you.
4. You may refer to any books and instruction papers while doing the essay. The student is tested on understanding rather than memory.
5. Please sign at the end of your work the following:—"This essay is my own unaided work".(Provided, of course, it is so).

-
- 1.5. Upon completion of the work of a Part of the Course the student is expected to write the essay and send it to the Secretary within a month.

This essay form may be sent to a student before he has completed the work of the Part of the Course he is on and there is no objection to his starting the essay before he has finished his studies in the usual way.

The essay may be sent in any time within a month after the completion of the lessons. Unless remission has been given the student is expected to continue his daily meditations, salutation and evening review while preparing the essay and to submit records as usual until the essay has been marked and new instructions sent to the student. During this period the student may do any of the exercises of the Part of the Course he has been studying.

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHTSTUDY COURSE (Part 3)

This Course consists of eight lessons based on "The Mystical Cabalah" by Dion Fortune.

SYLLABUS OF PAPERS.

1. Lessons for sixteen weeks.

<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Para.</u>	<u>Subject</u>
1.	8.		The Patterns on the Tree.
2.	9.	1-16	The Ten Sephiroth in the Four Worlds.
3.	9.	17-27	The Ten Sephiroth in the Four Worlds.
4.	10.		The Paths upon the Tree.
5.	11.		The Subjective Sephiroth.
6.	12.		The Gods upon the Tree.
7.	13.	1-14.	Practical Work upon the Tree.
8.	13.	15-37.	" " " "

2. Exercises.

3. Questions on Lessons.

General instructions and information concerning discipline are as in Part 1.

N.B. In recording meditation results please continue with the system adopted throughout Part 2. The instructions in respect of the answering of questions and methods of study set forth in Part 2. also apply.

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHTSTUDY COURSE (Part 3)

Note:- Each exercise represents about three weeks' work, since the period of the Course is sixteen consecutive weeks.

EXERCISE 1.

Prepare as for Exercise 5 of Part 2 but imagine yourself taking part in the action of the story, paying special attention to the conversations. Imagine yourself talking to the other characters and imagine their answers. Try to hear the actual words - sound of the voices.

EXERCISE 2.

Picture a scene made up out of your own imagination, with people taking part in it.

EXERCISE 3.

The same as Exercise 2, but imagine yourself also taking part, talking to the persons present and hearing their replies.

EXERCISE 4.

Choose some familiar subject and hear in your imagination a series of questions and answers, as if a teacher were examining pupil.

EXERCISE 5.

Imagine yourself on a platform giving a ten minutes lecture on a subject that you know well. See yourself speaking. Hear the words that you use, choosing your sentences carefully and building the speech paragraph by paragraph.

STUDY COURSE (PART 3).Lesson 1. Chapter 8.Questions.

1. Why are there various methods of grouping the Ten Sephiroth?
2. Contrast Chokmah and Binah.
3. Explain why the Sephiroth are sometimes positive and sometimes negative in relation to other Sephiroth.
4. Contrast Netzach and Hod.
5. What do the two side Pillars represent? And what have you learned about them in this lesson?
6. What does the middle Pillar represent? And what have you learned about it in this lesson?
7. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this Chapter.
8. Classify:
 - (a) The Ten Sephiroth in the Four Worlds.
 - (b) The Ten Sephiroth in the Seven Palaces.
 - (c) The Ten Sephiroth in the Countenances.
 - (d) The Ten Sephiroth in the Three Mother Letters.
9. Draw the Tree and place on it the information you have gained from this lesson.

4.

STUDY COURSE (PART 3).

Lesson 2.

Chapter 9 (Paras. 1-16).

Questions.

1. How does the divine influence act in the "Four Worlds"?
2. What is J H V H ? What use is made of it?
3. Discuss the fourfold classification methods of the Qabalist.
4. What do you understand by the expression: "The Qabalistic technique of mentation"?
5. Why will the initiated occultist have nothing to do with the uninitiated fortune-teller?
6. Discuss what the logical method of the Qabalah aims at.
7. Discuss the sentence: "We anchor the end of each chain of correspondences to its Sephirah".
8. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this part of the chapter.
9. Draw the Tree, and place on it the information gained from this chapter.

STUDY COURSE (PART 3.).

Lesson 3.

Chapter 9 (Paras.17-27).

Questions.

1. Put into 10 lines the teaching given in the first three paragraphs.
2. What do you understand by an 'angelic being' and how does it differ from an 'artificial elemental'?
3. Discuss the idea of an invisible framework to this visible universe.
4. In what way do the 'illuminations' of the Cabalist (as here defined) differ from the illuminations of the Christian Mystic? Why is this so?
5. What could one expect from the Hod and Yesod contacts?
6. How should one set about studying a Sefirah? (20 lines).
7. Choose and write down three important sentences from this part of the chapter.
8. Draw the Tree and place on it the information you have gained in this lesson.

6.

STUDY COURSE (PART 3).

Lesson 4.

Chapter 10.

Questions.

1. What is the major symbolism of the Tree?
2. What does each path represent?
3. Discuss the relationship between the Tree of Life, Astrology and the Tarot. (10 lines).
4. What is the difference between the methods of the initiated and the uninitiated astrologer?
5. From the point of view of initiation, what is the Tree?
6. What is a ritual initiation?
7. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this chapter.
8. Draw the Tree and place on it the information gained from this chapter.

STUDY COURSE (PART 3).

Lesson 5.

Chapter 11.Questions.

1. What, so far, has been the use of the symbols of the Tree?
2. What do the Sephiroth considered microcosmically represent?
3. Explain, in your own words, what this chapter has taught you about psychic "Centres".
4. What associations with the other great metaphysical systems does the division of the Tree into three Pillars call up?
5. In terms of consciousness what do Malkuth, Yesod, Tiphareth and Daath signify?
6. Discuss the symbolism of the "Four-petalled Lotus".
7. Discuss the symbolism of the "Six-petalled Lotus".
8. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this chapter.
9. Draw the Tree and place on it the information gained from this chapter.

STUDY COURSE (PART 3).

Lesson 6.

Chapter 12.Questions.

1. Comment on the Mystery saying, 'See that ye blaspheme not the Name by which another knows his God, for if ye do this in Allah, ye will do it in Adonai'.
2. Discuss the personalisation of natural forces. (10 lines).
3. From the point of view of experimental psychology what were the priests of the Mysteries?
4. What conceptions should be held in mind when co-ordinating the ancient pantheons with the stations upon the Tree?
5. Discuss the use of "ceremonial rites" which is mentioned in this chapter.
6. What is the method used by the modern initiate for interpreting the language spoken by the ancient myths.
7. What is the clue to the Tree in man and in nature?
8. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this chapter.
9. Draw the Tree and place on it the information gained from this chapter.

STUDY COURSE (PART 3).

Lesson 7.

Chapter 13 (Paras.1-14).Questions.

1. (a) What is the best method of attempting practical occult ceremonial?
(b) What is the worst method?
2. What has to be done before we can work with the magical images of the Tree?
3. Under what headings does a knowledge of the key symbols develop?
4. Discuss the use of symbols as set forth in this chapter.
(15 lines only).
5. What is the essential factor in the successful use of the Tree as a meditation symbol?
6. Explain what constitutes the technique of occult meditation.
7. Under what threefold aspect should the student think of each Sephirah?
8. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this chapter.
9. Draw the Tree and place on it the information gained from this chapter.

10.

STUDY COURSE (PART 3).

Lesson 8.

Chapter 13 (Paras.15-37).

Questions.

1. What do you understand by primary symbols and geometrical forms?
2. What information has this chapter given you on "The Four Names of Power" assigned to each Sephirah? (15 lines only).
3. What is a mundane Chakra?
4. What do you understand by the virtue and vice of a Sephirah? Give examples.
5. Why is it advisable that a student should know the symbolic animals, plants and precious stones of a Sephirah?
6. Where does the Tarot come from?
7. Explain why fortune-telling can bring bad luck.
8. Choose and write down seven important sentences from this chapter.
9. Draw the Tree and place on it the information gained from this chapter.

ESSAY FORM FOR STUDY COURSE PART 3.

1. Draw the 'Tree of Life' as shown in Lesson 3 of Part 1 of the Course (page 34) - as large as you like - and place on it the relevant information given in Chapters 1 to 13 of "The Mystical Qabalah". Then with the aid of your diagram describe in orderly sequence and point by point the process of manifestation of our universe from the Veils of the Negative Existence.
(Length not more than 1500 words)
2. Explain with reference to your diagram, how the Tree is interpreted psychologically.
(Length not more than 1500 words)
3. Give in detail the view of life that is indicated in the Study Course, i.e. the Whole Course. Relate this view as understood by you to your own experience of life. (Length not more than 1000 words)

Please send your drawing of the Tree with your Essay. The three sections should be kept distinct, each one being started on a fresh sheet of paper.

INSTRUCTIONS.

1. The object of this essay is to discover if you have read the text books and assimilated the teachings. If you fill your essay with long quotations or with careful paraphrases the conclusion may be drawn that you have not digested either the lessons or any supplementary reading. Use your own language, ideas and analogies.
2. The length of the essay should not exceed 4000 words.
3. The headings are purposely general to allow you the greatest scope of expression.
4. You may refer to any books or papers while doing the essay. The test for understanding, not only for memory.
5. Please sign at the end of the essay the following: "This essay is my own unaided work". (Provided, of course, the statement is true.)

N.B. The Student is expected to complete the essay and forward it to the Secretary within one month of finishing Part 3 of the Course.

P.T.O.

The essay form may be sent to a student before he has quite finished the work of the Part he is on and there is no objection to his starting the essay before he has finished the Course. It should be sent in any time after the date of completion of the lessons. Unless remission has been asked for and granted, the student is expected to continue the daily meditation, midday salutation and evening review and send in records until he has been told of the result of his essay and interviewed if his work has been found satisfactory. During this time students may do any of the exercises or meditations of this Part of the Course.

If this essay is passed as satisfactory the student who wishes to go further will be invited for a personal interview to decide if he can go on to the Threshold Course. If he takes that Course, he will be notified at its conclusion whether he is acceptable for initiation into the Mysteries. If he does not wish this, he may apply to become an Affiliate of the Society. All relevant matters will be fully dealt with during the interview.

N.B. In the case of an overseas student the procedure may be varied. For any student who wishes to apply for initiation and full membership of the Society the interview is essential, for it is after this interview that it is finally decided if the hitherto successful student is acceptable for full membership. An overseas student, however, who has had his Part 3 essay accepted as a 'pass' may, if he applies for initiation, be given Part 4 at once and the necessary interview can be postponed until, after satisfactorily completing Part 4, he can come to England. There is no essay on Part 4.

In such a case, if the interview is satisfactory, interview and initiation can take place during the same visit provided that visit can last for at least 3 weeks. It can, of course, profitably be longer if the student can arrange this, since after initiation the new member is eligible to attend all meetings here which are open to him.

*Note:- It may not be clear from the above,
that students who pass Pt 3 can be accepted
as Affiliates without the necessity of taking
Part 4 or attending any interview. I feel
I should mention this, - even though, in your
own case, you may well have in mind full*

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHT.

Correspondence Course.

THE THRESHOLD.

Lesson 1.

The following papers are not explicit in their teaching but are designed to evoke thought rather than to inform the mind; they should be looked upon as a basis for meditation for they contain hints that can open vistas.

In the light of what you have already learnt, and of your general reading in the literature of transcendental thought in all its branches, try to discover the implications of the glyphs that accompany these papers. Not more than one week and not less than two days should be given to each lesson, and a summary of results should be sent in at the end of each lesson.

The papers which the student is required to write concerning his meditations upon the glyphs are not designed to test his knowledge of symbolism but to reveal his power to elucidate the significance of a symbol by means of his imagination. While it is well, therefore, to gather together any information that may be available concerning the traditional significance and use of a symbol, it is the imagination rather than the memory which is being tested. If the student will surrender his imagination to the influence of the symbol, he will find that ideas formulate themselves in his mind. It is these ideas he should record in his paper, together with the considerations they suggest to him.

For example, the three steps forming the plinth of the Cross in Glyph I, indicate three grades or stages of experience in coming to the revelation of the Cross. Again, there are many types of Cross, the Crux Ansata, the Equal-armed Cross, the Swastika of all these, why has the particular type of Cross known as the Calvary Cross been chosen for representation in the glyph? Working in this manner, the student will find that he is able to elucidate the glyphs in some degree at least, and that if he allows the images and ideas suggested by the symbols to form freely in his mind, the glyph itself will instruct him. This method of using symbols is most important in the Mysteries and, although it may seem strange at first, the student should endeavour to habituate himself to it for it is the first step beyond mundane consciousness.

You have now completed your studies in the Outer Court of the Mysteries and stand upon the threshold of the Temple. Having formulated the desire to proceed further and being permitted to do so, you are entitled to know that which lies before you should you carry out your intention to cross the Threshold and pass between the Pylons of the Mysteries.

2.

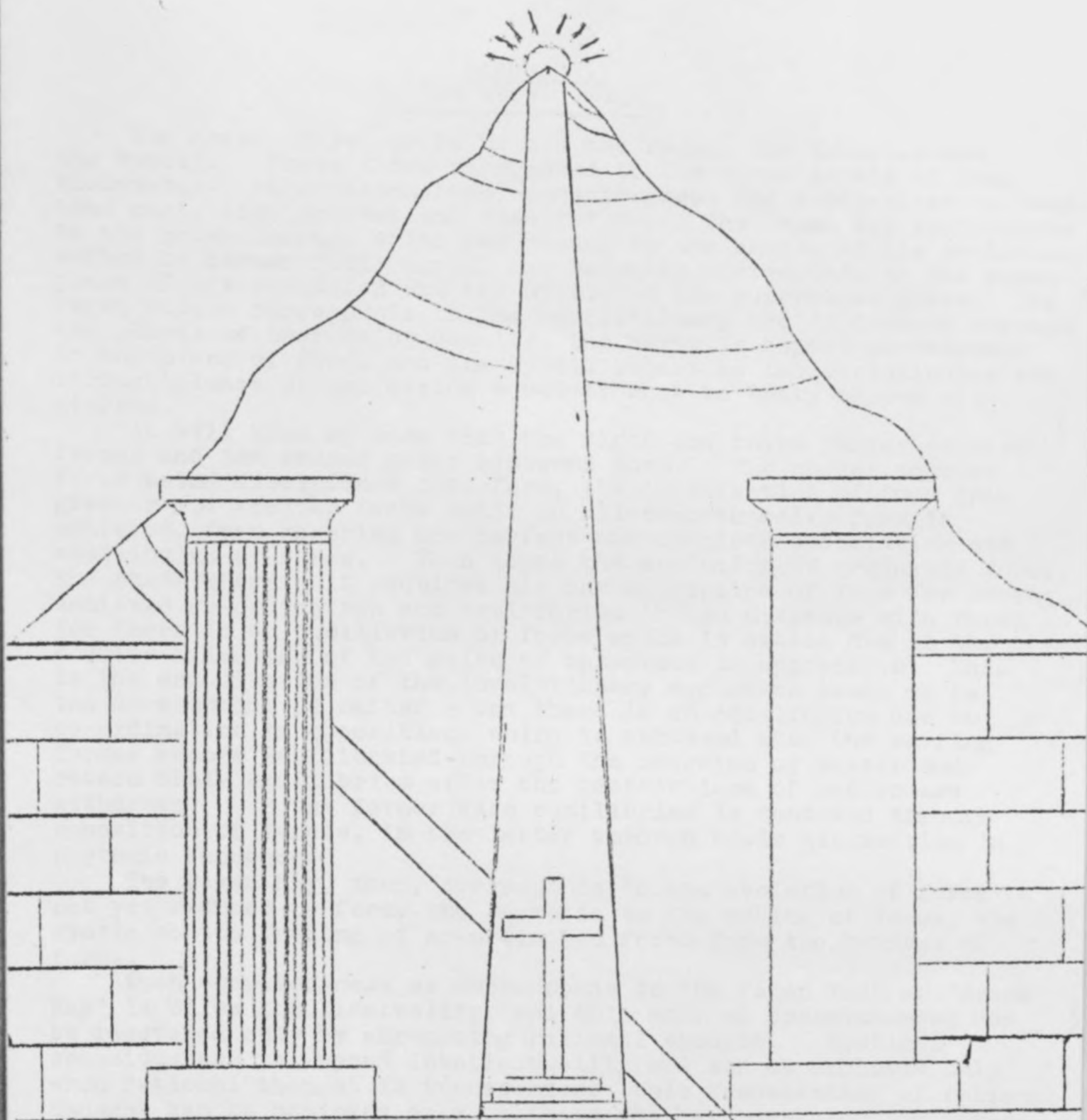
The decision to set out upon the Way of Initiation is one not lightly to be undertaken. Consider well therefore what it means. Viewed from the mundane standpoint, your gain is loss, for the prizes of worldly success are not the aim of the initiate. Unless the things of the spirit are dearer than the lust of life, the Path has nothing to offer.

The dedicated initiate does not view his mundane profession or calling as an end in itself, but as the means whereby he serves his fellow-men. The monetary rewards of his work he regards as an endowment that enables him to serve God in that place wherein the Good Law has set him. The duties of his station are the discipline of the Outer Court. Until he has mastered that discipline so that its functions are discharged with harmony, ease and order, he is not ready for the more exacting discipline of the Inner Court. For if you cannot control one plane, what confusion will be wrought when the problems of another plane are added to these that have already proved too much for you? Be patient, therefore, and lay firm foundations, for in humility is security.

Learn now wherefore you are summoned to the Path - if it should indeed be that you are summoned.

God works through His ministering spirits, the mighty and invisible ones; these, descending upon the planes according to their rank and potency, are met by the ascending spirits of those, freed from the wheel of birth and death, made perfect in adept-hood, whom men call the Masters. The servants of these Masters are the adepts and initiates of the Mysteries according to their grades, dwelling still in the tabernacle of flesh, and forming the earthward end of the chain of beings which is the Celestial Hierarchy. It is as a recruit to the ranks of these that you cross the Threshold of the Mysteries. You will not learn the arcane secrets for your own benefit, but in order that you may co-operate with the Divine Hierarchy in the service of God.

It is lawful that a man should seek advancement by the Mystical Path in order that he may win peace, or vision, or save his own soul; but it is not lawful that he should seek advancement by the Magical Path for any other cause than that he may be the better equipped to serve God and man. Ponder your motive in knocking upon the door of the Temple, for we do not train you for your benefit, but for our benefit, say the Masters.



Glyph for lesson 1.

Meditate on this glyph and write a short account of what it conveys to you.

Lesson 2. The Three Paths.

The three 'Rays' or Paths are the Pagan, the Hermetic and the Mystic. These three correspond to the three levels of consciousness:- subconsciousness, consciousness and super-consciousness; time past, time present and time future. The Pagan Ray corresponds to the phase through which man passed in the course of his evolution before he became fully human, the Hermetic corresponds to the human phase of his evolution and the Mystic to the superhuman phase. The Pagan aspect corresponds to the involutionary arc of descent through the planes of increasing density, the Hermetic aspect corresponds to the plane of form, and the Mystic aspect to the evolutionary arc through planes of increasing subtlety back to Unity whence all started.

It will thus be seen that the first and third phases concern forces and the second phase concerns form. The phases concern force being disciplined into form, the organisation of form into greater and greater forms until an all-comprehensive form is achieved, thus ensuring the perfect and complete correlation and equilibrium of force. Then comes the evolution of organised force, the state wherein it requires not the discipline of form for having achieved co-ordination and equilibrium it can dispense with form; for there is an equilibrium of force which is static due to the counter-balancing of the pairs of opposites in opposition: this is the organisation of the involutionary arc which leads on to the development of matter - and there is an equilibrium due to co-ordination in opposition, which is achieved when the warring forces become equilibrated through the coercion of matter and retain their equilibrium after the restrictions of matter are withdrawn. In the former case equilibrium is achieved through opposition of forces, in the latter through their alternation in rhythmic sequence.

The Pagan Ray, then, corresponds to the evolution of force not yet reduced to form, the Hermetic to the making of forms, the Mystic to the freeing of co-ordinated force from the bondage of forms.

Such consciousness as corresponds to the Pagan Path or 'Green Ray' is below intellectuality, and this mode of consciousness can be recovered only by abrogating rational thought. Mystical consciousness is beyond intellectuality and can be achieved only when rational thought is transcended; this transcending of rational thought can be achieved only by those who have mastered the powers of rational thinking. If rational thought be abrogated the result is a descent into sub-consciousness not an ascent into super-consciousness. The subconscious is a reservoir of Elemental power upon which consciousness draws, from which it derives its energy; it is rooted in the instincts, felt as emotion, expressed as

Imagination - its forms are those of evolutionary phases of the past. Mystical consciousness is based on intuition which is direct apprehension of subtle forces on their own planes, without the intervention of the senses or rational thinking, and it concerns the future of evolution - its forms are those that are formulating in the Cosmic consciousness but have not yet expressed themselves on the plane of matter. The Hermetic, or intellectual aspect, is the link between these two in which human consciousness is focussed, and it translates the apprehensions and intuitions of each into terms of sensible images, that is to say it expresses them in terms of the senses, or picture-images; thus it intellectualises and so translates them into its own language and manifests them in its own sphere.

Thus the three 'Rays' actually correspond to the three levels of consciousness and concern the initiations of each level; but they are also called the Three Paths and are viewed as three ways to God - this likewise is true. Do not fall into the error of regarding them as three stages of one Path - this is true as regards evolution but not true as regards initiation, for man has the factors in him corresponding to each Path. The past is repressed, the future is unrealised, the present only is in consciousness. Nevertheless man is all three things simultaneously, for time on the inner planes is not the same as time on the earth plane, but is a mode of consciousness. Time past is that which has passed out of consciousness, time present is that which is in consciousness, time future is the unrealised and unknown. When the past is remembered it is present in consciousness, when the future is realised it is likewise present in consciousness. That which is present in consciousness is, ipso facto, the present, but this concerns the Higher Self, and the Lower Self knows it only as reflected in the Magic Mirror. When the Higher and Lower Selves are united, as in the adept, then the Personality shares in the direct awareness of time past and time future.

Thus there are three Paths by which men may go to God, and there are three techniques in the Mystery Schools - the Pagan or Green Ray technique, the Hermetic or Intellectual and the Mystic or Devotional. This is because men are of different types and at different stages of evolutionary development. The man whose 'roots' are in the primitive must be trained on the Green Ray. The man whose 'roots' are in the Absolute must be trained on the Mystic Path. It may be that after some degree of training each of these may be capable of linking up consciousness with sub-consciousness or super-consciousness as the case may be. They then enter upon the Middle or Hermetic Path. It may be that they cannot achieve this and they then remain on their own Paths, but in such case their development is one-sided and they cannot go beyond a certain point, though that highly specialised development will in its own way be greater than that which is achieved

in the corresponding factor of the Hermetic Path, which alone is the way of completion. By the Hermetic Path alone is it possible to attain the goal, and those who go by either of the 'side' Paths can make progress in their evolution but will not complete it in that incarnation, but must come back to master the other Paths.

The young soul cannot be forced out of its own Path, but must be taken along that Path until sufficiently evolved to develop the intellectual aspect. Therefore there are three Paths to meet the diversity of human needs.

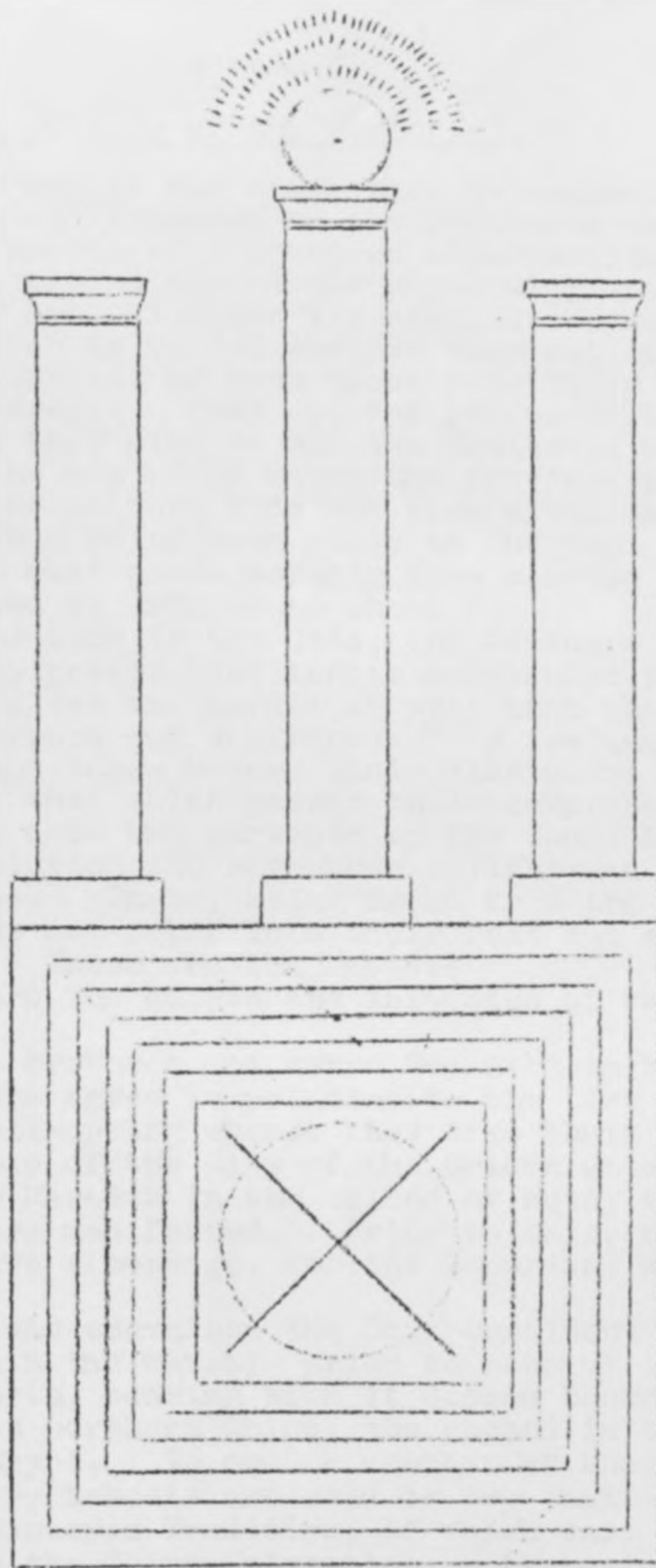
The Green Ray or Pagan Path is for the primitive type of soul that has not yet evolved intellectually - the children of nature: equally is it a corrective for those in whom civilisation has deformed the soul and who need to stress the undeveloped in order to bring about a balanced development.

The Mystic Path is pursued by those in whom certain aspects of life have been either outgrown or dissociated. There are those who have passed beyond the need of formulation or intellectualisation and can apprehend spiritual realities directly and there are those whom civilisation, departing from nature, has cut off from natural things. If such rebel they go by the Green Ray Path, if such acquiesce they go by the Mystic Path, but both are imperfect developments. The mystic who has achieved the Mystic Path by transcending the intellect can be distinguished from the mystic who has turned back thereon - by this - the achieved mystic is passionless, the repressed mystic is passionate. For both these types there must be a Path that they can tread, each according to his kind. The undeveloped child of nature must advance along the Green Path until he can enter the Hermetic, his mind developed. The repressed and thwarted must be let loose in green pastures to rest beside the still waters till he recovers from the injuries a false sense of civilisation has inflicted upon him, then he too must take the Hermetic Path to achievement. Upon the Mystic Path will come those souls who are near the end of their evolution, and upon it will go those who cannot, by virtue of the limitations imposed upon their experience by a false sense of civilisation, achieve the full range of development of human life; they too must have a Path. Through that which they learn by the Hermetic teaching they may come to a realisation, even as upon the Green Ray the opposite pathology may arrive at harmonisation. Upon the Green Path will be those not sufficiently evolved for the Hermetic, upon the Mystic Path those evolved beyond the Hermetic, and upon both Paths the pathologies of civilisation receiving curative treatment to bring them into equilibrium. In the Hermetic are all three Paths in equilibrium.

The choice of a Path depends upon the soul's development in evolutionary time, or upon the abnormal bias given it by the constricting influences of a false concept of civilisation. Some souls are made rebels by civilisation and some are made cripples. The rebels are dealt with in green pastures, the cripples in quiet chapels.

The initiate of the Green Ray is in touch with Elemental force but lacks super-conscious contacts with spiritual realities - the initiate of the Mystic Path has super-conscious contacts with spiritual realities but is cut off from Elemental force. He knows not his own origin, even as the other knows not his goal. In the Hermetic Wisdom is equilibrium, synthesis, completion; the Pagan and the Mystic are tributary streams of the main stream of the Hermetic Wisdom. Those in their fullness are shadowed forth in glyph and symbol and myth and ritual, that sub-consciousness and super-consciousness in all men may be illuminated so that there may be in them that upon which the Mysteries may work when they come thereto in this or a future life. Those deeper and more ancient Mysteries which are traditional are shown forth to the populace as the myths of the Heroes of bright Olympus in Greece, as the dark underworld in Egypt of the ancient land, and the ancient Glastonbury of Arthur in Britain.

The Trinity can be taken in one way to represent the three phases of evolution, the three levels of consciousness, the three stages of personal experience. God the Father, Saturn of the Old Gods, is represented in the Green Ray of Paganism. The Son, the Christ, the Redeemer, rules the Personality redeeming it from the primitive, rendering it human. God, the Holy Spirit is the God of the Higher Self.



Glyph for lesson 2.

Meditate on this glyph and write a short account of what it convrys to you.

The History of the Mysteries.

The origin of man is far older than is generally considered. Those things which are regarded as the rudiments of our civilisation are the remnants of a previous civilisation. The roots of human evolution extend beyond the physical plane.

Each epoch of evolution has its rise, its prime, and its decline. Each epoch is to God what an incarnation is to man.

In the first quarter of each epoch come those who are called the Seed-bearers. They are the perfected beings of the previous epoch and they give to man the fruits of the previous evolution so that he may begin where the previous phase left off. These are the Culture Gods who give civilisation to their peoples. They bring such gifts as the vine and corn and fire. The people must needs worship them because they are not sufficiently evolved to understand them.

Later come the Sons of the Gods, the Saviours of the people, who by their mighty powers equilibrate unbalanced force and break up and neutralise the burden of evil that the people have laid up by their errors and wickedness. A few among men may understand them, and these become their disciples; the rest must once again worship that which passes their comprehension.

Finally there come the Servants of the Gods, human beings of the current evolution who have been enlightened and purified by those Great Ones. These, being freed from the wheel of birth and death, do not enter into their rest but stay to serve their fellow men. These are the Masters.

Below these are the adepts and initiates of varying degrees of the Mysteries.

All these are brethren and serve God each in his place.

Many Traditions agree in pointing to the Lost Continent of Atlantis as the well-spring whence they take their rise. In the great Sun-temple of the City of the Golden Gates, beside the mouth of the River Naradek in the Island of Ruta, the first of the great Messengers manifested. Prior to this, mankind was not ready to receive a message, for the Lemurians were mostly mindless.

Three cataclysms convulsed the Lost Continent before it finally sank beneath the waves; prior to each of these an emigration went forth, bearing with it Sacred Books. The first of these settled in northern China, the second in the Himalayas, and the third in Egypt. To one or another of these emigrations all existing Mystery Schools are said to owe their origin.

The Western Esoteric Tradition, of which this school is a part, springs from the Third Emigration. Its main sources are two-fold, Egyptian and Chaldean. Its tradition descends through the schools of Samothrace, Greece, Crete, Tyre and Israel; the Norse and Keltic traditions are northern forms of

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its faith. The Essenes and Therapeutae were initiates of its Mysteries; the Arthurian legends are part of its tradition; the Gnostics and Neoplatonists adapted its methods to Christianity. The Templars re-introduced it into Europe after it was stamped out by the persecution of the Roman Church. When the Templars were destroyed, it continued in an unorganised form through such traditions as those of the Alchemists and some gatherings that later were called Witch-covens (not all covens).

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century a new impulse was given to the work of the Mysteries, and that which had been a smouldering fire was fanned to flame. Three movements arose simultaneously preparing the minds of men for the next phase of advancement. These were, first, the Spiritualist Movement, which helped to spread among men the idea of the reality of the Unseen and the survival of bodily death; secondly, Christian Science which was the parent of the New Thought movement and made men realise the power of the mind; and thirdly, the lifting of the veil which had hitherto covered the door of the Temple, and which manifested itself in the development of the modern occult movement, outwardly unorganised but inwardly co-ordinated.

The Fraternity of the Inner Light is one of the points of contact between the Temple not made with hands and the outer world of men. There are many other points of contact beside our own, scattered about the world, and to these we give the greeting of brotherhood; but there are also others who are not called of our Father. Fraternities that are of the authentic tradition may be known by three outward signs. Firstly, they charge no fixed fee for practical occult training, all contributions being voluntary. Secondly, they take no part in groups in political activities, national or international. Thirdly, they never name in the outer world the names of those who are behind them on the inner planes.



Glyph for lesson 3.

Meditate upon these four forms of the cross and write a short account of what they convey to you.

Lesson 4.

The Method of the Mysteries.

The method of a Mystery School is different from that of any other system of training, for its primary appeal is not to the reason or the intellect. Its methods often, therefore, appear foolish to those whose imagination cannot extend beyond the range of their senses. To the intuitive, however, a vast field is opened up; progress in the Mysteries is impossible without intuition, imagination, and faith.

The occult schools rely largely upon the use of ritual to obtain their results; for much of their appeal being to sub-consciousness, it must be couched in terms that the subconscious mind can understand. This level of the mind is older than language, therefore words have little meaning for it; the only effectual method of approach to this level of human consciousness is the same as that which Froebel, the great pioneer of child education, employed in dealing with very young children; the action-song of the kindergarten has the same psychological basis as the initiation ceremonies of an occult fraternity. A realisation of this simple but fundamental fact will save much apprehension, and prevent the ceremonies which form so important a part of occult work from being misunderstood and regarded with either scepticism or superstitious veneration.

Symbolism.

Because the teaching of the Mysteries concerns that which is beyond normal human apprehension, no adequate concept of its subject-matter can be conveyed to a mind that has never been accustomed to deal with anything save impressions received from the physical senses and concrete ideas.

A method of approach must therefore be found which will enable the mind to transcend its limitations and enlarge its scope. Therefore esoteric schools achieve this end by the use of symbolism. There are certain basic principles of symbolism which prevail in all schools of the Mysteries; but each esoteric school will have its special adaptation of these symbols.

These symbols do not consist of arbitrary designs, but of certain forms, simple and compound, which have been handed down, their primary forms originating before the dawn of history, being found upon the earliest known monuments.

These symbols are important not only on account of the ideas they represent, but because countless generations of initiates have been trained by their use, and their psychic atmosphere is rich in associated ideas. These ideas the student picks up psychically when meditating upon a symbol and they enlarge his sphere of consciousness by bringing into it concepts which he could only with great difficulty have apprehended by means of conscious meditation and study. The symbols themselves are

well known to geometry and art, but their combination into composite glyphs for use in occult meditation and the method of using those glyphs, is not known outside the schools of initiation.

Invocation.

The occultist makes use of invocations in order to get into touch with concentrated forms of natural forces. This method is based upon a profound occult teaching which declares that each fresh development of evolution takes place through some form of individualised consciousness. Beings of widely diversified nature have worked out in experience all the types of existence, mineral, vegetable and animal, which remain to us today as stereotyped forms. There was a time when these forms were not stereotyped but were being consciously developed by the efforts towards expression and adaptation of living creatures, albeit creatures that may have differed widely from any form of conscious existence with which we are acquainted. It was the efforts of these creatures to achieve a particular form of activity which built up the thought-form in the "akash" which became, when stereotyped, the archetypal mould for the subsequent appearance of a new species.

When an occultist desires to develop, stimulate, or reinforce the activities of a particular aspect of his own nature he makes contact with the archetypal being which presided over the phase of development when this activity was being brought through into manifestation. These beings are known to us by various names, according to the nomenclature employed and the type of being referred to. They are called gods, angels and archangels, the Names of God, devas, nature-spirits, demons, daimons, archons, the Sefirot, the Qliphoth, and many other titles. Some of these names are interchangeable, such as gods and archangels; devas and angels; a knowledge of the nature and nomenclature of these beings, and the methods that may be employed to contact their consciousness psychically and receive their influence, is important in practical occultism.



(Scarab
beetle)



Glyph for lesson 4.

Meditate on each of these three figures and say what esoteric doctrines they express.

Lesson 5.

The Nature of Practical Occult Work.

Little is known outside the Mysteries concerning what is actually done within the Temples; the secrecy of the Mysteries has never been entirely broken. But the Seeker advancing to the gate of the Temple is entitled to sufficient information to enable him to judge whether he desires to proceed or not, for no man should be asked to commit himself blindly.

As was noted in a previous instruction, the work of the Occult Path is undertaken for one purpose, and one only - in order that we may be the better equipped to serve God and man. Whoever enters upon it for any other reason, eats of the Tree of Knowledge and drinks of the Water of Life to his own damnation.

The ceremonial method of the Mystery rites is designed to bring the student gradually into touch with the great cosmic forces in order that the Microcosm may be united with the Macrocosm. This does not imply the extinction of individuality, but the extension of it.

These forces, whose outer garment is a coat of many colours - the robe of the Isis of Nature - are used first to develop and harmonise the whole being of man. Having been thus harmonised and developed, the initiated adept, after reaching the appropriate grade, learns how to invoke and direct these forces so that they may be used for many purposes, not at the arbitrary will of the adept, but according to the cosmic plan. Far from appropriating to his own use these mighty powers, he lends himself to their service, saying: 'Not my will, but Thine be done'.

But he is not relieved of all responsibility by thus dedicating himself; the physical plane is the plane of Man, and the adept is responsible for the planning and carrying out of the work of the Masters and the great Building Angels upon that plane when he becomes a co-worker with them in the cosmic task. His intelligence must discern, his wit design, and his will maintain control among the warring forces, incomplete and unbalanced until the end of the Great Work.

In order that he may discern truly, he must diligently study the cosmology of the Microcosm and Macrocosm. In order that he may will rightly and powerfully, he must diligently discipline and purify his nature.

The study of cosmology includes more than the visible world. The adept must perceive and direct the forces and forms of the invisible worlds. To this end he needs the instruction of the Mysteries. In order that the will may be powerful and pure the initiate learns the works of ceremonial magic so that he may direct and control the cosmic forces in his own nature. The Microcosm is represented in the system of the adepts by sets of symbols combined into glyphs; these the initiate

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studies and with them he learns to work in the operations of practical magic; by means of them he checks his findings.

An occult Order may be likened to an iceberg, of which one-seventh of its bulk is above the surface, and the rest hidden and concealed. So with the great Fraternities whose roots are deep in tradition the strength lies not in the membership on the physical plane, but in the membership on the inner planes; in the body of "just men made perfect", the "communion of saints" who are freed from the wheel of birth and death and who continue to work for their Order upon the inner planes.

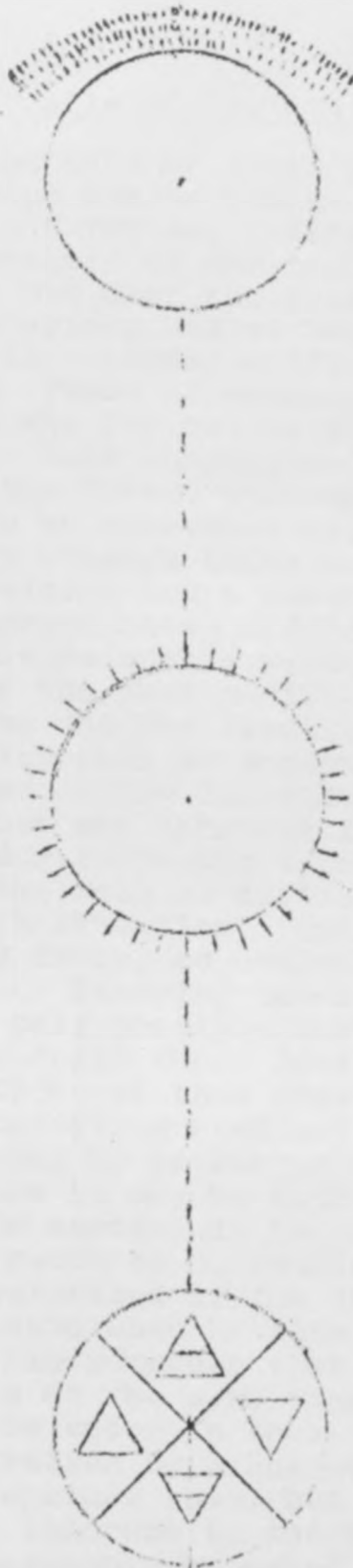
If a Fraternity is of a true tradition, its inner plane records of initiation lead back in an unbroken chain to the days when the gods walked the earth. To these Great Ones it looks as having ordained its Mysteries. These it invokes in its ceremonies and they respond. It is their response alone which makes initiation possible and it is the aim of coronation initiation to invoke their presence and link up the aura of the candidate with their forces.

In the course of ages many initiates of a Fraternity of ancient foundation will have won freedom from the wheel of birth and death and have advanced to high grades on the inner planes; these too are numbered among the membership of the Fraternity. Some among these it is who instruct individual pupils in their own fashion.

In order that his contacts with the Esoteric Tradition may be facilitated, the initiate studies the history of that tradition and familiarises himself with the lives of those who may justly be deemed initiates, such as Socrates, St. John the Divine, St. Paul, Paracelsus, and innumerable others that the mind recalls as it ranges over the history of the past.

Likewise with the beings that are called gods or arch-angels, according to the terminology employed. In the case of these beings he should familiarise himself with the symbolic forms represented in the sacred art of their cult, as for instance, the hawk-wings of Horus, or the spear and serpent associated with St. Michael, and he should meditate upon these beings, with the assistance of the symbols traditionally associated with them.

Thus does he enter imaginatively into the sphere of consciousness of the occult tradition and read its records in the "Akasha".



Task for lesson 5.

This diagram is a glyph of the descent of Spirit. Explain the symbolism.

Lesson 6.

The Pitfalls of Occultism.

If we sit at home and take no risks we run into no dangers and experience no hardships but we cannot hope to reap the fruits of endeavour and enterprise. This consideration applies equally to the great adventure of the soul which is the Way of Initiation. In setting out upon the Path we encounter difficulties that would not have arisen had we been content to live the ordinary life of the world. These difficulties are not peculiar to any individual or any system of development, but are the common experience of all who set out to seek the City of God. 'Pilgrim's Progress', by John Bunyan, and 'The Dark Night of the Soul' by St. John of the Cross, tell the same story; therefore when upon the occult path we encounter trials and difficulties let us not think that any strange thing has befallen us.

A wise system of training and a carefully administered discipline can greatly lessen these difficulties, and it is the aim of this school to provide such a system, taking for its guidance the tradition of the past modified by the experience of contemporary organisations and the findings of modern thought.

The difficulties which will be encountered are of two types; first, the karmic problems of the individual himself and secondly, the problems that are inherent in the nature of occult work. Let us now consider these two types of problem in detail.

When we come on to the Path we definitely and deliberately set out to co-operate with evolution; and as an oak wood is made up of individual oak trees, so evolution takes place individual by individual. Studying the laws of esoteric cosmology as we do, it is not only possible for us, but obligatory if we take initiation, to apply those laws to our own lives, and one of the first applications of this knowledge is to the working out of our own karma by conscious realisation, instead of enduring the slow process of learning by prolonged experience.

From one point of view it may be said that initiation precipitates karma; but from another it is seen that our karma is being brought within our reach to be handled. The initiate should not therefore be surprised if the chronic problems of his life tend to become acute when he sets foot upon the Path; but at the same time let him remember that the power to deal with them intelligently is at the same time developed in him.

It is not necessary to enter in these lessons into the question of the problems raised by Black Occultism, because we can safeguard our pupils against them, but we must face and consider the difficulties inherent in the Way of Initiation itself. It may not unreasonably be asked, Why is the Path to Illumination beset with any difficulties or dangers? To this we reply that the Path itself is a clear and open way, though narrow and steep; it is the imperfections of human nature which

cause us to react wrongly to the discipline of the Path and so create our own problems. By adequate knowledge and wise methods, however, we can minimize these difficulties and make them manageable. It is the aim of the Masters to make, not to break the souls that come to them. It is this preliminary knowledge which this lesson is designed to give, and we must therefore put the issues frankly before the student. Let him not be alarmed at the problems thus revealed to him, or auto-suggest himself into imagining that each and all of these problems are his; but let him equally face the fact that according to his temperamental type, one of these problems may be his more or less intensively.

Let us first consider the problems that arise out of the stimulation of psychic consciousness. The grades of our Fraternity are designed to introduce the neophyte to the work of practical occultism very gradually, in order that there may be no sense of strain or surprise. Working up grade by grade it is an easy matter for the student to develop his capacities until, like the athlete who is 'in training', he can do what would leave the untrained novice utterly exhausted. We aim at a steady growth and complete harmonisation of the nature and the circumstances of our initiates. The achievement of this two-fold harmonisation we regard as the proof that the work is going correctly.

In the case of an entirely undeveloped person we claim to be able to take him right through his grades without the likelihood of any untoward incident; but in the case of a person who has been partially developed by other methods of training, or who has cultivated a natural psychism without skilled direction, we sometimes find that there are problems which require very careful handling.

Each case must be considered individually, and we would not wish to deny the opportunities of the Path to any who are honestly desirous of following it, but such students can cause us a good deal of anxiety for it stands to reason that if the system in which they had been developing had proved satisfactory they would not have abandoned it for ours. Some of the systems in use, and especially those which apply an Eastern technique to a Western temperament, are unsatisfactory, and can damage pupils. We therefore ask those who have had any kind of psychic shock or nervous breakdown to be frank with us in their own interests in order that we may take steps to repair the damage and restore them to normal before attempting to initiate them, for the training will find out any weak spots there may be in their psychic equilibrium.

It is a very simple matter for us to break a psychic rapport for any of our students, but if an undesirable rapport is left unbroken it is very apt to give trouble as the work progresses. It is for this reason that we require our students to fill in on their application forms the names of any occult movements of which they have been members. The great

majority of these are innocuous, their high-sounding names concealing no active principle of good or evil; but in certain movements there is definite force - and a force with which we do not desire to be associated, and if a student has been in touch with one of these organisations we like to make sure that the contact has been broken before admitting him.

Correctly developed psychism is known first by the fact that the student is able to open and close the inner consciousness at will; it does not remain permanently open as in the case of many 'sensitives'. Secondly, it is known by the ability to keep the different kinds of reality separate so that he does not 'confuse the planes', assigning objective existence to that which is a subjective experience. And thirdly, that he knows how to transmute correctly from one plane to another. The technique of these processes is learnt in the Mysteries.

But what is the position of the person who has developed his psychic faculties without any such technique? He is at the mercy of his imagination. All the stirrings of his subconscious mind are projected and objectified, and he has no means of knowing if he is merely seeing the shadows thrown by his own complexes. When it is recalled, as already explained, that the karma is stirred up by initiation into the Mysteries, and when, as will be explained in another paper, the Elemental forces of our own nature, the unconscious of the psychologists, are also stirred in process of being equilibrated, it will readily be seen that confusion thrice confounded will be produced in the consciousness of the imperfectly developed psychic who can perceive but not discern.

The only satisfactory way to deal with such problems is to close down the psychic faculties altogether until the student reaches the grade at which they are normally opened. Many psychics object to this being done, feeling that they are losing their contact with higher things. To this we reply that the longer way round is sometimes the shorter way home. What shall it profit a man if he gain consciousness of the higher planes and lose his mental balance on the lower planes? Unless the psychic faculties are used with the correct technique they will produce dissociation of personality and undue suggestibility.

It must always be borne in mind that the occult arts, as such, are not spiritual in nature, though they are designed to lead on to spiritual things and to be used in the service of spiritual work. Neither are they good or bad in themselves but only as they are used. Always regard occultism as a means to an end, and not an end in itself, and remember that when the time comes to unveil the finished edifice, the scaffolding must be removed.

Occultism aims at revealing and applying the little understood powers of the human mind; and it follows, therefore, that unless that mind is directed by a Higher Self and regarded as its tool, it is liable to break loose from control

and pursue its own ends of self-aggrandisement. It is for this reason that candidates for the higher initiations are carefully inspected before they are trusted with any knowledge having practical applications.

When the human mind is stimulated and developed, it is liable in certain temperaments to 'get the bit between its teeth', and, as it were, embezzle the cosmic forces entrusted to its care, using them for selfish ends. This is the sin against the Holy Ghost which is not forgiven till the uttermost farthing of restitution has been made.

The temptation to break away from the restraints imposed upon the neophyte and experiment with the occult forces is a very real one to some temperaments, especially in the case of students who feel they are making more rapid progress than the orderly sequence of the grades permits. To those we say that intellectual development is not the only kind of growth that is required in the Mysteries, and that we take into account the spiritual equilibrium of the candidate when considering advancement.

Students who are accustomed to the discipline of earning their daily bread in a competitive world seldom find any difficulty with the discipline imposed by the Fraternity of the Inner Light in training its pupils; but those who are accustomed to a life of leisure or independence not infrequently find our discipline irksome - as they would find any other discipline, let us remind them, if they came to it late in life.

When they are tempted to condemn our discipline we ask them to consider carefully whether it may not be that our discipline is condemning them.

We would also ask them to consider whether they would not sooner be members of an organisation which maintained a high standard among its members, than of one in which membership conferred no honour. It is only by keeping up individual standards that we can keep up standards as a whole, and we would ask any student who is confronted with this problem to do his share in maintaining the ideals for which the Fraternity stands by demanding of himself those efforts without which no worthy aim can ever be achieved.

The tendency of the last century was towards a complete repression of the Elemental and primitive aspect of life; the tendency of the present century is to glorify them and free them from all restraints. The former attitude produced a rank crop of psycho-pathology; the latter attitude is producing an equally rank crop of social problems.

It is the aim of our discipline and teaching to show the path of equilibrium between these pairs of opposites. We must recognise that both viewpoints are facets of the truth, but that the whole truth is only to be found in just and true balance between them. In neither repression nor lack of any restraint shall we find a solution of the problems of life.

Lesson 7.

Some Practical Considerations.

The seeker may ask concerning the relation of the Temple of the Mysteries to the religious denomination of which he is a member. To this we reply, religion is the Outer Court of the Temple of the Mysteries, and it is necessary that we should fulfil all righteousness before we can leave that Outer Court and pass within.

Initiation is for the man or woman who seeks to enter more deeply into the spiritual realities than exoteric religion has taken him. If therefore you find in your religion all you require at the present stage of your development, you have no need of initiation, and it is not for you in this incarnation. But if you need more of spiritual light than your religion has given you, then we would bid you make ready for the illumination which the Secret Wisdom can bestow upon the initiate who perseveres.

Remember that exoteric religion is said to have been given to the world by initiates of the Mysteries, and the Mysteries do not hold their mandate from the sanctions of religion.

In ancient days each religion had its exoteric form in the temple-worship in which the people participated, and its esoteric form in the Mysteries to which the populace was not admitted and to which entrance was gained by "ordeal" and discipline only. The priests of the public temples were all initiates of these Mysteries and performed their rites with knowledge, working upon the subconscious minds of the people whose consciousness was not yet ready for illumination.

Those who come for initiation into the Mysteries must be prepared for two things: first, that the Mysteries cannot be judged or measured by the religious instruction they have been accustomed to receive; secondly, that life as revealed in the cosmology of esoteric science, both as related to the microcosm and the macrocosm may be something very different from that to which they are habituated.

Into these new fields of knowledge and experience they are led step by step. There are no sudden shocks of revelation, but a steady expansion of knowledge and experience; and unless those who come to the Temple gate are prepared to welcome change and growth they should not seek to pass the threshold.

The initiate looks upon all religions as given by God to men to meet their varying needs. The founders of all religions to him are holy. The Temple of the Mysteries, wide as the earth and high as the heavens, is no place for those who, when they say there is but one Name under heaven whereby men may be saved, mean Jesus, instead of the Cosmic Christ. The initiate says: "The ways to God are as many as the breaths of

the sons of men".

Christianity, as we know it, is not only Christianity as Jesus of Nazareth taught it. Much has been lost and much has been added and distorted. We are unwise to be bound by dogmatic theology, which is man's opinion about God; and do well in addition to seek God for ourselves and commit our souls to Him, using the minds He gave us.

The Mysteries have no authoritative Yea, yea, or Nay, nay, to impose on us; they teach first principles and give a training which extends consciousness beyond its normal limitations, thus enabling us to know more about God, man and the universe than is possible for the untrained person. For note this, no one can perceive for another anything concerning God; each must perceive for himself, and only that is valid for him which he has perceived. We each perceive according to our capacity, and therefore no one should seek to set limits to the spiritual enterprise of another.

Let no one enter any occult Order unless he has confidence therein; but if he decides to submit himself to its discipline, let him do so whole-heartedly until such time as he has reason to withdraw his confidence.

No man can serve two masters. The experience of all occult schools points to the undesirability of mixed contacts. The unwillingness of the Fraternity of the Inner Light to admit persons who are members of other occult organisations or psychic groups is not due to any condemnation of these organisations, but because it is found in practice that mixed contacts are unworkable and give rise to psychic disturbance in the student and unrest in the group of which he becomes a member.

Neither is the Fraternity willing that any student should do independent practical occult work while in the lower grades. There is much more in practical occultism than is usually realised and those things which can be done with impunity, doing no harm if they do no good while a person is not a member of a Fraternity, become a very different matter after that person has been linked up with cosmic forces by virtue of his initiation.

The strict enforcement of this rule is for the good of all concerned, and those who decide to take initiation into the Fraternity of the Inner Light are asked to observe it in the spirit as well as the letter.

There have been occasions when it has been disregarded, and subsequent events have shown the wisdom and necessity for this rule.

No matter connected with occult work or psychic experience should ever be discussed with any one save the person under whom the student is working. To do so breaks the magic circle, the psychic pressure falls, and there is risk of the operation becoming infected by impure forces. To introduce a fresh viewpoint into one's consciousness while an occult

operation is in process is to alter all the psychic stresses and upset whatever equilibrium of forces may have been attained. It is as if the scaffolding were removed from a building before it is completed; long cracks will open in every direction, and the structure, which previously was safe enough even if incomplete, becomes dangerous and liable to sudden collapse. More occult experiments have been spoilt by disregarding the pledge of secrecy and silence than by any other cause.

The student may not at the present time be able to understand why he should not confide in some sympathetic and trusted friend, but when he has advanced further in his studies and had some experience of practical occultism he will realise the necessity for this precaution. Until then, we must ask him to be guided by the experience of those who have given many years to the practice of occult work. If he feels that these do not command his confidence sufficiently to make him willing to accept their opinion, it is best that he should carry on his own experiments independently until he has satisfied himself as to the facts. In spiritual matters we must solve our problems in silence and solitude, guided only by the counsel of the teachers under whom we have enrolled ourselves.

It is never wise to make public any psychic experience, not even a dream, until at least a year has passed since it occurred. In very important experiences it is best to let three years elapse before recounting them. If this precaution is not observed, the developments that might have arisen out of them may be nipped in the bud. In the case of unpleasant experiences, we may put the person to whom we tell them in touch with the same evil forces through the fear-images evoked in his imagination and thus give him a psychic infection. All supernormal experiences that occur in the course of the training given by the Fraternity of the Inner Light should appear in the diary and nowhere else; but they should all be recorded there, together with the time and place and any other relevant circumstances connected with their occurrence, and carefully filed for future reference.

For the same reason it is unwise to have recourse to psychics, astrologers, and spiritual healers, or to have any form of divinatory work done for us by another. This restriction applies equally to the consultation of personal friends making use of these methods and to the work of professionals. The soul must be allowed to make its growth without interference during the critical phases of its development. Later on, when the student is of a grade to know what he is doing, he is left free to exercise his own discretion. We do not seek to interfere with personal liberty or freedom of judgment in any way whatever; our only desire is to safeguard our students, and incidentally ourselves, from the inexperienced handling of little-understood forces.

Another pressing problem concerns the relations of the psychic with guides, Masters, and spirit-friends, possibly of long standing; in this matter we say that the same considera-

tions apply as we have already noted when considering the problem of occult secrecy. The obligation to secrecy applies equally to those who have physical bodies and to those who have not. The applicant should come to a clear understanding with his spirit-friends on this point before presenting himself for admission to our Fraternity.

In brief we require any candidate, however far he may have advanced in his occult studies, to begin at the beginning when he enters our Fraternity. If the candidate already knows all we can teach in the lower grades he will recapitulate rapidly, and he must not grudge us our caution in requiring adequate time to elapse to enable us to become well acquainted with his temperament and capacities before we admit him to our higher grades.

Questions are also frequently asked upon the subject of marriage and celibacy: such questions, as any other, can be answered from principles given. Wise use of all faculties under control is necessary. The method of training employed in the Fraternity of the Inner Light is designed for the use of people who are leading ordinary workaday lives; it is unsuited for use in conjunction with an ascetic regime, or any form of artificial stimulation, such as drugs or fasting.

In the matter of diet, a mixed diet will be found more satisfactory than a vegetarian one, which tends to produce a sensitive psychic condition. It is not desirable to sensitise the physical body unless we are able to command such conditions as will give it the isolation and protection it will then need.

It is among the teachings of the Fraternity that the initiate should be able to rise above the influences of his environment and maintain his spiritual poise unimpaired under all circumstances. It follows, therefore, that those who look to any form of regime or mode of life as an essential of spiritual development will be out of place in its school.

In saying these things we do not condemn other occult schools who do not agree with us in these matters. They have their own systems, and if these systems require certain regimes, they naturally demand these of their pupils. There are some systems which require celibacy and continence. There are others which attach great importance to sex and encourage polygamy. The teaching that vegetarianism is a *sine qua non* of occult development, and the teachings that and continence is the highest form of spiritual life are not universally valid.

The Fraternity of the Inner Light condemns none; in making its position clear it has no other motive than to avoid misunderstanding and disappointment. It is best and fairest that students should understand its viewpoint at the outset so that they may know whether that viewpoint is congenial to them or not. If it is not congenial to them, it is better that they should continue their quest for an initiator rather than try to effect a compromise which is seldom satisfactory.

It is also desirable to explain the position that arises when students of other races than European desire initiation. Broadly speaking, it is advisable that souls should seek spiritual development in their own racial tradition, but each case must be considered on its merits. The Fraternity being intimately associated with the Group Soul of the British race, it is better that members of races that are in antagonism to the British race, or, being members of the Commonwealth are in a state of political unrest and dissatisfaction, should not seek affiliation with what are essentially racial Mysteries. The difficulty is due solely to psychic incompatibility, and applies to white as well as coloured races. Racial prejudice, as such, does not exist in the Mysteries: there is but one Temple in the Highest, but until the Highest is reached there are many

We do not sit in judgment on any human soul, but since we have learnt by experience that certain conditions give rise to difficulties in the working of our system of initiation, we think it best to advise those who have these conditions to seek initiation by some other system in which these difficulties may not arise.

TASK.

Write a short commentary upon this lesson, giving your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the statements contained therein, and citing examples real or imaginary in support of your statements.

Lesson 8.

The Discipline of the Fraternity.

Before applying for initiation into the Fraternity of the Inner Light students will naturally wish to know exactly what they are undertaking and in what way they may withdraw if they should desire to do so.

According to the tradition of the Mysteries, there is no fixed subscription, but it is expected that those who are received into the Fraternity should assist in its work as far as lies in their power. A subscription is not to be reckoned by its intrinsic value, but by its relation to the resources of the member. A subscription of a few shillings that involves a real sacrifice is of far greater esoteric value than as many guineas that are never missed. Subscription lists are never published, neither do large subscriptions in any way influence the standing of the member. The contribution which each individual makes, whether in money or in services, is entirely a matter for his own conscience.

Members of the Fraternity are expected to keep a diary as heretofore, and to perform the meditations assigned to their grade. There are certain studies to be pursued in each grade, and members are advanced when found suitable.

A ritual initiation admits to the Fraternity. An explanation of the principles of ritual initiation is contained in 'Esoteric Orders and their Work' in Chapter IX to which the reader is referred.

At a certain point in the ceremony the candidate takes the "Oath of the Mysteries", a copy of which is given to him some days beforehand for his consideration.

It is necessary that the candidate, before offering himself for initiation, should realise that the "Oath of the Mysteries" is a very real thing and not a mere formality, and that in taking it he links himself up with the great forces that are behind evolution. These forces afford him most powerful protection against any form of occult interference, but at the same time they are apt to give rise to drastic reactions upon any departure from good faith on his part. These forces are not set in motion by those in authority in the Fraternity, who may indeed have no knowledge whatever of the circumstances which have brought them into play. They come into action automatically, whether to protect or punish, and are not directed or controlled by any human will.

The penalties for betraying the Lodge are not enforced from the physical plane at all, but are left entirely to inner plane forces; for we hold that if the forces with which we deal are what we believe them to be, they are very well able to take care of themselves. In actual practice this has proved to be the case.

Members are free to resign at any time, quittance being given in a spirit of goodwill. No attempt is made to persuade any member to remain in the Fraternity if he does not desire to do so.

It is not possible to give the full details of the inner workings of the Mysteries to non-initiates, but candidates may rest assured that at the completion of each stage of their advancement the next stage that opens before them will be fully explained, and they will be given the option of taking it if they fulfil the conditions.

TASK.

Write a short commentary upon this lesson, giving your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the statements contained therein, and citing examples real or imaginary in support of your statements.

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHT.

TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED PARTS 1.2.& 3.OF STUDY COURSE.

Those who wish to go further after passing the first three Parts of the Course have two alternatives before them - to apply for initiation which automatically admits to full membership of this Group, or for Affiliateship.

Initiates. The applicant for initiation is required to come here for an interview after which it is decided whether or no he can be accepted as a candidate. If accepted he takes Part 4 of the Course and when he has worked through this arrangements can be made for his initiation.

For overseas students this procedure may be varied. The interview cannot be waived but if an overseas student applies for initiation he may be given Part 4 before the interview and when he has completed it he can come here for interview and, if accepted for initiation during the same visit to England. The visit would have to be one of about three weeks - but could profitably be longer, if possible, as after initiation the neophyte is eligible to attend any meetings open to his grade.

Before the interview the applicant for initiation is sent two papers, one of which briefly explains what is expected of him after initiation, but as much as is necessary is explained here since some students may find certain conditions affect their decision as to which alternative they can apply for. The meditation discipline presents no difficulties since students have become accustomed to this during the Course. There is, however, the question of attendance at ceremonies and meetings here. Attendance at the ceremonies held for the Vernal and Autumnal Equinoxes is obligatory in all circumstances unless there is some insuperable prevention. These meetings are usually held on the nearest Saturday afternoon to the date of the Equinox. This obligatory attendance is, however, merely the minimum attendance permissible but there are other ceremonies which take place about twice a month and the initiate is expected to attend as many of these as he reasonably can, he being the judge of what he can undertake. There are also weekly meetings which are not ceremonies but are equally important. Attendance at meetings not only accelerates development but is an important aspect of service to the Mysteries through this Group and it will therefore be clear that the initiate should attend as many as possible if he is to participate fully in the Group's work.

For overseas students attendance is, naturally, likely to be very limited but, as has already been explained in the Study Course particulars, initiation will be given to those who qualify even though there may be little likelihood of their coming here again afterwards.

Affiliateship. An Affiliate is one who, having passed the Course, decides, either for reasons of his own or because he cannot fulfil the condition of coming here for interview and initiation, not to apply for initiation but who wants to maintain as close a contact with the Group as he can and receive its teaching as far as possible. He receives, for the Equinoxes and Solstices, papers selected from those otherwise issued only to initiates. He thus gets much of the teaching given to initiates but takes no further training with the Group - unless he later decides he can now apply for initiation. If he does so the usual interview has to take place then.

Otherwise, an interview is not necessary for Affiliates but ~~the applicant for Affiliateship first has to take Part 4, on completion of which~~ he can become an Affiliate subject to agreeing to certain conditions.

These conditions are an undertaking not to allow the Affiliate papers to be seen by anyone other than himself, except someone he knows for certain to be another Affiliate or an initiate of the Fraternity; not to make any copies of them; to return them to the Society if asked to do so; to arrange for their safe-keeping and, in the event of his death, their return to the Society unread by anyone else; prompt acknowledgment of their safe arrival each quarter since the Society can continue to send them only if certain they are reaching their destination safely; and the giving twice yearly (for the Equinoxes) of a donation, the amount of which is for the Affiliate to decide. This last condition applies also to initiates.

If the Affiliate fails to observe these conditions he is held to have lapsed and will be asked to return the papers sent him as a former Affiliate.

The student who wishes to go further is asked to state whether he wishes to apply for initiation or for Affiliateship, and if for initiation to give some idea of suitable dates and times for the interview. The Director of Studies will then communicate with the applicant and arrange the interview.

~~If he applies for Affiliateship Part 4 of the Course, the cost of which is £4.4.0, can be sent him.~~

~~Part 4 of the Course is £4.4.0.~~

The cost of part 4 is £4.4.0.

If an Affiliate is also an Associate he need not pay the annual Associate subscription of 10/6 since he gives donations anyway.

C.1.

3

THE SOCIETY OF THE INNER LIGHT
To Applicants for Initiation (1)

Students applying for initiation have a right to know, before going further what will be expected of them after initiation. The meditation discipline, to which they have become accustomed while working through the Study Course, remains but the form thereof will be given to them on initiation.

Regularity of attendance at meetings, as far as the initiate can reasonably manage it is essential if he is to participate fully in the Group's work. Regularity of attendance greatly accelerates development and attendance is an important aspect of service to the Mysteries through this Fraternity; therefore regularity greatly increases the value of this.

Attendance at the ceremonies of the Vernal and Autumnal Equinoxes is obligatory in all circumstances, unless there is some insuperable obstacle and failure to attend these for any other cause has serious effects on the member's standing and condition. Attendance at these two meetings is, however, merely the minimum attendance permissible and the initiate should attend as many Lodges (ceremonial meetings) as he reasonably can - he being the judge of what is reasonable for him. Fixture Lists covering the period from one Equinox to another are sent out well in advance of the beginning of each term and the member can therefore make his plans accordingly.

There are also weekly meetings (at present - September '62) held every Wednesday evening from 7.30 sharp to 9.0 p.m., (in ordinary clothes) which are quite as important as the Lodges since they represent another of the avenues of experience which the member who is fully participating in the Group's work should undergo. They deal with "spiritual psychology" in Earth. Those who cannot or do not attend may not be eligible for advancement.

The position of overseas students who became initiates has already been explained in the papers sent to students who have completed the first three Parts of the Study Course.

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To Applicants for Initiation.(2)

Applicants will understand that this paper is given them not because of any wish to delve into a person's private life but simply because the subject of the paper is one on which, for the sake of the Group and its work, we have to have certainty before anyone can be initiated. We have to be certain that we do not initiate anyone who is using abnormal sexual practices - by this is meant homosexual practices in either sex, etc.

If an applicant is found to be indulging in such practices, though his aspiration, dedication and desire to serve the Great Work may not be in doubt, he cannot be accepted into the Group while he continues, or intends to continue, those practices.

He is regarded, whatever his private views on the subject, as one suffering from a form of spiritual sickness and he cannot be brought into the Group any more than one would bring into a gathering of people someone suffering from, let us say, smallpox. There is no shade of condemnation implied here any more than there would be for the smallpox sufferer - and just as one would try to bring healing to that sufferer so there is help available for anyone indulging in such abnormal practices if he wishes to overcome these habits. He is, therefore, not rejected but he may remain a candidate until the practices are eradicated. Only when they are eradicated can he be accepted into the Group - but we will help in the cure of his spiritual sickness if he wishes.

Applicants who wish to continue are asked to give us the required information in this matter. Needless to say, the information will be treated as confidential, and in the case of one suffering from this spiritual sickness it would be revealed only to those who would need to know it such as the one involved in giving help if this is wished; and, of course, the Director of Studies to whom the information has to be sent.

11.C

3
SECRECY.

June 1962.

In this Group there is no longer any oath or promise of secrecy administered to candidates. Instead, candidates undertake to accept full responsibility for their actions and decisions and to use the two prime virtues of Discretion and Discrimination in speaking to non-members about the Group's teachings.

The True Plan of the Logos for humanity has not been manifested in Earth because, at the beginning of the evolution of the human Life-Wave or Swarm most spirits, in varying degrees, rejected parts of the Plan and therefore began their evolution in the Logoidal Universe on a pattern that was, to a greater or lesser extent, out of alignment with that Plan. This initial error is known in the Group as the prime deviation and is indicated in the Bible by the story of the Fall.

Had there been no such deviation a group of the nature of this one would, quite simply, have been concerned with training individuals in the true fundamentals of living in Earth. There would have been no secrecy and such a group would have been recognised as a training-ground for teaching these fundamentals for it would have been taken for granted that incarnating souls would need and appreciate guidance in this matter of living in Earth. Any 'secrecy' if one can use the word in this connection, would have been a matter of the grading of the teaching for it would have been realised that one cannot teach anyone higher mathematics, for instance, before he has mastered ordinary arithmetic and that the higher reaches of the subject will remain closed to him until his consciousness has so developed that he can become aware of them. Thus, instead of 'secrecy' the giving out of the stages of teaching would have been governed by Discretion and Discrimination - assessing the right moment at which to enter a student upon the next phase.

This Group works for the bringing into manifestation of the True Plan; it is therefore concerned with teaching those fundamentals of living in Earth, it has nothing to hide, and so has done away with as much secrecy as possible. Instead members are expected to be mature enough to manifest Discretion and Discrimination and to take full responsibility for preserving the integrity of the Mysteries.

It has been said that secrecy is necessary to preserve power in a group's rituals; that if, for example, the names of certain inner plane beings were known to non-members there would be loss of power. This idea is not valid. All the world knows of the Christ and knows that that name, and others, are used in the enclosed orders of the Church and in exoteric ceremonies but the fact that this is generally known in no way invalidates the power.

A valid reason for secrecy has been, in the past, the fear of persecution and it is probable that at one time or another most members of a group such as this have suffered for the sake of a group but persecution no longer operates on that level. That reason, therefore, no longer applies.

The withdrawal of secrecy closes what, in this Group, is called an 'avenue of escape'. This means that the promise has often been used as a means of escaping responsibility. There are occasions when to talk of the teachings of the Group can be helpful in meeting the needs of a non-member provided Discretion and Discrimination are used in deciding how much to say, when to say it, how to put it and so on. Sometimes, however, one who could have helped in this way has avoided the responsibility of deciding to do so by saying "I cannot talk about this", "I am not allowed to" etc. It is emphasised, however, while it may do no harm to the Mysteries or the Group to discuss the teaching and other matters with a non-member, it may do harm to that individual unless Discretion and Discrimination are used in deciding what he is ready for.

For these reasons the promise, as has been said, is no longer administered to candidates and instead they are enjoined as follows:-

"A brother among us is expected to take full responsibility for his actions, and we are concerned here with the integrity of the Mysteries even as the brother is concerned with his own integrity.

Many are the lessons he should learn in this Degree, the most important being the application of Discretion and Discrimination.

It is not advisable to reveal our inner life - that is to say our ceremonies and symbols to those who are not members since they could not understand them without a background of knowledge that a First Degree initiate would be unable to impart even if they were able to understand it. Much harm may be done by idle talk on these matters. The Inner Plane Adepts have long been against the use of occult or psychic powers for monetary gain or idle purposes and we should not hire the services of any who have these powers or claim to have them.

The names of the members should not be revealed without their consent - as, indeed, is the custom of good behaviour in mundane life.

The papers must not be shown to anyone, but the contents and the teaching can be imparted if considered likely to be helpful though the source is not to be revealed. If you must err, it is better to err on the side of saying too little as that can be more easily remedied than can the damage of saying too much.

Remember this is the grade of probation: you are not expected to be teachers of others as yet - save by the example of your life."

To Candidates for Initiation.THE MAGICAL NAME OF AN INITIATE.

Upon initiation into the Mysteries on probation a name is taken by the candidate. This name consists of a phrase or motto chosen to represent his highest aspirations, and the choice should be made after careful meditation on the subject, for it can have far reaching results.

In the first place, such meditation reveals oneself to oneself; in the second, it affords those who are training the probationer an important clue to his nature, thus enabling them to understand him better and adjust the training to his needs. But it has more than a psychological import. It forms his "signature tune" and puts him in touch with spiritual influences in the same key; these help to determine the nature of the tests he will undergo in the course of his training. These tests are not devised by his tutors nor are they inherent in the system; they arise spontaneously out of the circumstances of his life and involve the making of decisions which test his discernment, integrity, courage and dedication. If he fails to pass such a test, a condition arises either in his circumstances or his feelings which makes further advancement impossible until he has learnt his lesson and worked out his problem. Both lesson and problem are in terms of life experience. He has to apply to the circumstances of his life and the experiences that come to him the lessons taught him in the Mysteries. These afford him the means to reach a complete solution which he must work out for himself; but in the working out of it he may seek counsel of the proper person. These tests fall into certain well-recognised types and much help can be given by showing the student what teaching applies to his particular problem, though it always remains for him to make the decision as to the way in which he will apply it, for the teaching is always given in terms of spiritual principles, never as specific instructions to do or not to do a given thing, because it is no part of the Mystery training to relieve an initiate of the responsibility for the living of his own life. He can, however, be given the knowledge necessary for the exercise of discernment. Without this, he is liable to make mistakes, and neither pride, nor diffidence, nor that form of pride which expresses itself as a dislike of giving trouble, should prevent him from asking for whatever he feels he needs in the way of help in solving the problems of the Path. Certain officers are there to render him this service, without which he might just as well attempt self-initiation by means of books - a course which esoteric knowledge has declared to be inadvisable.

There is an old saying that the initiate should regard every experience of life as the direct dealing of God with his soul, a great truth is contained in these words. We are under no delusion that a personal God is watching with a jealous or anxious eye all that we do, but life is, in literal truth, the Great Initiator - another traditional Mystery saying - and in the Mysteries we must learn to look upon life in this light, for it is only through life's experiences that any real tests can come to us.

The story is told of a certain school of initiation wherein tests were given to the students whenever the head of the school thought fit. When by hard toil the garden had been got into good order, the teacher turned the cows into it. Frequently when students sat down to a meal, they would be told to go and clean the windows, or some such task, their food being left to go cold meanwhile. These things were supposed to test their spirit of dedication. This they might do, if blind obedience is considered to be any part of dedication; but they are no test of discernment; for the students know quite well that they are being tested, and provided they have sufficient control of tongue and countenance to avoid any overt expression of exasperation the test is passed.

There are no such tests in the Fraternity of the Inner Light. We consider it to be beneath the dignity of any human being to give blind obedience or submit his will to another. The Temple of the Mysteries is not built with hands but is eternal in the heavens upon the Inner Planes. The Lodge-room is but a symbolic representation thereof. The work of initiation which is done upon the physical plane is psychological and spiritual in nature and a contacting with great spiritual forces which conduct the real initiatory process. The teaching and training, especially the meditation discipline, prepare the student's conscious mind; the meditation subjects and the Lodge ceremonies prepare his subconscious mind and put him in touch with the initiatory influences; it is only when these begin to operate that the work of initiation starts. The student takes responsibility for his own experiences, for he can learn only by doing, but he can ask for guidance whenever he feels in need of it, in relation to the experiences which life sends him, for it is never volunteered in regard to his personal affairs since it is the right of each individual to live his life in his own way and no good ever comes from attempting to coerce him - he only swings back to his own way as soon as the pressure is withdrawn. Therefore advice is seldom given unless it is asked. Those, however, who are serious in their desire to make progress on the Path, and none others are at home in the Fraternity, would do well to take counsel before embarking upon any course which may have far-reaching consequences in their lives so that they may know whether, and to what extent, it is compatible with their aspiration to advance in the Mysteries. They can then decide what they will do in the matter under consideration and save themselves from the disappointment of trying to combine incompatibles. It often happens, however, that what at first sight may appear to be incompatibles prove not to be so if rightly handled. It is best for the student to inform himself on these matters rather than to risk exposing himself to difficulties and disappointments which may be quite unnecessary, or, on the other hand, of involving himself in a situation from which he cannot withdraw and which is liable to develop in such a way as to conflict with his dedication. What he does with his eyes open is nobody's business but his, and nobody in the Fraternity will interfere in it; but it is a pity for him to do things blindly which he may afterwards regret. The treading of the Path in the Mysteries is a method of spiritual development which concerns the whole man, mind, body and estate, and it is a very serious matter and an undertaking not lightly to be entered upon. The old saying that the good is the enemy of the best is often exemplified upon the Path, and the initiate finds himself called upon to choose, not between good and evil, but between 'good' and 'better', and 'better' and 'best'. It is at this time that the Mystery

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name he has chosen can afford him the needful clue. If in doubt, let him meditate upon this name and see how its implications apply to his problem and he will find that he has got something that will serve him as a most reliable measuring rod.

II.

The initiate keeps his Mystery Name secret, and it is known to his brethren only by the initials of the words forming his motto. The reason for such secrecy - and nothing is done in the Mysteries without a reason - can readily be seen from the explanation that has already been given concerning the choice of a motto, namely, that it affords a clue to a person's nature. Such a clue is not to be given indiscriminately, but should only be entrusted to those entitled to receive it. For this reason the candidate encloses his name card in an envelope and the only persons entitled to read it are certain senior Officers. No other member ever knows his motto. The Magical Name, written by his own hand is enclosed in an envelope in the Silver Casket which is part of the symbolic furniture of the Lodge and which is kept in the Altar. Each card forms a magical link between the Fraternity and its owner. If a member resigns in good standing, it is returned to him. If he resigns in bad standing, the reasons for his bad standing are written across it before it is returned to him, and until such time as he has fulfilled the obligations to return things and papers entrusted to him by the Fraternity, his card is retained and he remains under the discipline of the Mysteries.

The Magical Name forms a link between each member and the great Order on the Inner Planes of which our Fraternity is a part. In all times of difficulty and danger on the physical or the Inner Planes, the initiate can invoke for help by means of his Magical Name. He enunciates it mentally and even as he can be called up by the use of his Magical Name, so can he call, for "magic" is an evenly balanced scale. The name is not called aloud with the lips, it is called aloud in the imagination, saying "I, an initiate of the Mysteries of, claim the help of the Order that is behind the Fraternity". This is particularly potent in any matter involving 'spiritual wickedness in high places', such as the abuse of mind power, whether with or without esoteric knowledge, or any form of undue influence directed against the mind, body or estate of an initiate; it is also effectual in places where there is a bad mental atmosphere.

A member, once initiated is within the Veil and in touch with certain forces. True, in the degree of Probationer, he obtains no knowledge he can carry away with him and put to any practical use should he proceed no further, but he is nevertheless an initiate and has the rights and duties of one, and in times of stress the significance of this fact reveals itself even to the most junior brother among us. The Mysteries have been built up by the work of millions of highly trained minds in the course of thousands of years, and though in the normal way the power is 'eased in' gradually, in times of stress it can come through in full spate and though this is rare, it is best that members should know that it can happen.

It is a very great experience for members when this happens, but it is also a very exacting one. It is no part of our training method to exhibit spectacular phenomena, but occasionally they occur, and though their occurrence is unpredictable their nature is well understood.

When, therefore, you have chosen your name, write it on a card and place that card in an unsealed envelope. Put that envelope in a sealed envelope addressed to the Warden and send it to the Secretary for transmission to the Warden. The Warden will read the name which he will impart to the Magus who will then seal the envelope himself.

The initials are used only in Lodge in special circumstances. Otherwise the member is known by his mundane name, and the forms used, both in correspondence and otherwise, are those of everyday life.

SOME FURTHER NOTES ON THE MAGICAL NAME.

Full instructions for the choosing and sending in of the name are given in pages 1-4 of this paper, but the following points are not dealt with.

As the paper explains, the name in full is known only to certain members who, by reason of their responsibilities, have to know it but to all other members only the initials are known - while to non-members nothing at all about it is known. For convenience in usage candidates are asked not to use more than four initials. This, however, does not limit them to a motto of only four words - it can consist of any number of words but the ones whose first letters are chosen for the initials should be those which really carry the meaning. As an example we can take the motto of the Royal Air Force - "Per Ardua ad Astra". If this were chosen the neophyte could be known as Frater (or Soror, if a woman) P.A.A.A. - but since the two words that carry the essence of the meaning are the "Ardua" and the "Astra" he could equally well be Fr. A.A. In the case of a longer motto it may well be that two or three initials will suffice but there should not, in any case, be more than four as already explained.

The motto can be made up by the candidate, can be a quotation from any source - and need not necessarily be in English.

It sometimes happens that a candidate chooses initials already borne by another member. It does not, of course, follow that the words of the two mottoes are the same but, whether they are or are not, we have in such a case to find some means of varying the initials. This can be done in various ways - for instance, the first two letters of one of the words might be used. Thus in the example given above the initials might be A.R.A. Sometimes the order of the words can be re-arranged without affecting the sense: sometimes the same idea can be expressed in another way - or even in another language. Again, in the example given above the English translation of the Latin phrase could be used.

5 In order to avoid any possible delay, candidates are asked to provide alternative sets of initials when they send in their Name cards - they should, of course, indicate the order of their preference. They should not, therefore, write any initials on the envelope containing the card but should put the alternatives on a separate sheet of paper, in the order of preference. Should the top priority choice coincide with the initials already used by another member we will choose the next highest possible one and let the candidate know which has had to be selected. If the candidate does not hear before his initiation it will mean his top priority choice can be used - in either case, the initials to be used will be written, here, on the envelope containing the card.

Cards should be despatched in time to arrive here about three days before the date fixed for the initiation. There is no objection, however, to their being sent in sooner if the candidate wishes - though, plainly, as the choice of the Name is very important it should not be hurried.

N.B. In the last paragraph of the booklet on our Work and Ideals it is said that the work of this Group is to bring the Spirit into Earth in daily life and that to do this one has to "make straight its paths". Making straight its paths is one way of describing redemption and since this is so vital an aspect of the work the candidate should, in his own mind, add to his motto or Magical Name a sentence or phrase which connects it with redemption and with Our Lord as Redeemer.

This sentence or phrase should not be written on the Name card nor need it be told to anybody but it should definitely form part of the Name, in the initiate's own mind.

To Candidates for Initiation.SOME FINANCIAL PRINCIPLES.

It is upon the plane of Principles that we work and teach, the application of these principles to mundane conditions being the work and responsibility of those working on that plane. Only when matters go astray do the Masters intervene in mundane affairs. Consequently, having laid down principles which should guide your judgment, we leave to that judgment the conduct of those affairs for which you are responsible.

Certain clarification still remains necessary in order that you may have clear guidance, and I will deal with that traditional rule which lays down that you shall not sell the occult arts for gold, nor hire for money the powers of another.

In the application of the occult laws, we must draw a distinction between the brethren within the Temple, and the populace in the market-place. The populace is governed by the law of the masses; its members are influenced by the tradition of the Race. They are as yet imperfectly developed beings, with far to travel on the evolutionary path; and even as you would not apply to children the laws governing adults, so you cannot apply to the populace the laws governing initiates. The child is not held responsible before the Law for his actions, but on the other hand, he may be restrained by physical force in a manner which would be illegal if applied to an adult. And so with the populace - judgment, understanding, self-control and self-discipline are not expected of them, but they may be - and indeed must be - influenced and guided, disciplined and coerced in a manner not applicable to initiates who are held to be adult souls standing upright on their feet, capable of judgment and responsible to God for their conduct.

The populace have a mode of consciousness which is not individualised and therefore is not rational when expressed by the individual. The initiate is individualised and is expected to be rational and in control of his own nature. He knows the Cosmic Laws and that they are unavoidable; therefore he is bound by them. He knows that this applies equally to all other initiates, and so he can deal with them secure in the knowledge that these Laws which bind him bind them also in their actions. These Laws are, of course, equally binding upon the populace, but the populace do not know it, and have to learn by experience that these Laws are unavoidable; and the experience may be painful. If the initiate in dealing with the populace relies upon these Laws for his security, he may find himself involved in the confusion and suffering caused by the process of learning by experience on the part of the unevolved person. The populace learns by the method of trial and error: the initiate learns by meditating upon Truth, and putting his realisations into practice.

Times have changed since the Mysteries were first brought to this planet and their broad lines laid down. In those days the gulf was wide between the initiated and the uninitiated, and none entered the Temple save by summons; and having entered the Temple none went forth again unless they broke their pledges.

But in course of time, both knowledge and power spread among the populace; for those who had left in defiance of their pledges were reborn, and there was no power that could take from them those capacities they had acquired through initiation; neither was there any power that could discipline them when they were no longer in the Temple. So they continued till they destroyed themselves by the abuse of their powers, or, learning their lesson, were recalled to the Temple.

In such manner, however, knowledge, and the power that follows on it, spread beyond the confines of the Mysteries and gradually built up into a kind of secondary or Left-hand Tradition, which was under no guidance, discipline or obligation, and was pursued by men seeking power for its own sake and not in the spirit of religious dedication. So it came about that some degree, though imperfect, of the Sacred Wisdom was abroad in the world, and men were aware of its existence.

Evolution is marked by a definite tidal movement, and at each new phase the standard of the Mysteries was raised and a new Degree developed. At the same time certain of the Secret Wisdom was released to the populace because the mass of mankind had likewise advanced in evolution.

The initiate is a man ahead of his time. He may be ahead of it one or more cycles according to his grade, but he is a man ahead of his Age. So initiates in their relations among themselves are governed by laws and live under conditions that neither apply to, nor prevail among the masses.

Today we witness the further drawing back of the Veil of the Mysteries and the release of further knowledge in such measure as has never been known before. In consequence those in the market-place are being brought into touch with the Secret Wisdom and Hidden Forces as they have never been before. This makes it necessary for us to consider in what manner the laws governing initiates shall be applied to the uninitiated among whom the secret teaching of the initiates is now being diffused.

Let us now consider directly the question of the terms on which the occult arts are sold. They shall not be sold for gold, says the Law of the Mysteries; but gold is the current coin of the market-place, and how else may the populace pay? And in what other coin may the initiate be paid for his Outer Court teaching in the market-place? Therefore there must needs be an exchange of values between the market-place and the Temple, for which gold is the token. Now gold or money is but a symbol; it is the symbol of energy - of life-force upon the mundane plane. A man puts his life-force into his work, and receives in return money, which is this stored life-force; and this money he can exchange for the life-force of another. It is merely a convenient substitute for barter.

3.

So when the initiate stands forth in the market-place to deal with the uninitiated he must carry out his transactions in terms of the market-place, and he will perforce use gold or its equivalent; he cannot conveniently do otherwise. How then shall he obey the Law of the Mysteries which forbids the selling of the occult arts for gold? This is achieved in two ways: first, much that was occult is no longer occult, has ceased to be under the jurisdiction of the Mysteries and has become a matter of ordinary scholarship. To such knowledge, and the teaching of it, should be applied those principles which govern the work of scholars. Their principles are not those of hucksters in the market-place, but the labourer is worthy of his hire nor will the demands of the market-place be lowered in the matter of prices charged to him for food, housing and clothing.

Let the initiate, therefore, who teaches in the market-place to the people those aspects of our ancient Tradition that have been released from the ban of secrecy guarding the Mysteries - let him stand forth as a scholar, demanding his just fee for his services: else he will be unable to exist. For the populace knows not the Law of Polarity of the Mysteries, and will take without giving if so permitted, believing it thereby enriches itself.

But equally let the initiate consider the standards of conduct demanded by the learned professions. Thus such standards as apply to the lawyer, doctor and professor of learning apply to him; and to all Outer Court organisations apply the standards of the College or University.

Guided by these rules, you will see that the Outer Court school does not depend upon voluntary contributions any more than does a University; neither does the initiate teaching the populace the great truths released to them by the advance of evolution hold out his hand like a mendicant, but requires his just fee as a professional man would require it. Not otherwise can he hope for a just fee from the unjust.

Let us next consider where the line shall be drawn between the teaching released to the populace and the knowledge retained in the Mysteries. To the populace, in the present age, is released the science and philosophy of the Ancient Wisdom, even as the principles of hygiene are taught in order that men may live healthfully and raise their children adequately. But from the populace are withheld the dangerous drugs which, though curative, can kill. So with the Mysteries are withheld from the populace the knowledge of the practical workings which alone give power. They are taught the laws of Life and of the Universe in order that they may adjust their lives thereto, but from them (the populace) is withheld the knowledge of the manner in which those laws may be used to confer the power over that of which they have control, which the initiate by his knowledge learns to exercise.

The reservation of this secret portion of the knowledge of the Mysteries is a simple matter, because power rests on ability and ability has to be acquired. It is in the First Degree that these abilities are acquired. So the First Degree stands as a forecourt to the Temple itself.

The principles that I have indicated apply to the forecourt as well as to the market-place, but in a modified manner. They are modified by the addition to them of the principles governing initiates; for an initiate of the First Degree though within the Temple and under the discipline and protection of the Tradition is a man in process of transition from the market-place to the Holy of Holies. The laws governing the populace for their well-being will apply to him, but the higher law of the initiate applies also. Until such time as he is a man who can stand upright on his feet and judge justly, the law of the populace rules over him for his discipline. Gradually he learns to observe the law of initiates, which is that a man of his own volition, out of love, obeys the Law, which needs no enforcing upon him; but wherein he fails to obey, the law of the populace is enforced for his discipline and the preservation of order.

Let me sum up thus far. In the market-place you charge the just fee of your profession as esoteric teachers. In the forecourt the rule of the Mysteries begins, and the principle of free-will offerings is applied. If the principle is abused, then the attention of the offender is directed to this fact and he is bidden to return to the market-place where he belongs, and abide its discipline until he has learned his lessons; for men cannot be entrusted with freedom until they are capable of self-discipline. In the Temple, which is the Holy Place, no such discipline is necessary or applied - the initiate being directly responsible to the law, and his fellow-men do not intervene.

In the First Degree the soul is prepared, it is later trained and contacted. Finally, the soul thus made fit and equipped with abilities learns to handle the Cosmic Forces by means of its own powers and in the light of its own judgment. The Adept is free, self-directing and responsible for his actions. If he makes an error or judgment or miscalculates his strength, he must take the consequences. In the First Degree responsibility is not laid upon an initiate, and as long as he is obedient to the discipline there are no consequences for him to take.

The occult arts which may not be sold for gold concern the manipulation of the Cosmic Laws that govern the Universe and the Soul of Man. There are thus certain services of the teacher, the lecturer, the corrector of papers which come within the purview of professional services. These are of the Outer Court and the market-place, and may justly be made the subject of a fixed fee and of remuneration; a fixed fee to those who receive the services, remuneration to those who give them.

The co-operation of the Adepts in research, in experimentation in that practical work which is carried on with the handling of the Cosmic Forces, with the exchange of knowledge among their brethren, is under the Law of the Mysteries: and while there must needs be funds for the payment of expenses incurred in connection therewith - and ritual magic is costly - and such funds must needs be replenished from the pockets of the brethren, the occult arts are not sold, but shared and bestowed; and the Chest of the Temple is filled with free-will offerings, it being presumed that a soul that has not learned the lessons of the market-place will not have succeeded in crossing the Inner Court and arriving at the Holy Place.

These are the principles which are laid down for your guidance that this Temple of the Mysteries may be conducted in an orderly manner, not thrown into confusion by the weakness of the unevolved; nor the brethren exposed to inconvenience or hardship by the fact that they are bound by a law which does not bind those with whom they deal, thus placing them at a disadvantage. Justice is a Cosmic Principle: between brothers justice is holy for the sake of love and comradeship: between those who struggle and chatter in the market-place justice has to be enforced by a superior power.

C.4.

TO THE CANDIDATE

At two point in the ceremony you will be asked a direct question. To each there is a set answer. These questions and answers are given below for your consideration as it is wished that you should have had time to consider them.

(A) Shortly after you have been summoned but before you are admitted into the Lodge you will be asked why you "seek to enter....." The answer to be given by you is:
"I DESIRE TO KNOW IN ORDER TO SERVE" .

(B) After you have been admitted you will be led to your seat and after a prayer you will be asked: ".....in whom do you put your trust?" The answer to be given by you is:
"IN GOD" .

In the accompanying paper on Secrecy it is explained that there is no longer a promise administered to candidates but that they are enjoined in a certain way which is there set out in full - this you should understand fully. Before you are thus enjoined in the ritual of your initiation you will be asked the following: "If it is still your will to join us in our work, raise your right hand in sign of assent". Be alert for this.

All who attend Lodges must send in reports on the ritual. In the case of an initiation the candidate's report is, naturally, an important one. For instruction about reports the neophyte should refer, as soon as possible to page 23 of "General Instructions to all Initiates". This is a set of papers given to him after his initiation. He receives a number of papers but "General Instructions" is one he should familiarize himself with as soon as possible - especially page 23 "Reports on Rituals" for the report should be sent in not later than a week after the initiation.

If there is anything in the enjoiner, or in the other two points mentioned above, with which you do not agree please write at once to the Secretary as any disagreement must be cleared up before your initiation.

At initiation ceremonies all members attending wear robes, except for one who attends in his ordinary clothes. This is because there has to be someone available to attend to callers at the house, if there are any during the ceremony.