

THE PROBLEMS OF MEDIUMSHIP

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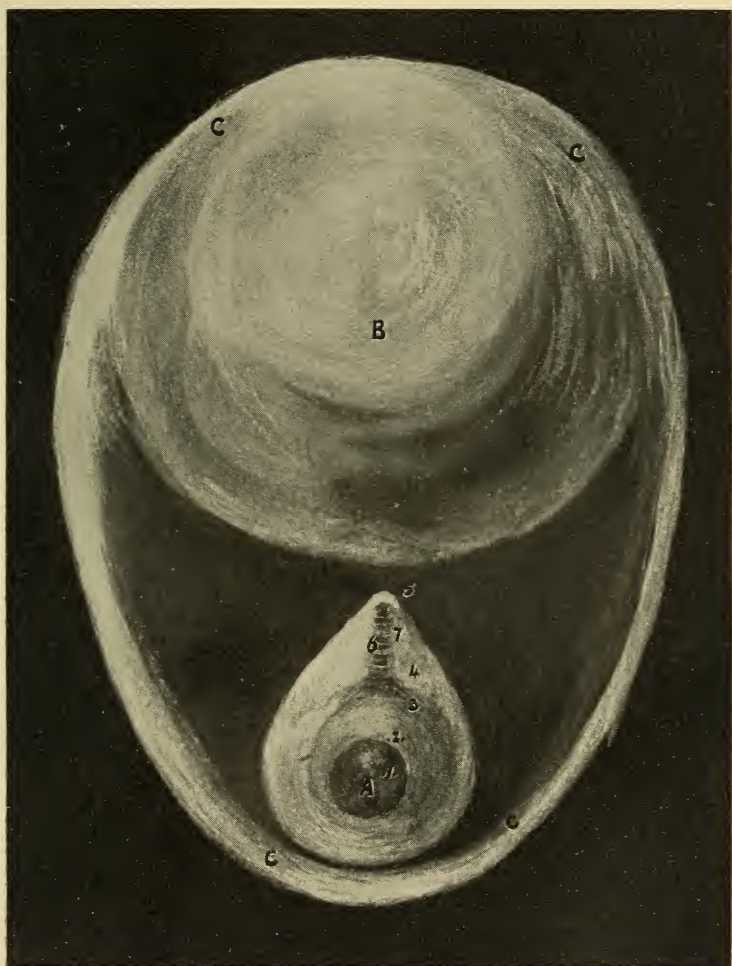
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LONDON: KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH,
TRUBNER & CO., LIMITED, BROADWAY
HOUSE, 68-74, CARTER LANE, E.C.
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.

1920

BF 1261
.Z92

304173
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PREFACE

THIS book, and the following books of this series, are written for persons who, having satisfied their minds that man has a soul that survives the death of the body, desire to hold communion with the spirit world, and are attracted by the many alluring possibilities which the various schools of psychic thought and occult wisdom hold out to the students who join them.

These books are not written to kill what is true and valuable in the teachings of Spiritualism, nor to destroy the hope of holding communion with the departed that is so comforting to the bereaved. The books are written to show what is false and misleading in many of the alluring paths to psychic powers, and how truth may be found instead of error. They are written to show the real nature of the plane that intervenes between man on earth and the spirit world of realities, and how and why, in allowing himself to become entangled in the network of illusions, he loses those realities ; also what is the origin of the difficulties he encounters and the disappointments he meets, even when good conditions for communication are given.

These books do not enter into the questions as to whether immortality has been fully established

as an eternal verity, nor whether there is a spirit world man can hold converse with, but begin at the point where psychics find themselves confronted by a variety of paths to the attainment of occult powers, and desire to know what is the origin and source of the teachings that will direct their progress on one or other of those pathways.

Especially do these books deal with the source of the power, and the real objects sought by those inspirers of the occult schools that adopt the serpent as their symbol ; for all through the lapse of ages the corrupting influence of that line may be traced in one religion after another, and one school of occultism after another ; and always with disastrous results as the ultimate outcome of those teachings.

All psychic associations to-day are so permeated with the teachings of the Orientals and the old occult schools of the Middle Ages in Europe that the dominant note in them all is this quasi-Oriental, Christian mystic, magical and semi-scientific combination, and to amalgamate with one school is to find a measure of affiliation to them all ; hence, to disentangle the truths from the falsehoods of that polyglot mixture is a Herculean task. This book is primarily devoted to the study of the psychic evolution of our planet and the origin of the elemental plane and its conditions, because it is in those conditions the entanglement begins.

The records of the older Western schools of occultism and magical powers are made easily

accessible by the numerous books that have been published, since Spiritualism began, dealing with those psychic associations; and the Oriental teachers who give their formulas for attaining wisdom and power are now quite numerous, although Oriental occultism originated with a small group of men, and has gradually spread everywhere that a loophole for their teachings could be made.

It would, however, be unjust to the people of the Orient to say these men are really representative of the desire of the East to proselytise among the Western nations. By far the greater number of the Eastern races have nothing to do with the occult propaganda, and regard the Western races as "unbelievers," outside the pale of interest so far as their religious opinions are concerned.

The alluring and beautiful aspects of the Oriental religions must be fully recognised by every one, and still it must be pointed out that every religion or philosophy representative of the highly-civilised races possesses similar beautiful truths, and also embodies them in picturesque and poetic language.

Those who are acquainted with the Greek and Roman writers, upon whose ideals Western thought has been largely built up, or with the wealth of imagery of the Jewish chroniclers and the exalted visioning of the early Christian mystics and their school of literature, know that the beautiful truths enshrined in them all are of universal origin, and belong to no age, no race, no religion or

philosophy, but are the property of the whole universe and its myriad worlds as an eternal heritage.

Wherefore, when we find these truths translated into the language of the Brahmins, Buddhists, Egyptians, or other races whose mystical religions have influenced thought, these truths may seem to acquire thereby an attractive air of novelty and mystery, from the strangeness of the language in which they are expressed, and their unfamiliar aspect when presented through a different type of mentality ; but those truths are, in reality, neither more illuminating nor more profound when presented in these semi-comprehensible terms than as given in the familiar language of everyday Western races.

There is, in fact, no reason why the very attractive guise in which the wealth of imagery and poetic beauty that distinguish the Oriental writers, should make any logically-minded person blind to the obvious errors and dangerous perversions of the beautiful truths of which some of those accomplished writers are guilty when they incorporate with the truth certain very dangerous psychic teachings, false doctrines, and distortions of the truth, together with formulas for the development of psychic powers that are altogether misleading and evil in their effects ; derived not from the Divine Inspirer of truth, but from the dangerous and deceiving spirits who have in all ages contrived to thrust their poisonous seeds of

occult wisdom into the most beautiful of religious doctrines.

The author of this book asserts that certain of these very dangerous errors are incorporated in the teachings of all the old "mystery" religions, and are being reproduced to-day by the Oriental teachers and by those who seek their knowledge among the archives of the occultisms of the semi-scientific non-religious associations of the Western psychics of the past eras.

There is no religious prejudice behind this assertion; the original author* of this series of books was a man of wide sympathies and a free-thinker in the best sense of that term, who began life with a strong prepossession in favour of the old mystical religions, with their wonderful power on the occult planes.

The Elemental-astral Plane is made the subject of this book, because it cannot be ignored by the psychic. Man enters upon a quicksand when he affiliates to it, and can rely on nothing that is seen on it, for thought there assumes the guise of reality, yet cannot possess it. The error against which this book is a protest is the error of the whole system by which the student is put into affiliation to it at all.

The sole reason we write against the good men among the Oriental teachers (they are not all good men, though some are) is that they are themselves the victims of their false line of development,

* See Note at end of Preface.

and can only lead their pupils astray also. Their age-old system makes of the beautiful gifts of the spirit—clairvoyance, clairsaudience, and mental mediumship—a snare, because developed into the illusionary conditions of that plane instead of into affiliation to the true spirit sphere; *and at death* the victims of these errors are left imprisoned on that plane to which they have established affiliation by that system of development.

If is of no use to appeal to this or that psychic, who sees the “Masters” or the deities of the Oriental faiths; nor to the Mystics of the semi-Oriental, semi-European schools of occultism of more recent origin.

These seers have concentrated their whole power of vision on that plane in mistake for the spirit world, and cannot see anything but that wonderland of illusions. These seers behold their visions in the astral light of that plane, and by no other light. It is a false light, in itself a mere reflection. What is seen is thrown off from the *minds* of the powerful intelligences on that plane, with many added thought creations from earth minds.

If these seers could *go beyond* that plane, they would perceive the whole transparent illusion.

So many spiritualists and psychics in general have developed that type of clairvoyance it is difficult to make people realise the nature of the mistake that has been made by the old occultisms in practising formulas that lead to the quicksand region, and nowhere else.

The misfortune is that a mass of good persons, adhering to an error, or a thing evil in its effects, give it life and act as a living wall that protects it against exposure. It would be well if good persons would sometimes allow suspicion to invade the serene confidence of their pleasant mental enjoyment of their power of visioning fair things, and their trust in the teachers whose real powers they cannot test except by the apparent results of successful development of much visioning.

When death has separated these persons from the protection of their earth bodies, a great many have already found *too late* the nature of the mistake they have made.

It is not a question, then, of choice, nor of moral or immoral desires, nor of reward or punishment, but of the automatic operation of a nature law that causes the astral body they have redeveloped to be drawn on to that plane to which it is affiliated, and on which alone the ego can now live.

These statements are the result of many communications from spirits, as well as from experiences of mediums in the flesh, and are not made in haste, nor lightly. More than seventy years have elapsed since the first members of the little coterie—some of whose researches this book embodies—began their study of the mystic planes and magnetic forces, before the period of the Rochester knockings.

To the original circle others of a younger generation were added, who carried on the study quietly and with no intention of assuming the

position of critics of others' teachings till the position was forced on them by the discoveries they made in relation to the spirit side of life, and its material correspondence with mediumship.

It would be a far pleasanter task to simply record the results of the investigations of the little circle and the theories developed by them; omitting all adverse criticism of other individuals. Universal toleration for the ideas and the teachings of others would suggest refraining from any direct attack on what to the author appeared as dangerous, and even fatal, errors in the teachings of the Oriental schools. It has been said that Western races are prone to attack the religions and religious practices of other peoples, and even to exercise a perpetual restless criticism of their own faiths, whereas the Orientals refrain from such discourteous treatment of the beliefs of others, and show a deep respect for their own faiths.

Now, if the question were simply one of extending universal toleration for the opinions and religious practices of those who differ from ourselves, and if such silent toleration of erroneous opinions and practices affected only those individuals who held those opinions and followed those practices, it would be quite just to say that criticisms and attacks on the religious, or political, or social ideals and practices of others are discourteous infringements upon their individual liberty.

But, as a matter of fact, the opinions held by any body of individualities, and the actions that

are the outcome of those opinions, affect not only the individuals themselves, but the whole community, and, finally, the world at large, because the world has been, and is being, moulded into its permanent future form *now* by its inhabitants, and will possess hereafter the character, as a world, which the races of men who evolved on it developed.

Moreover, even in the immediate present and the near future, the lives and the safety and the liberty of the whole community of any world is menaced or benefited by the degree to which truth or error prevails; for no man can live for himself alone. Wrong ideas, false doctrines, practices that lead to evils and breed them, the sowing of disease in minds and in bodies, do not end with the individual, but become powerful to affect many lives through the wrong actions of one thinker who goes astray, or one individual who indulges in immorality.

All evils and all errors are as weeds that bring forth the seeds of other weeds, and that multiply and extend their zone of influence far and wide, and, spreading over the whole land, use up the vital force that should grow flowers of truth and virtue. Weeds grow far faster than flowers; weeds flourish and spread in the poorest of soil, where flowers die for lack of sustenance; and the spreading weeds will soak up all the vital essence in the soil around them, and overrun the borders where the flowers are planted, enveloping the flowers and choking their growth, and, finally,

killing them. So that the weeds at last reign alone over all that part of the earth where their seeds were scattered by evil or careless hands, and left by supine minds to germinate and flourish till they had reduced that land to the conditions of a wilderness of weeds, wherein no flowers of truth have any more a chance to grow and blossom.

If throughout the ages all reformers, all clear-sighted men and women, all who could discern truth as distinct from the specious and plausible lie, had stood aside in *amiable toleration* for all the evils that have corrupted the world, that world would by now have retrogressed back far behind its original starting-point, into a condition of moral and intellectual darkness and of horrors unspeakable. Only by the persistent fight against error and evil, wherever met, has the world been preserved from that fate and evolved into even its present imperfect condition of good balancing evil and making a certain measure of progress possible for the peoples.

It requires courage, both moral and physical courage, to challenge some popular fallacy and expose an accepted but corrupting doctrine, or to fight against the stream of public opinion when it has set in a particular direction, or to criticise adversely some venerated teacher. The mild tolerance that prefers to stand aside from the battle is far the easiest attitude to assume, and the most comfortable; but it is in its essence a cowardly attitude, however much it may appeal at first to

that love of freedom of thought and of action for all which it is intended to express.

We may be tolerant of evil because we are quite indifferent to its results, so long as we ourselves are not affected by them. Many persons have no very active convictions on any subject, and can feel tolerant to all without an effort, because their minds are almost a blank in regard to those questions.

Intolerance is the forcing upon others the course of action, or the line of thought that appears right for ourselves, even the forcing on others of moral laws they do not choose to observe. So long as an individual harms only himself by his thoughts and actions, he has the right to do wrong if he elects to ; he has the right to go even to the lowest hell if he so desires ; but when the wrong thought or the evil action affects even one other member of the human family, the community possesses a logical right to coerce and restrain the individual who thus harms his neighbours, and to restrict his liberty to do wrong for himself and others.

Man is put on earth between the two conflicting influences of good and of evil in order to evolve for himself a character in which the good or the evil shall prevail, and to fix which condition in the next stage of life he is to occupy. Freedom of choice is always his, but those who have travelled the road before him, and who know all the pitfalls and quagmires and illusions he will meet with, have laid on them the burden of warning those who are

following, and then they should stand aside while the individual makes his own choice as to which path he will take.

No one may ask, "Am I my brother's keeper?" All are the guardians of those who are more ignorant, less clear of sight, less ripe as spirits.

The watchman on the tower is set there to be the herald of the approaching danger to those who are working and not watching. The watchman is not there to chronicle the pleasant things of daily life he sees spread out before him in a fair panorama of beauty. He wastes his time if he allows those fair things to attract his notice and beguile him from his watch for the danger signals.

Wherefore it is that the watchman is always the herald of evils, the one who cries the warning words into the ears of the careless, and happy when no danger can be discerned from a lower altitude than the watchtower; and, therefore, it is that the world which likes pleasant things, and to be left in peaceful enjoyment of them, is so slow to take alarm when the pioneers of the community give the signal of the danger approaching, and that so often are the great mass of people overwhelmed in the catastrophe, despite the existence of the watchmen on their outposts in the wilderness or on the city walls.

Never yet has a "world-change" come without these warnings, and never will there fail to be people who refuse to see a danger till it has engulfed them.

All reformations have been at times when great

changes were due upon the earth, and always to the bold souls, who were steadfast in their fight against evil, has it been due that a remnant has come out of the cyclone of destruction and remained to found a new line of evolution upon the ruins of the old.

So far from it being a merit to practise a wide toleration of all of the good or of the evil things, it becomes a sin when by that toleration a multitude are lost who might have been given the choice of paths and warned of what was evil and dangerous.

In the sense of there being a moral responsibility resting upon each one—mortal in the flesh or discarnate spirit alike—in relation to his neighbours, and in the special responsibility to warn that rests upon anyone who knows that a certain path or a certain line of psychic development ends only in a dark gulf, a moral quagmire, that cannot be escaped if the road is followed beyond a certain point, it may truly be said that each man is his brother's keeper, and none by excessive tolerance or philosophic indifference may escape that responsibility.

In relation to this book, and to the assertions that will be made later on in its sequel concerning the effects upon the spiritual evolution of the soul of man that result from following out *certain lines of psychic development*, it must be stated here that the original members of the coterie, among whom this book and its companion volumes may be said to have been born, are all on the other side of life

now, and have reaped in their own persons the fruits of the paths they followed on earth. They speak from knowledge, not from theoretical argument.

Much of the information that has come from them, to those members of the circle who now represent their line of labours, has been held in abeyance till the fullest confirmation had been obtained by the earthly friends. The testimony of a father, a brother, a friend, and co-worker in the field of mediumship carries with it a special value, because the identity of the communicating spirit being known there is at once confidence felt in his honour and his knowledge.

In many cases years elapsed before the spirit friend could communicate—various reasons were given for this—in other cases the return and the message given were very prompt. Where actual return in tangible form was not possible there were communications through intermediate sources, sometimes through stranger mediums not previously known to the circle; and there was the transmission of messages, through the mental mediumship of one or two of the survivors.

A spirit arriving in the next sphere is very like a man arriving from a long, hard journey, and requires a rest and to acclimatise himself to his new conditions before taking up the burden of active existence again.

A spirit, on the other hand, who is only on the earth plane, and consequently within the elemental

astral envelope of the Earth, is like a man who puts off his outer garment and lives henceforth in the more attenuated envelope of the most material astral elemental condition that is described as "earth-bound." The process is so simple that some spirits hardly lose consciousness in thus freeing themselves from the mortal form. These spirits can very readily and very soon communicate.

The mistake they often make is in believing they are truly discarnate spirits. They are not ; they are spirits who are only in a finer earth form. These cannot give true pictures of the real spirit world—only of their own section of the elemental plane.

These earth-bound spirits are the workers on their plane when they are conscious and active. Some are, however, quite unconscious and in a state akin to sleep.

When the older members of the small group of students, whose experiences gave the first foundations for this book, passed into spirit life they made various discoveries as to its conditions and their own, and those nearest the Earth and in the Elemental-astral Plane have done much to assist in showing its true conditions, and in explaining the nature and origin of some of those unfortunate experiences of which nearly all psychics have had painful cognisance.

The story of the astral era of our Earth's evolution came from another source, and was given many years ago. All that relates to the astral body

and the astral world, with the ending of that era and the evolution of the earth planet into material objectivity, the study of the conditions of the elemental-astral planes and the source of the power of the adepts, was given by a spirit who claimed to have been one of the masters of magic in the past. He gave certain particulars as to his life-story and identity that proved correct.

He stated that the publication of his manuscript would be an atonement on his part for his share in propagating some of the errors he now desired to expose, and that other ancient spirits are also seeking to undo their errors or misdeeds by helping the cause of true knowledge.

Nothing but good has ever resulted from the controlling influence of this spirit, only help and protection have been the result of reposing confidence in him, and more than one psychic has found that through his warnings and by his help the pitfalls and entanglements of the Astral-elemental Plane were avoided. These books are published as a tribute to his labours on behalf of mankind, as well as an attempt to make those labours fruitful in saving many psychic persons who are rushing into danger to-day.

Very many years ago, before Theosophy began to expound its teachings concerning the astral plane and the astral body, this old spirit gave his teachings on all those subjects, but his manuscript seemed too strange and too impossible to find acceptance and publication. It was not till more

recent years that the truth in that old manuscript became apparent, and was made the foundation upon which this and the succeeding volumes are built up. The relation between all those conditions of the astral era and our present Earth, as traced out in the manuscript by the old spirit, were found to be correct when tested by experiments and experiences. These books have been kept back for years while investigations were being carried on, and not, indeed, till the friends here discovered *for themselves*, through *independent* sources, the truths that lay buried in the old manuscript, was there an opportunity for publishing it in this revised form.

By that time the old spirit came no more to show his psychic the wonders of the astral world and the astral plane, but other manuscripts in which those wonders were recorded remain, and are available for far more extensive explanations of the subject than are given in this volume.

The whole line of studies these books represent was an honest attempt to obtain knowledge by independent experiments. These volumes will not contain borrowings or appropriations from the labour; of any other psychics. Nothing is given that has not come direct to the seers. Experiences that will be referred to in the later volumes are taken from actual cases; nothing is asserted that has not been carefully revised and tested to prove whether it came from a true or a false source of information on either side of life. In giving the

account of the Astral Era, and its consequences to the people of the Physical Era, the teachings of the old spirit are given unaltered, although a little abbreviated.

To write a book making assertions that from their very nature, as relating to the subtle unseen forces of the universe, and the use made of them by spirits and by "Masters" in the flesh, cannot be proved before a jury, will carry little weight with the world; but if those who read these books can, from their own experiences, recognise the signposts of danger given therein; or can accept the explanations of the vague, half-recognised consciousness of evil and of danger which many psychic students have, but hardly like to heed till some one else gives voice to them; or if they can corroborate the truth of the theories advanced in explanation of those things of doubtful import that they have experienced; or can accept as logical the solutions given as throwing light upon the vexed problems of psychic development, great support is given to the cause of truth by their independent testimony.

It is hoped that a large number of persons can testify to the truth contained in these books, and in that hope the books are sent forth to meet the opposition and the criticisms that must be expected where the statements conflict with the theories and teachings of the Oriental and kindred schools of occult thought that are now so dominant an influence in the psychic world.

Great is, however, the power of Truth. In the name of God, may the truth in these books prevail and carry conviction to those who read them with an open mind.

NOTE AS TO AUTHORSHIP OF THIS BOOK.

The original author of these books was a Venetian Jew. He travelled much, studied many subjects, practised medicine as a profession, and made music his recreation. He was a man of wide experience and broad sympathies, but did not identify himself with any special line of religious or philosophic thought.

He died very suddenly, leaving an enormous mass of manuscripts that represent his life-work in regard to investigations on the occult planes, to be published by his friends as his last request.

There are materials grouped into books, but not prepared for publication, as well as a quantity of manuscripts, that are intended to supply the materials for replies to the criticisms and contradictions his theories will encounter.

To give his identity would not help the books. A great name is a powerful introduction, but, after all, every book must make its own appeal to the individual judgment of each mind, and the fact that the author is not here to accept the personal responsibility for the books as presented now by others, who have had to, practically, rewrite them from his materials, makes it unfair even to him to call the book his alone.

The value of the materials he left in manuscript, and the light they throw on the vexed problems of psychic control, fully justifies their publication.

The Problems of Mediumship

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE GREAT UNIVERSE AND THE TRINITY IN UNITY

IN order to understand the psychic evolution of our planet—Earth—it is necessary to study, first of all, the evolution of the Universe, of which our Earth forms so minute a part, because our planet is a miniature universe in itself, and possesses some portion of every element found in the Great Universe that stretches away in boundless magnificence far beyond man's power to measure its extent, that which man sees being but a fraction of the whole.

Every planet is, in fact, a miniature universe, and as each individual gives character to his personality by specialising certain features of his development, so every planet evolves certain features that remain the characteristics of it and its Spirit Spheres, and show that it has received a preponderance of development in one or other of the great primal elements that constitute the Universe.

The prevalent teachings have been that there are only two great primal elements, or "first cause" of creation. Mind, which is Spirit, and Matter in which Spirit gives objective expression to all

things created in Matter, from our Earth to all the countless stars that gem the midnight sky.

Of late, however, the idea that there are three primal elements has begun to find expression in the writings of various occult teachers, who all claim originality for the idea, and in the oldest of all religions—now virtually extinct—there were the traditions concerning three great stars, or suns, each a distinct element showing its own individual colour, and all three in combination producing the Great Universe.

The mystic doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, the Three in One, and the One in Three, has thus, in the objective half of creation, found expression in the three great primal elements. While many mystical interpretations of the Three in One are given by various religions in relation to the mental aspect, and the influence of the Three upon the evolution of the moral nature of man, the influence of the elements as mere automatic machinery for the evolution of the objective demonstration of the Universe, has become obscured and lost in the multiplication of doctrines evolved by the religious minds in explanation of the meaning of the Trinity.

The development of the properties of each element forms the purpose of their separate individual evolution, and is completed by the final union of the Three in One harmonious whole.

The force of attraction that draws the three elements together, and holds them in harmonious

combination, is counterbalanced by an equally strong opposition that causes them to separate again. Thus the individuality of each is preserved by giving to each its separate immortality.

At the one extreme the positive opposition, which is due to their totally dissimilar characteristics, causes a strong repulsion, amounting even to antagonism, and at the other the negative receptive character of the same elements gives a condition of passivity that admits of amalgamation with the opposite temperament and qualities, and results in the union and blending of all.

In objective Creation GOD THE FATHER, as Creator, Ruler, Sustainer, may be said to express His power through these three primal elements.

GOD THE SON, begotten of His Father, expresses (in this relation) the created Universe, with man made in the image of his Maker, exemplified by man of the many types yet one dominant feature, of whom Adamite man is on our Earth the representative with the angels, who are of the man type also, and the Messiah, or true God-Man, as the highest expression of that Sonship with God the Father.

GOD THE HOLY GHOST, or the Immortal Essence, is that element of pure spirituality that radiates from the Father, and gives life and immortality to every living thing throughout creation.

GOD THE ONE SUPREME, is Father-Creator of all, in whom the other members of the Trinity find union and immortality.

This is a brief outline of the correspondence between the Trinity of the Higher Soul and its reflection in that Lower Soul of the Universe as represented in the primal elements. Many volumes might be written to give even a tithe of the aspects which the mystery of the Trinity—the Three in One—present to the student of the psychic side of creation and its relation to the objective condition.

THE THREE PRIMAL ELEMENTS are called—

- I. THE PHYSICAL ELEMENT: that is, Matter, and all that belongs to objective demonstration in its most dense condition in the Universe.
- II THE ASTRAL ELEMENT: the vehicle of thought, and the element which unites mind to matter, or to the physical.
- III. THE SPIRIT ELEMENT: which is called *the Soul* as expressing the Immortal Unit, and *spirit* as an all-pervading essence that radiates from the Divine, and gives immortality to all that is created, or given form and substance in the two inferior elements.

These three primal elements of creation must not be confounded with what are commonly called the four elements: *Air, Water, Fire, Earth*; because these four are all objective to man's material senses, and are all existing in that objective condition on the Earth.

These four are merely evolutions of the two subordinate elements of the Universal Trinity.

Water and Air belong to the Astral Element.

Earth and Fire belong to the Physical Element.

They are transmuted into material objectivity, as the four elements of Earth, through the combination of the astral fluids with the physical fires, and the resultant reaction which this combination produced upon the dense matter of the physical globe.

The three primal elements have existed, exist now, and will exist, through eternity, as three separate and dissimilar elements, each containing within itself all that is required for the complete evolution of a world representative of the peculiar characteristics of the one element in which it has evolved. At the same time, it must also be remembered, that a world may evolve in one element after another, and thus find the perfect trinity of power.

Hence, there could be a world that represented the astral condition only, or the physical condition only ; or, again, a world that had evolved only in the spiritual element, and had never known expression in either of the other conditions ; but, as spirit is the all-pervading essence of immortality, that essence would require to be present in both the astral and the physical worlds. It is the presence of the soul which gives independent life to the forms created in the other elements.

The Universe that man sees, and which astro-

nomy describes as extending in all probability far beyond even the range of the most powerful telescope, is merely a portion of the host of worlds existing in the globe of the Physical Element ; for it is in the Physical Element that the Earth planet exists at present. The other globes of the Astral Element and of the Element of Pure Spirit are not in any way visible, although analogy teaches that they do exist, and seers who possess a high degree of spiritual clairvoyance can see them. Moreover, our Earth gives evidence, to the occult student, of the possession of an element other than that of either spirit or matter.

Clairvoyance also perceives the three elements in one vast combination, with our solar system as a minute speck, scarcely discernible except as a small sun centre, or bright star.

Concentration upon that star alone shows it to be a solar system with attendant planets, and the Earth, as the point of interest, emerges from the vision of that solar system.

In attempting to give presentments of things seen by clairvoyance, only the broadest features can be shown, and that without the marvellous interblending of the three elements, which all attempts to describe the mystic Three in One must fail to convey, since there are no terms by which to express a spiritual mystery, nothing in material life by which to compare it, or present to mortal minds the spiritual appearance of a Universe as well as its physical conditions.

The three globes are each of a distinct colour ; the three primal colours from which all the others are formed by combinations.

Surrounding these three globes is a ring of light that is ever varying and changing into myriad tints of a rainbow so delicate, so beautiful, so varied, and so ethereal, that no rainbow seen on Earth can more than faintly indicate what the spiritual rainbow is, and reproduce its more dominant shades of colour.

THIS RAINBOW OF LIGHT has the appearance of being a ring when seen with the three globes it encircles, but in reality it is an envelope of misty vapours that encloses the three in a complete covering of multi-coloured radiance, and is produced by the emanations from the globes themselves. It is, in fact, the aura of the Universe, and the multitude of colours is produced by the blending and separating, and blending again, of the colours belonging to each globe separately, and to all in combination—the Three in One and One in Three of the elements.

The Rainbow Light has a deep significance to the psychic student, and gives the key to the conditions of spirit life.

In the complete spectrum it indicates the highest attainment of harmonious unity in the spirit ego. That perfect attainment, however, belongs to the spirits of the Universe alone, and is only possessed by spirits who have found expression in all the elements in turn, and have entered the Divine sphere.

A reflection of the Rainbow Light is often seen by clairvoyants as surrounding spirits, and even persons in the flesh, but *it is only a reflection*, and, instead of indicating the attainment of power in all the elements, the rainbow, *as a reflection*, shows a dangerous condition of affiliation to those elemental conditions in which all colours are mingled in fragmentary and broken successions, the rags of colours left by the disintegration of partially evolved entities.

Within the rainbow three distinct rings, or rather envelopes, of the primal colours may be noticed, and that they blend and form the complete spectrum as they float outwards; the blended colours finally melt into white and a colourless vapour of exceeding clarity as of glass, or rather of liquid air.

This transparent sheath is interposed between the rainbow light that envelops the Universe, and a background of a darkness so intense the blackness of a funereal pall hardly expresses the sombre aspect of its fathomless depths.

In the Universe there is for ever a tremendous activity, a perpetual motion, an interchanging and blending of the elements and of the colours of the elements which causes them to be perpetually reborn in fresh combinations, and it is this continual action and reaction that generates the vital essences by which all the life of the Universe is sustained. The elements in the rainbow cloud are the supply-source of all living things. Each shade

of colour is seen to possess affinity to some type of entity and to certain individualities.

Sometimes the waves of light separate into the three distinct colours, and float as veils enveloping each its own globe, again as vivid contrasts, and anon melting and blending in softest shades of harmony; then, as long rays of light flashing from point to point, or uniting in long ribbons of colour to form the rainbow arch. The activity of this enclosing mantle of light serves to disturb the stagnation of the dark region in which the Universe appears to float, and by breaking up its stagnation and its dense cloud masses, prevents them from closing in over the Universe, and submerging it in those vast sullen, silent, well-nigh stagnant depths.

That vast ocean of darkness is called "the Region of Chaos," the realm of night, of disintegration and fusion of all things drawn into it; a region of Death, because it causes the annihilation of all that gives individuality and permanence.

In Chaos all elements are found floating in a condition of disintegration, instead of in distinct form, or as a combination harmoniously blended. They are seen in disorder, confusion, aimlessly drifting on that dark sea where such sluggish motion as can be discerned consists in the slow movement of the dull mass of darkness towards the attraction of the radiant, vivid Universe.

Against the transparent sheath and the bright rainbow cloud the dark tide surges continually, only

to be broken up by its spear-like flashes of light, and driven back, leaving some of its disintegrated elements on those luminous shores around which the sombre Ocean of Chaos drifts.

Throughout all the Universe law and order reign, but in Chaos there is neither, only this apparent force of attraction and repulsion following each other with rhythmical precision, and an aimless drifting to and fro round the focus of attraction. Beyond the influence of this attraction there is absolute stagnation that appears to result in petrification, instead of dissolution, for even dissolution entails some action, and Chaos is an utterly dead region of dense impenetrable darkness, like a pall cutting off all power of further exploration of Infinitude, which must extend beyond even that veil of darkest night.

Many and fantastic have been the theories concerning the region of Chaos. Where it extends none can tell us; even spirits from the highest spheres say it forms an impenetrable veil between the mighty Universe and some vast Beyond, to which one can give no boundaries; but, nevertheless, wide as is the Universe and this great encircling Ocean of Chaos, there must be something beyond, and that it is possible that Chaos is the barrier between our Universe, of which the solar system in which our Earth revolves is so finite a part, and a yet more vast scheme of creation—another Universe existing in Infinitude.

It may also be that the elements found drifting

on the shores of our Universe are the cast-off elements, the reliquia of some other worlds that have long since passed from the conditions known to the mortals and spirits of our Universe, and that the great law of change and progression into new forms and fresh conditions that are seen operating in everthing known to us is, in its infinitely wider application, responsible for the conditions found in Chaos.

In effect, this ocean of darkness separates us from the vast Beyond as seas separate continents on Earth, and give to each its separate individuality, its opportunities to evolve originality in its types and conditions. The probability is that our Universe, self-contained within its own sheath or armour, is but one of similar schemes of creation forming units in an ever-extending, ever-expanding series of examples of the Creator's power. That all alike have had their origin in, and derive their sustenance from, a Divine and Immortal Being, the true Great First Cause, the ultimate source and centre of a creation that has a centre but no limits to the possibilities of future creations, no end to its eternal existence, no boundaries to the radiations from that Centre of the Divine Creator's power.

No spirit can truthfully tell us more than this. Some profess to have seen endless series of universes, extending into Infinitude, and give multiple details ; but in fact no spirit in communication with the Earth has seen beyond the veil that limits our Universe for our powers of sight. The vast extent

of our Universe offers in itself sufficient problems for the spirits, even of the highest spheres, to solve. Neither can any spirit truthfully say he has seen the ULTIMATE CENTRE : THE GOD-HEAD.

Certain spirits claim that they have beheld the One Supreme. That must be left as an open question ; but as the Divine Soul is in all the Creator's works, and the inspirations of Divine Truth are the birthright of all, the power to conceive with the mental faculties a vision of God, who is Supreme Spirit, may be given to those who are sufficiently advanced to be spiritually in affinity with the Divine.

Man, we are told, is made in the image of God, and a dim consciousness of the glory of the Divine Appearance would naturally be sometimes vouchsafed to man's ardent aspirations for communion with his Creator.

* * *

THE GLOBES OF THE ELEMENTS.

I. THE PHYSICAL GLOBE.—Since the Earth, with its spirit spheres, duplicates the leading features of the great Universe, and will in its final evolution possess the three primal elements in perfected combination, the nature of each element, and the influence which it has had, and is having, on the development of the Earth now, and of the men and the things upon it, becomes a very important subject to study, as giving the key to

the course of evolution our planet has already known, and to that which it is to receive and follow hereafter.

In order to obtain the three elements, it is necessary to experience evolution in each separately, in order that the character of each may be given clearly ; just as one colour is thrown upon a screen, and then the next is sent to follow it when the first has been given full measure of time to leave its impress.

Our Earth at present is in the conditions of the Physical Element, and the Sun, round which we revolve, is in the globe of the Physical Element, and is the parent sun for our Earth, as it is for all of its own group of planets that are now experiencing their physical expression. The whole expanse of the heavens that astronomy recognises is in that physical globe and in the physical condition. Our Earth being in the physical stage of its evolution, that element should be first reviewed.

This element is shown as concentrated into a vast globe, whose constituents give materiality, objectivity, and physical force to all that is within its confines.

The dominant colour of this globe is RED, in varying shades, from deep rose-red to palest pink, where the negative colour—white—blends with it ; SCARLET and flame colours, changing to brick-red, and then brown, where the dense matter of the lowest expression of physical life comes into contact with the Ocean of Chaos.

THE ASTRAL ELEMENT.—The dominant colour of this element is BLUE, because blue is the colour of the mental powers, and the astral element in itself is colourless, so that any colour that it shows is always merely a reflection of some attribute of the thing reflected ; and mind, being the dominant influence over the Astral Element, that which is in true affinity to it, the colour of the mental faculties, gives the blue to the astral globe. At its higher pole the Astral Element emits a pure, colourless ray that finally becomes tinted with the gold of the spiritual globe. It shows first as a pale blue, becoming silver where the negative white is reflected in it, and then as pure silver.

Lastly, the ray becomes a white, silvery flame. That silvery flame is the pure spirit of the Astral Element in its highest expression. At its lowest expression, or pole pointing to Chaos, the blue becomes dark, dull, steel-coloured, then ashen-grey, and finally is lost in the blackness reflected from the region of darkness.

The Astral Element being the vehicle for thought transmission, and the element in which mental creations find objective demonstration apart from the Physical Element, the various shades of blue and of grey that are seen in the auras of mortals or the robes of a spirit indicate the degree to which the higher or the lower influences of this element dominate those individuals.

The Astral Element, in uniting mind to matter, is the intermediary between those extreme con-

ditions. Mind, as the attribute of the Divine Personality, could control matter without an intermediary, since all power is an attribute of the Divine ; but God rules His Universe by laws that He has given for its regulation and progression, and one law is that *mind cannot act directly upon matter, but requires the intervention of this Astral Element*, and so *mind does not enter into matter*, except through the agency of the intermediate element.

Matter belongs to the lower polarity of the Physical Element ; mind belongs to the higher polarity, in whatever element it expresses itself ; and until the Astral Element forms an intermediate condition uniting the two neither can affect the other. Thus a spirit cannot lift a table, nor move a rock, purely by the impetus of his will-power ; but when the will-force acts on the sensitive, uniting Astral Element, the action of mind on matter is accomplished.

Because the astral has this power, in uniting two opposite forces, it is the vehicle of the magic arts, the phenomena producer in the alchemist's laboratory or in the science room ; for the pious Hindu, or for the Red Indian medicine-man. In this the Astral Element has a power that belongs to itself alone.

THE SPIRITUAL ELEMENT (the Soul) is the essence of immortality ; the animating, sustaining force of all life. It permeates the other elements, and gives them their immortality. It is the One in the Three—the Supreme Element.

AS THE SOUL, this element expresses itself as an essence, giving to all things power to exist as *units of the great whole*.

AS THE SPIRIT, it expresses the individual unit, the separate personality that can exist apart from any bodily form of any element, except that of the spiritual.

SOUL and SPIRIT are one, yet can be separated into two expressions of the one essence.

THE COLOUR OF THE SPIRITUAL ESSENCE is yellow, or rather GOLD, as its highest expression, with white at its most negative condition.

POLARITY OF THE GLOBES.—These globes of the elements each show the existence of polar attraction as influencing their conditions. Each has its higher and its lower pole, which may be said to correspond to the North and South Pole of the Earth, in that there is a constant interchange of magnetism of negative and of positive character between them. These two polarities control the lower and the higher influences and conditions of the elements of each globe.

The centre of a Universe, being the ultimate goal of all evolution in the Universe, and representative of the Divine Source of all life, is the highest state to which the spirit can attain, and therefore the higher poles of each element are found to point to that central zone; the lower poles, being farthest from it, touch the rainbow light that envelops all the Universe, and point

to the region of Chaos than which no lower condition can be known.

The study of the influence which polarity exerts over all evolution is so important, and so interblended with every condition of evolution, that again and again its operations must be traced, not alone through one stage, but throughout all. The polarisation of each globe holds all its constituents in cohesion. The lower pole also serves to attract from Chaos such of the disintegrated elements as are in affinity with it, thus recovering and using again the lost fragments floating in that sombre sea. The powerful magnets in the lower poles revivify the waste materials, and utilise them in forming the suns and planets and stars ; while the higher poles attract the finer essence of the elements.

THE CORE OF EACH ELEMENT is the point at which the essence is found in its most highly concentrated condition, and the source from which power is radiated.

The Physical Element is in its own nature the farthest from that type of mentality that belongs to the spirit. It is the least sensitive and least responsive of the three. In its lowest expression as matter it is a dull, formless mass, with no features ; but in its highest expression it is radiant energy personified. Combined together these two conditions possess great formative power.

THE CORE OF THE PHYSICAL ELEMENT represents perpetual activity—unresting, untiring—and

the constant generation of vital force—electricity, fire.

Strong physical power always manifests itself in active movements, often in conflicts with anything that opposes it and obstructs its movements. It is aggressive, usurping, dominating. It creates, builds up, and then destroys the things it has created, and re-creates them in a new form. Hence, the core of the Physical Element appears as a sun-centre of stupendous activity, where repose would be impossible, and in which all the constituents of physical life and its organisms are being fused and vitalised and cast forth with tremendous violence and raging energy.

By one action this sun-centre attracts its own element to itself, and by a contrary action ejects it again in a constant stream, vitalised and charged with the magnetic force of that glowing, palpitating heart of this globe, to flow through the whole realm of physical existences, and charge with life and with power of growth in objectivity all those countless solar systems, star clustres, planets, and worlds—every form of life that is within the vast realm of the physical globe.

The Sun, round which the Earth revolves, is the direct offspring of the Physical Element, and as such is a great store-house of physical energy, a powerful magnet to attract the vital force from the fiery core of the Physical Element. To the Sun the Earth owes its material life, and from this far vaster storehouse the Sun, as only one of

many solar systems, draws its power of sustaining the Earth and the other planets in material forms.

The physical is the simplest, least complicated of the elements ; its operations follow mechanical laws, fixed routines that are tangible and easily discovered, quickly followed and grasped in their train of evolution. It is not difficult to study physical nature once the key to it is found, and the future may be safely predicted from the past until physical evolution encounters and falls under the control of the other elements. Then begin those variants on the automatic routine that have produced so great a change in the normal physical routine, and given such myriads of individual types of life in all stages of the Earth's evolution.

THE CORE OF THE ASTRAL ELEMENT is the exact counterpoise to the glowing fiery core of the physical. It is seen as a beautiful fixed star, of intense brilliance and great magnitude, because its condition of repose allows of the consolidation and multiplication of its light, giving the light power to exercise sway, so that its soft light is diffused almost to the limits of its globe.

THE ASTRAL STAR CENTRE does not create anything ; its realm of passive repose gives only a sleep that has the stillness of death, yet is far removed from the annihilation of death ; for the Astral Element preserves, it does not destroy. The power of the astral largely consists in reflecting, as in a mirror or in a still pool, the creations of the

other elements, especially the mental creations. The truth, the wisdom, the beauty of the highest thoughts from the highest minds, are received on the sensitive astral mirror, and remain as crystallised images, thought pictures, that are thus depicted and preserved for eternity's imperishable records.

Strictly speaking, a star is a heavenly body that reflects the light from the Sun ; the Sun being the generator of life and light, and the star the receiver. The Astral or " Star " Element does not CREATE, but only preserves the creations of the physical and the spiritual, which are both creators on different planes—the physical creating form, the spirit giving life, the astral consolidating and preserving their creations. Were it not for the steadying and preserving properties of the Astral Element when joined to the physical, the restless activity and destructive properties of the physical would prevent its creations from attaining maturity.

Intense cold characterises the astral fluids, as intense heat characterises the physical fires. The astral worlds appear as worlds of ice and snow, but with a transparent beauty beyond the power of ice or snow to represent. If the core of the Physical Element is a glowing furnace, the core of the Astral Element is as a diamond scintillating with brilliant lights.

The intense cold of the astral magnetism is due to this icy reservoir, from whence it radiates

throughout all its own globe, and floats tranquilly over the outer rings in soft waves of vapour, like veils of white and silver mists, and glistens on everything objective with myriad rays of pure light, till they seem as the frost flowers that sparkle in the brightest moonlight.

These strange ethereal wraiths of vapour become also the garments of light in which the astral spirits clothe their forms in shining robes that no words can describe. And always the heart of this lovely star realm is as a calm, clear, frozen pool, in which the soul of all things may be mirrored in perfect beauty, perfect truth.

It is the astral light in its purity by which mental clairvoyance is enabled to read thoughts, receive inspirations from other minds, and transmit thought messages to or from all conditions of material existence. When slightly mixed with the Physical Element, the astral fluid assumes a faint, milky tint, and gives objective clairvoyance. When the mind is concentrated in meditation, the affinity of the astral for the mental causes its fluids to flow towards the mind thus concentrated, and to illuminate the aura of the "thinker" with its soft light, so that the mirror-like qualities of this astral light serve as a medium, in which not only mental images, but spiritual realities, can be shown to the clairvoyant, who can thus "see" on the mental planes.

It is this astral fluid that gives the state of suspended animation, the stillness of the trance-

sleep, in which everything is preserved and held in a condition of negation.

Mixed with the physical element, this astral fluid undergoes many changes, and in its impure condition on the elemental plane of the Earth becomes the vehicle for evil and dangerous manifestations; the astral element in itself being a negative element, and reproductive of whatever is amalgamated with it.

THE CORE OF THE SPIRITUAL ELEMENT can scarcely be described; so radiant is its appearance that even the eyes of the spirit cannot steadily regard its brightness. Light, life, power, mental illumination—every emotion, from supreme love to deepest hate, find concentration in the heart of the spirit realm; and all find expression: the fires of passion, the light of love, the glory of conquest and of religious fervour.

The heart of this element is both a sun and a star in union. It possesses the extreme positive quality of the Sun and the absolute negative of the Star, and creates the spiritual flame of life and immortality from their union. The power of giving life or death belongs to this spiritual flame that may be seen passing over the individual unit, for whom an entire change of condition is due. It is so life-giving that even Death relaxes its miser's grasp, and yields up the soul imprisoned in the form of clay when that spiritual flame passes over the earthly prison-house. To the embryo form that has never throbbed with life, the spiritual flame gives

independent existence, separate identity, and pervades the whole Universe with the essence of immortality. From the instant that the spiritual fire touches any created thing it becomes a distinct unit, and as such is heir of immortality, however humble may be its status in the realm of creation. The other elements clothe the unit and give it expression in form, but only the Divine essence of the spirit can give immortality. The other elements may be separated from the unit and dissolved into elements again, but once the soul has entered any unit of creation it remains as its integral part for ever.

The all-pervading nature of the soul essence might give the impression that it would require no special globe of its own, but that impression would be erroneous, because the spiritual is found existing, not only in everything, but also apart from everything, in its own pure element alone. It has its separate identity in the Trinity, as well as its harmonious unity, and it is found in the globe of spirit essence only, unmixed with either of the other elements.

THE POLARITY OF THE SPIRITUAL GLOBE dominates and controls the higher and lower polarities of the other elements, and determines the conditions in each.

The Spiritual Essence is positive in its higher polarity, and negative in its lower. *Negative*, it is the immortal essence permeating the Universe, all unindividualised entities, and the lower types of

creation ; it is the soul of the nature-realm. *Positive*, it is the dominant force that gives character, moulds the destiny, and is the spirit ego of the higher type, which is the man-type of creation.

As the ABSOLUTE EGO, the higher soul is both good and evil ; moral responsibility, which belongs only to the higher type, introduces factors that are absent from the evolution and the irresponsible condition of the lower soul.

The term "higher soul" is used as expressing the responsible individuality of the man-type of created life. Only man belongs to this type. Every type below man belongs to the polarity of the lower soul.

The higher soul may be characterised by either moral or immoral attributes, for the status of the higher soul, as the superior, is not due to its own achievements, but to its type, which is derived from the angels, and through them from God, in Whose image man and the angels—and as we are expressly told, only man and the angels—are made. The condition in which man as a spirit will find himself hereafter will be the result of his moral or immoral development, but his soul will still be of the higher type whichever path he has followed. Ultimate triumph of good over evil is the highest ideal, and gives the most perfect condition attainable ; but, although an individual soul, if it elects to follow the path of evil rather than of good will thereby sink into the domain of the lower polarities that interlude will not alter the type to which the

man-soul belongs, nor destroy the affinity of this type of soul to the higher polarities. Hence, ultimate return to the higher status is always possible to every man-soul, however low he may sink, however vile he may become.

The man-type always represents the higher soul, even in a condition of great degradation. The lower soul is represented by all the nature-realm—all living entities other than the man-types. The lower soul is always found in subjection to the higher, even among savage races.

The Earth planet, as an independent unit, into which the essence of the spirit has passed, possesses immortality as an individual planet. Although the forms of all things on Earth are destined to change and pass away, their spiritual counterparts will continue to exist in a higher condition as appendages of the higher soul that has been identified with all things during the material stage of their evolution.

The Earth is, therefore, rightly described as possessed of a soul—that *anima mundi* of the Ancients. It is a collective subordinate soul, belonging to all the lower polarities. When the final evolution of the Earth planet is accomplished, and it has passed through the final etherealisation of the purely spiritual element, it will, with its spirits of every type and class, pass into that Divine centre, which is the ultimate Heaven of our Universe. The limiting phrase, “our Universe,” is used, because, as already stated, we have every reason to believe there is an “ultimate centre of Divine

life " existing somewhere, quite beyond the power of thought to fix its position.

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THE DIVINE CENTRE OF OUR UNIVERSE is, at the innermost point of the triangle, formed by the higher poles of each of the three globes of the elements. It is a region of multi-coloured light, reproducing the rainbow ring once more, but as much more ethereal than the outer rainbow as that arc of light transcends the merely earth-born rainbow ; and in the very heart of the Divine realm there is a suffusion of exquisitely beautiful golden and silvery luminosity that shimmers through the rainbow as through a veil. That Inner Radiance is that highest Heaven, which eyes cannot see, nor words describe.

In the attempt to give even an approximate idea of the Universe, the very effort to show the relation of one part to another has the effect of seeming to limit that which is a well-nigh limitless realm for mortal thought, and this centre of Divine life is vast beyond words to convey, or the calculations of the mathematicians to gauge ; when we repeat that our whole solar system is but a finite speck, a point of light in that enormous Universe, we still convey but a feeble idea of its magnitude.

The rainbow cloud that encircles the Divine centre, and touches the poles of the elements, is called *the Inner Plane of Expression*. Between this plane and the *Outer Plane of Expression* there is a

continual interchange of elements—a travelling out from the inner plane of negative soul units of the higher polarity, and the return of positive individualities from their pilgrimage through the experiences of many stages of life.

THE OUTER PLANE OF EXPRESSION is a wide belt of active life, situated between the extreme poles of each element, and girdling the Universe as the imaginary line of the Equator encircles the Earth, and gives to it a tropical region of extreme productivity.

All the inorganic, negative, unindividualised elements of the lower soul polarities are drawn up to this Plane of Expression to find there definite form and type.

All the positive, organic, individual units, that are the direct offspring of the higher soul polarities, are drawn from the Inner Plane of Expression, to find, on that Outer Plane of Expression, independent power of thought and of action, and of conscious, responsible existence ; to reap the harvest of moral or immoral lives ; to develop intellectual powers, and conquer all inferior conditions, or be conquered by them.

This wide Plane of Expression incircles the whole Universe, but each element that it incircles holds in affinity to itself, and to its own particular part of that zone, all those worlds and suns and individualities that are passing through their evolution in that particular element, *i.e.*, the stage in which that element dominates their evolution.

The evolution of a world, or anything, through a particular element, must not be confused with the *rudimentary*, or elemental, stage of evolution, because the most complete and perfect evolution of a world must be accomplished in one element before it can pass to another ; whereas rudimentary, or elemental, conditions are always unfinished, and are only the preparation for the true and permanent stages.

It is upon the widest part of each globe, and farthest from either pole, that the Plane of Expression is found, for extreme negative, or extreme positive, conditions are always barren of results, because they limit all power of expression, and expression means giving tangibility and life to the thing expressed.

The force of attraction from either pole being less on the Plane of Expression, the possibility of attracting the higher to the lower, or *vice versa*, begins to operate there, and produces an interchange of qualities, a blending of forces, a union of negative to positive. Passage from one polarity to the other is possible ; that which has become affiliated to the higher soul can pass to it from the lower, and be carried by the higher towards the Divine Centre on the return journey to it. On the other hand, the higher soul, as an individuality that has incorporated the conditions of the lower soul and *allowed them to dominate the personality*, will be drawn across the dividing line, and carried down into the lower polarity and into the nature world ;

into the subjective, subordinate conditions of the lower soul.

We speak of downwards in the sense that it is a descent to go into an inferior condition ; while to go upwards means the attainment of a more advanced condition, as setting the individual above and superior to all inferior states. We say we go down into hell, because we deteriorate in doing so, and that we go up into heaven, and in doing so become superior, as the possessors of boundless power of the highest type (*i.e.*, most spiritual type).

Man's life begins at the Inner Plane of Expression ; he finds independent individuality and personal responsibility on the Outer Plane of Expression, and returns again to find his final and highest expression of individual independence in the Divine Centre : for, whereas all things proceed from the Divine in a state of negative "possibilities" and individual immaturity, all things return to the Divine as perfected spirit entities, stamped with the character evolved during their cycles of progress into dominant individualities, and with the powers that they have gained by their own efforts, and which, having been won by each individual for himself, will therefore be retained throughout eternity.

It is the formation of character that gives individuality ; it is individuality that gives and constitutes immortality for each soul.

To teach that any individuality in either the

lower or the higher polarities becomes absorbed finally in the Divine life again, is to teach an error ; for to do that would mean the obliteration of it as a separate ego, whereas the whole aim and object of creation, and of evolution—that means progression—is to give separate independence to every unit in creation, and that *indestructible* individuality that is the very essence of immortality.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN OF OUR PLANET EARTH

IN that vast Outer Plane of Expression, described in outline already, are to be found a multitude of suns, accompanied by their family groups of planets, to which each sun is the parent centre and supply source of physical life.

Each of the three primal elements is the realm for the evolution of worlds in every stage of development, but it is in the physical element that we find family groups of planets and satellites forming a solar system; neither of the other elements shows this feature.

Some of the suns resemble ours; others show marked differences, from which the conclusion may fairly be drawn that the planets in a solar system, like the individuals in a family group, or races and nations, evolve idiosyncrasies of their own in using and combining the universal elements common to all.

Astrologers, and even astronomers, recognise this when they give names to the companion planets of a solar system and to the spirits, or gods, who are supposed to rule the destiny of the planet, and assign particular characters to the influence each radiates.

The presence of a particular planet in a solar

family group does not prove that it is finding its first expression of individuality there. Some of our companion planets are doing so ; others show that they are what may be termed " re-births," after some previous experience of life in another element than the physical one.

A planet that is primarily of the physical evolution will show a superabundance of that type of power and its activities ; our Earth does not do so.

A child shows first the characteristics of its parents, and a world in its first age as an infant world would show the prevailing note of its original form, if it were a re-birth. Our planet, in its earliest ages of this physical era, gave evidence of possessing certain conditions that could not be attributed to the physical element in which it was then existing as a new-born unit ; on the contrary, those conditions were directly foreign to the physical type. Our Earth resembles a shield, with two distinct sides to it, one of which may be called the daylight aspect, and the other the night side of Nature.

If the Earth were a purely physical earth, there is no reason why the night should bring into activity a thousand mysterious things that seem non-existent by day ; that, indeed, show strong antagonism to the powerful rays of the physical sun.

The physical condition dominates our Earth now, but it does not wholly possess it ; and in the

earliest ages there was evidence of another condition that seemed even more dominant. From whence did the Earth derive that other side of its nature ?

Again, if we judged of the Earth's age only from the stage of evolution it has attained now, and the rate at which changes in it take place to-day, and accept the theory that it has evolved thus from a gradually consolidating ball of insensate materials, we would require to assign to it an almost fabulous period during which that long, slow process was taking place.

But, supposing the Earth as we know it to-day is an example of a world that has known existence first in another and more sensitive, more rapidly responsive element than dull, insensate matter, would not that circumstance account for both the curious dual nature of our Earth and also considerably shorten the period that its evolution into its present form matter would entail ? Would it not throw light on the problem of how man, supposed to begin as an aboriginal savage, could have been the constructor of those magnificent palaces, those splendid temples, those wonderful cities, those strange and astonishing monuments whose ruins are scattered all over the Earth.

Re-birth means transition into new conditions. The ego is born again, but into fresh surroundings to obtain a new form of experiences.*

Reincarnation means a return into the old

* See Note on Reincarnation at end

conditions in order to find an opportunity to reverse the former line of evolution, or make reparation for evils done.

Rebirth into successive conditions is a law of the Universe ; but re-birth and reincarnation must not be confused in their relation to progression, nor held to mean one and the same thing.

The great truths contained in these laws has been grasped by the minds of men, and then greatly overworked to fit into all sorts of schemes of creation.

A planet and its people would evolve first into the most perfect condition possible in the one element before being reborn into another ; while man in *reincarnating* is simply gathering round his spirit ego again a form of flesh that in all essentials reproduces his previous body of material elements.

The soul of all things being first purely negative, expressionless, and void of character, is therefore so plastic that it assumes personality from the imprint given by the parents. Never again can the soul be so absolute a negative, and never again does it receive the imprint of character from others. It is the first birth that gives the keynote to the evolution of the soul ; and, while experiences and the development of the individual powers neutralise the effects of that first imprint, they do not obliterate it. The power of this first formative influence is most clearly traceable among those entities where mentality is non-existent,

and responsibility has no share in the process of evolution.

The lower we go in the scale of evolution, the more distinctly do we find evidences of the dual nature of our earth planet, and that the element of the astral globe, and its magnetic conditions, are a powerful formative factor in its physical development, although the physical is now the dominant one, and is becoming more distinctly so with every passing century.

That night side of Nature, when the rays of the physical sun no longer beat down upon the Earth, gives to the astral element a season of control of the nature forces, and bathes the Earth in the consolidating astral fluids, thus enabling embryo life in every form to retain the shape it is assuming ; whereas the strong rays of the Sun would disperse the elemental materials before they had amalgamated into form ; showing that, while the Sun gives life to the matured entity, the embryo stage requires the return into an approximation to that first condition in which the planet Earth itself evolved the seeds of all living things now upon it.

Our Earth owes its types to the evolution of the astral world—our planet's first vehicle of expression in form. The types have varied and expanded into a multiplicity of types, as the materials of Earth were re-created under physical conditions, but in origin they are all of the astral stage of evolution, and all retain affinity to astral influences. The Earth now is contained in the matrix of the old

astral world, and is evolving its spiritual replica in preparation for its final birth into the true spiritual elements.

Our present Earth is not so old as might be expected were all things evolved from insensate formless matter. It would, indeed, require a foretaste of eternity, were the super-sensitive soul of man required to evolve through every form of dull insensate matter up to the ape stage, and then to that of civilised communities.

The astral element, however, affords a vehicle that is at once far more plastic, far more responsive, far closer to the spiritual conditions as a mould in which to shape the original types in all their many and wonderful aspects.

Furthermore, those who base their theories of evolution on the aspect of the Earth as it is to-day forget that it was once an infant world, even in its material development, and that embryo life is far more rapid in its growth than life in its mature stages ; that, in fact, growth in bulk ceases with the attainment of maturity, and there is a period when Nature only reproduces the amount of materials required for sustenance of the developed forms. Then comes a time when less and less is produced, and as age advances reproduction ceases, the form shrinks, and death brings the inevitable change, or translation, into a new condition. The old order passes away, because there is no longer any purpose in its continuance ; a new era has been attained.

Wherefore it is a mistake to measure the age of our Earth by the rate at which changes take place now ; or to judge of past eras of evolution by the present very material stage.

Without any occult theorising, it is quite logical to assume that all life, all types, were evolved more rapidly in the first eras of the present material evolution of our planet ; and that, while the " seven days " of the Biblical account of Creation may well be regarded as periods rather than as days, those periods do not involve such a vast measure of antiquity as the Orientals declare to have elapsed, nor does the Biblical account necessarily preclude the possibility of an astral evolution for a world created *in thought* by the mind, and at the commands of the Supreme Creator.

An astral stage would hasten the process of formation, not interfere with it ; for in a world of the astral element mind would dominate the creation, and all things conceived by the mental powers would find form and expression in that element, which is a million times more responsive than matter. The young Earth would not require to waste its vitalising energies in a constant struggle with the nature forces of the lower polarities ; while the consolidating and preservative properties of the astral element would give completion to all types more rapidly and cause them to remain, instead of wearing away, as all things do under the restless influence of the physical element.

An astral world and its people would reach maturity swiftly, and remain unchanged for certainly very long periods. If we study the astral forms on Earth now, we find that they show this tenacity of identity, and we can understand how those astral seeds from which all physical types are evolved into material existence have survived from the former stage of purely astral creations.

The great Astral-elemental Plane of the Earth now contains a number of astral roots, from which the astral bodies of all types are germinated still.

In early days these roots were much more numerous, and their peculiar properties more strongly demonstrated in the astral envelopes of both men and animals, and there are indications that a period will arrive when the physical element will have almost eliminated its astral partner, and demonstrations on the astral plane become impossible.

At present everything on Earth has its dual envelope—its astral body as well as its physical form—and it is desirable to study the past history of Earth's evolutions and of the astral era.

Persons who accept the account of the Creation, as given in the Bible, may contend that it does not agree with the theory of an astral world and its re-birth into another element ; but there is no real conflict in the two ideas.

It must be remembered that the story of Creation was given to a people in the early ages of the present

Earth, and given in language easily understood by them, and that much would be omitted and much summarised to make a brief, easily comprehended story.

A Supreme God could create a world in seven days, or seven seconds, if he so desired ; but where we see a routine of law and order prevail throughout a Universe, we may assume that Creation follows that routine of laws. To the Ancients the Earth was THE ALL of the Universe, and the story of Creation would, to them, refer only to the Earth. It may have referred to the *Universe* we know, and then to the Earth as it is to-day, and the account given in the Bible be quite accurate, and still admit of an astral-evolved stage before the physical era.

We are told that “ the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, where all was void and darkness.” Is not that the Ocean of Chaos ?

Then follows the account of how light came from the darkness, and life and substance ; form where there was none ; law and order where chaos alone reigned ; the night and the day ; all living things from the mere elements. Stage by stage, each higher than the previous one, the *Universe* we see emerged from the darkness of complete negation. Our Earth was a unit of that Universe.

Then comes the story of our Earth *from the stage at which Adam appears*, because Adam was the man of special interest to his descendants, and the story of Eden was the story that concerned

the people whose position on Earth was due to the sin of the first parents of the physical race.

The story of the redemption of Adam's race is the story of the Earth of to-day, but that does not negative the possibility that the Earth has another story of another race than that of the physical creation ; for in the story of Adam and Eve there is mention of " the Serpent in Eden," and it may fairly be asked, who and what was this serpent who could speak to Eve with the voice of a man ?

No living thing in the lower kingdoms has this power of speech ; they are dumb, so far as the language of man is concerned.

Why were Adam and Eve warned not to eat the fruit of one tree in all that garden ?

The story of the astral world and its ending answers these questions, and gives the key to the mysteries of the Astral-elemental Plane of the Earth to-day ; so that there are many reasons why the story of the astral world has very great interest for the psychic student.

Materialists, and also many persons who believe in the existence of the spirit, deny that there are such things as astral bodies, or astral anything, as a distinct element in Nature ; but there are also other persons who are very conscious of the existence of this astral phase, and it is for them principally that this book is written, because such persons run great dangers from these astral conditions, which do not menace the more strictly " physical " individuals. The astral element, and all that belongs

to it, is a part of the economy of Nature. In its subordinate and natural condition, it serves an important purpose ; it is only when it is given undue development that it becomes a danger.

The theory of evolution loses none of its value, but we must modify its interpretations as applied to the story of the Earth, if we accept the theory that there are three distinct elements in the Universe, and totally different laws of evolution that apply to each ; so that anything created to find expression in one of the elements cannot evolve through the law that applies to a different element ; it must evolve in accordance with the law of its own element, and that element alone. At the same time, there are certain universal laws that apply to evolution in all elements.

In considering the development of the astral body, and of the physical body, this point ought to be especially emphasised, both in its relation to the evolution of an astral world and to the evolution of a physical one.

It must likewise be remembered that there is a fundamental difference between the path of evolution of the higher soul, which is the human ego, and that of the lower soul, which belongs to the nature world, and that the Earth planet itself belongs still to the polarity of that lower soul, and that its evolution takes place under the operations of those automatic laws, called the laws of nature ; while man, who belongs to the higher polarity, evolved his personality under the operation

of *the law of individual responsibility*, and only comes under the influence of the automatic laws of the lower polarity through his material body.

In the physical element, and in its lower polarity, the production of new forms takes place so automatically as to be quite separate from any mental influence ; indeed, the law under which they are produced will operate in spite of any mental influence brought to bear on the process.

Thus a world that had been created in the material element would go on building up form after form, and through stage after stage with routine precision, because the law of matter and of the lower polarity would be the formative factors ; but a world created by "thought," and transmitted into objectivity in that the astral element, which is the servant of the mind, would come under another law of evolution.

An astral world would come into being as a picture designed by a great artist appears on the mirror of the mind before it is transferred to canvas.

The powerful influence that the astral fluids exercise in attracting thoughts would cause the astral world to draw to itself the thought creations of many minds, besides those of the mind that first conceived it. Many beautiful, but negative, creations of the spirits of the Divine sphere would find reflection in the astral aura, and become a part of its conditions thereby. All that was vivid with life in the mental planes of spirit life would

contribute something to the evolution of an astral Earth ; for the astral is a receiver, and not an originator—it multiplies its possessions by reflecting them from mind to mind, and absorbing what each mind adds to the original reflection. Finally, it transfers the whole to the inner mirror of its soul. Of itself the astral has created nothing ; it has only received what the other elements have created, and given those creations a permanence in its own element.

This peculiarity of the astral element may be remembered in relation to persons who develop affinity to the astral aura of the Earth, and who become apparently highly productive in *thought* creation.

A thought in itself is an intangible thing, evanescent and perishable, swallowed up, and, in the Earth plane where the physical influence, which is destructive, is strong, is frequently devoured by the hungry minds that are ever seeking inspirations. To give power to a thought, so that it will live, and be the parent of other thoughts suggested by it, and a distinct influence in the world even for an hour, requires that the thought shall find immersion in some element ; otherwise, thoughts are as nebulous as mists, and like cloud shapes that assume form only to lose it again for ever. Myriads of thoughts have perished unborn, because they were never carried beyond the nebulous condition. To become tangible, a thought must find embodiment in the aura of the thinker ; it must clothe itself in

the astral element, which, as a fine essence, envelops every mentality in the Universe. Until a thought is thus clothed other minds cannot read it, and it is to the super degree of consolidation in the astral aura of the mental planes, which an ancient and oft-repeated thought has known, that in some cases makes of a thought as perfect a creation, so far as objectivity is concerned, as if it were a reality, not merely a powerfully-developed demonstration of a thought form.

The length of time during which a thought has remained in the astral element will be the measure of its power over other minds, and of the period during which it will possess the power of survival.

Hence a world born first into the astral element would show great tenacity in the forms it possessed at birth, and, in adding new forms from exterior mentalities, would still preserve the integrity of its original possessions. Again and again we have the reappearance upon the Earth's mental plane of images of thought creations from the astral stage of the world's history ; and the more the mediums develop on to the astral plane, the more will these survivals from a prephysical stage tend to confuse the records of Earth's present evolution with those of that past, giving many suggestions and curious examples of ancient wisdom that were appropriate to the conditions of an astral world, but are simply misleading when applied to a physical condition.

One of the most perplexing problems of medium-

ship to-day is the confusing effect produced by the ability to read those old astral records without a corresponding power of distinguishing between merely thought creations and the records of actual verities, *i.e.*, things that have the stamp of truth, as distinct from the myriad interpretations of the original germs of truths that have arisen from the concentration of many minds upon that truth in the effort to comprehend its full meanings.

In regard to the records of the Atlanteans, of which so much has been made, those records are not the story of the true astral race and their world, but of a people incarnate on Earth in the conditions of matter.

They never were astral anything, except in that they had affiliated to the Elemental-astral Plane, and to the Serpent-men, whose domain it is, and thus they had acquired power on that plane, and a share of the very mixed conditions of the astral element found there; more especially the ability to absorb the vital fluids from the "Grey Land" and the astral light that illuminates it, and shows all its myriad illusions.

The wisdom of the Atlanteans is tainted at its source, and no valuable knowledge is gained by the study of their records; rather are they as will-o'-the-wisps that beguile the psychic student into the marsh lands and the noisome quagmires of the worst conditions of the Elemental-astral Plane.

This plane is called the Elemental-astral Plane because it is the region in which the elementary

stages of both astral and physical entities unite. It is not purely astral anything, but only the embryo condition of the astral element as found on our planet; the elemental stage of the astral planes which in their higher evolutionary expression in the spirit-spheres of the hereafter form, in conjunction with the physical element, the Trinity of Elements for our planet.

CHAPTER III

THE ASTRAL WORLD: ITS ENDING

A THOUGHT-CREATED world projected from the mind of its Creator into the astral element, would travel to the Plane of Expression to find there its evolution into responsible individuality, and would there encounter the great forces of good and of evil that control the evolution of the higher soul ; forces which would then exercise tremendous sway over the destinies of a mentally-created world, and be dominant factors in its evolution.

In the vivid zone of expression every latent possibility of a moral or of an immoral character would awaken into power with a force which physical man, who is only half a " mental " creation, can scarcely imagine. Mind is reality in relation to temptation, and matter is only the enveloping and restraining impediment which mind encounters in a physical world.

As the statue which Pygmalion fashioned and prayed that the gods might endow with life, represented his ideal of beauty, and nothing more, while it remained the material reproduction of his thought creation, but, on receiving a soul became thereby a responsible and independent unit, destined to reap the harvest of its own desires and actions, and to experience all the emotions that

belong to the higher soul, so would the thought-created world, born onto the Plane of Expression, and endowed by that birth with a soul, become from that moment of birth the arbiter of its own destinies, and no longer a mere reflection of the contributions from other mentalities.

In that world will power would be the dominant factor in controlling its activities. Concentration upon a "desire" until it had become crystallised into definite form, and in its turn an influence over other individualised mentalities, would be an art studied and taught; as would its necessary co-relative intense positiveness and determination to dominate and control the will force of others, with that highest development of all, the reasoning powers of the intellectual faculties themselves.

Men can scarcely conceive the splendour of the intellectual power, the dominant force of individual "desire," and of the "will" to accomplish that desire, which a great leader or a teacher of the astral race would develop in the struggle of mind against mind, and positive will against positive will, good desires against evil, and evil against good, during the long period of evolution of the astral world. There would be far more opportunity to develop all these in the one individuality, because life in the astral world would be continuous in the one stage, and the consolidating and preserving nature of that element would give an apparently perpetual existence to everything that found expression in it.

Men would live for ever, *while the astral world lasted*. It is from the astral race that the idea that man might possess himself of a body that would live for ever has been derived.

The splendour of the conceptions of the finest intellects of the astral race, the perfect ideality and beauty evolved by their art, cannot be reproduced by mortals now in the denser materials of the Earth's present era ; but to the eyes and the ears of the mystics, and of the artists, the writers, poets, musicians, visionaries of all types, the sensitive films of the recording medium of the astral plane give reflected images of many of these astral creations.

Colossal also would be the power of their grosser conceptions, and the thought imprints of their fierce desires, and of those strong, all-mastering passions that belong to the soul, and not to any element in which the soul finds its individual expression.

Good and evil are eternal factors of evolution ; their influence over the individual soul never ceases. Conquest of evil on one plane only opens the path to still stronger, more subtle, temptations in a higher, more spiritualised condition.

If physical man owes some of his finest inspirations to the mental records left by the astral race, he also owes them some of the most pernicious and degrading suggestions that have ever cursed a world with the far-reaching influence of a corrupt knowledge, and a wisdom tainted with falsehood and

with the grossest perversion of the most sacred truths. Who that ventures into the conditions of the astral plane now in order to glean wisdom from its records can presume to say what is valuable in that old and superseded compendium of wisdom, and what is only vile and misleading, as a will-o'-the-wisp that lures with its false light those who follow it into the marsh lands and foul slime of the Elemental-astral Plane ?

The astral element is not the vehicle for the generation of new forms of life ; its function is to consolidate and preserve, and the astral race would not be parents of other astral men and women. But the power of *creation* belongs to the soul, and the astral race, as possessed of souls, would also possess the power of creation, only all their offspring would be of the intellect, and pass onto the mental planes in the form of works of art or thought creations, typifying their aspirations and their desires. None of these astral records of their creations would be truly immortal, for immortality is given by God alone, and nothing that is created into an element by any mind, save the Divine Mind, possesses that immortality.

As a race they would be barren, and all union between the masculine and feminine representatives of that race would be on the mental planes, and give only added power for mental demonstrations. It is a fact that an excess of the astral element in the aura of a mortal tends to divert all creative power onto the mental planes, and to cause a

consolidation of the individual personality, with a resultant aversion to the physical side of life, and a repulsion towards any form of union. Self-centred, self-sufficient, and isolated individuality marks the cold, negative unresponsiveness of the true astral temperament where it is untouched by passion; a petrifying, unprogressive condition that clings to what it has and what it is, and shrinks from any suggestion of change in any direction. This is the crystallising influence of that frozen diamond in the heart of the star—a barrenness that clings to its condition.*

In direct contrast to this there is the astral temperament that is so receptive, so absorbent, nothing that has once come within its focus of attraction escapes again. This is the astral of the lower polarity, and it makes of its subject an octopus, the many arms being the multiple powers it possesses of amalgamating with both higher and lower entities of mind and matter.

It is this lower personality of the astral temperament that reflects the desire of the soul, magnifies and multiplies the force of the temptation, and crystallises that desire into a giant impulse that is not readily dissipated again. This also is a barren condition, because the all-absorbent lower soul of the astral is a vampire individuality that builds up itself with everything it can absorb, and has no desire to give life or form to anything beyond itself.

The astral race were characterised by the

* See Introduction.

prevalence of these extremes. Thus, on the one hand, we find in their records laudation of the celibate life of pure negation, and innumerable secret teachings of how desire could be stimulated, power be attained for its gratification, and all the fruits of united mentalities absorbed and retained by the vampire himself for the building up of his own personality.

The pure and holy are shown in their lofty isolation as standing apart from the active life of their world, lost in mystic contemplation ; while the gross and evil, on the other side of an impassable barrier, are pursuing their quest for knowledge and desires for self-gratification and power ; cultivating their dominant will force, and imposing their dogmas on other people ; exercising despotic control in all things over the weaker and more negative personalities ; grasping at selfish power and imperial magnificence, and filled with ambition to be as the gods.

There is always a condition between two extremes, and in the astral world there were, no doubt, many whose wisdom had no taint of self or evil, and whose holy aspirations were translated into active lives ; *but they have left no records on our astral plane*, because their records have passed away with themselves into the higher polarity of the true spirit realm. We may seek in vain to come into affinity now with these higher astral spirits and their histories.

The histories recorded on the astral planes belong

to spirits of that race who were not freed from attachment to their Earth, and who carried with them, as mortals do now, the spiritual records of their lives, which remain affiliated to the spirit, and *are reflected from the spirit on to the astral aura of the Earth.*

.When the spirit passes away entirely from the astral plane, or the Earth's spheres, these records will fade out and pass away also. *Wherefore we may know that for every record man can read on that plane now there is an imprisoned spirit in some one or other of the myriad conditions of our astral planes.*

This is another reason why it is not desirable for mediums to affiliate themselves to that plane, nor to the spirits whose life records they are studying. Those records are *a legacy from the lower polarity of the astral world*, the higher soul of it having passed entirely away.

Owing to the consolidating properties of the astral element, the men and women of that evolution would not require to renew their bodies daily with a supply of food, and would draw from the elements around them, by the force of their will power, all that was required from time to time. The natural sustenance of the body of an astral man or woman being drawn from the atmosphere around, the power of thus absorbing, would be likewise a natural attribute of the astral body, just as the power of assimilating physical food is an attribute of physical man.

That power of absorbing from the atmosphere the vital essence in it remains an attribute of the astral body now.

The idea that man in a material body might redevelop and use again this latent power in the astral envelope to supply himself with mental force, and even physical vitality, and obtain a wealth of ideas and of healthy elements thereby, is a suggestion from some spirit of the astral planes who knows how youth may be renewed, the body built up again, the mental powers enriched by absorbing from persons in the flesh that life and those mental possessions which are much more easily absorbed when in a created and vitalised condition as part of some mortal's equipment than when drawn from any other source of supply. Such knowledge is a revival of the old wisdom of the astral era, but it does not belong to the physical scheme of evolution.

Although, as a race, the astral people left no offspring to perpetuate their type, it does not follow that they were sexless, nor that the passions which belong to sex, and the ideality and beauty of a pure and selfless love held no sway over their emotions. Sex is an attribute of the universal soul ; it has many more phases of expression than that of mere physical functioning. The astral body of Adamite man responds most powerfully to the sex emotions, and that circumstance would indicate that the astral world was no less dominated by them than this world is, but on the mental plane, and in conditions that do not reproduce themselves

now except by reflex action from the survival on the astral plane of that astral body man has inherited. On the mental plane Love finds expression in the most poetic and beautiful interpretation of that passion; but it has also on that plane found possibilities for suggestions of such selfish, licentious debasement of the same passion that no one need wonder that persons of weak will, negative character, sensitive temperament, and predisposition to vicious tendencies, who have developed on to the mental plane and into affinity with its astral conditions, have become obsessed by the suggestions of impurity that have found records there as well as those giving the ideality and the beauty of pure love.

All the arts would dominate in that world; music, in particular, would be its possession. The astral fluids, being of so light and ethereal a nature, so receptive and responsive to the emotional side of life, and fluids having the peculiar property of conveying sound waves, these astral fluids would most swiftly and accurately receive and distribute all over that world the waves of Divine harmonies that radiate from the heaven world of perfected souls. It would likewise absorb and reproduce those weird inharmonies, those wild, mystic, grief-haunted strains that float up from the far outer regions where the lonely hells, that are the habitations of the souls who are in the prison realms of their sins, drift on the edge of Chaos.

Every emotion the soul can know has its

expression in the language of music. A people of transcendent intellectual powers and vivid responsibilities would possess the musical faculty in a high degree, and in giving response to every throb of sorrow or ecstasy of joy, which those sound waves conveyed to them, would intensify and multiply their own capacity for suffering or for happiness. For them there would be far more powerful temptations than assail Adamite man—strange as that statement may sound—because the material element deadens the power of sensation and the acuteness of the mental consciousness, and acts as an opiate in dulling the power of the mind to suffer or to enjoy.

At the beginning of its evolution, the astral world would be an ideal creation with every possibility of good or of evil development. At the end of its evolution it would show what that astral race had made of those possibilities for themselves. Good and evil having dominated in turn, there would be two halves to that era of evolution, both developed into strong individualities in the people.

Of the half that was of the higher soul, and all that had found expression in the domains of the higher polarity, there would be the spirits ready for transition to spirit life.

There would likewise be a residue who were not perfect in their era of evolution; some because they were too undeveloped in character, though not evil in any way. In spite of the long years given to the soul to evolve its character, there are

always some persons who are unprogressive by temperament, and prone to imagine they have all eternity to experiment with, and who prefer to enjoy the present rather than labour for the future of progress. Many influences keep individuals from growing in the spirit, and all such would be left behind when the end of the astral world arrived.

There would also be by far a greater number who had *sunk themselves* into the conditions of the *lower polarities* by the degradation, the selfishness, and the evil of their lives, and these would have no heritage at all in any higher evolution of their world. With all their intellectual power, their gross passions, their tyranny, their greedy, grasping at power and unscrupulous robbery of everything possessed by the weaker members of the community, would give them no affinity except to the lowest conditions of evolution in any element. The spirit world of the astral race would have no place for these.

That Astral World, with its power of renewing everything at will, was, *par excellence*, the world of youth ; for its sages never grew old, nor felt the decay of their mental powers creep over them as men do now. At the end of its cycle of evolution, those people would possess all the brilliance of youth and the accomplishments of age. The ardour in pursuit that belongs to youth, and the keen appreciation of attainment that comes with maturity. That world, like its people, would

know no season of decay and change, no autumn for their year, but only perpetual spring and summer. There would be no fast creeping shadow of a change to foretell the coming at last of a night that was to end for ever that radiant day of power.

And yet, with so clairvoyant a people, there must have been some who could see the approach of some great event, and there must have been for many a consciousness that a catastrophe was overshadowing their future; a vague fear of that change which was to terminate with cataclysmic suddenness that era of everlasting youth for this people who worshipped youth and all its pleasures. But, in a world where death had never entered, and separation was unknown, death and separation would be the two conditions they could least comprehend, and so to the Astral World, as to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, the end would come in the midst of their lives of activity and of pleasure. The higher world of the astral people, refined into its last stage of ethereality in that element, would float away, like a soap bubble, carried by a gentle wind, and all its ethereal spirits with it; while the lower world, separated from it and released from the restraining influence of the higher soul polarity, would sink down into the lower plane, and begin to go lower and lower as its spirit counterpart was carried farther and farther away.

That would be the first death and separation

the astral race had ever known, and for many it would be a final parting.

The age of this Astral World at the time of its dissolution would not be very great, for it was a young world, and everything would evolve rapidly. Nevertheless, the cycle of that evolution would extend over a very considerable period of time, and still be comparatively short when measured by the physical stage of evolution.

The length of time which a planet will take to evolve into maturity in any element may be predicted with great accuracy, because the planet itself always belongs to the lower polarity of the elements, and, as the law of the lower soul polarity is the law of automatic sequence throughout the progress of evolution, the rate of that progression can be gauged with the same certainty a tide is known to ebb and flow, and may thus be predicted with accuracy, because there are no mental factors to interfere with the automatic routine of evolution. The law of change, which is a law of the Universe, places a limit upon the time a world or an individual may take to pass through a given stage. When that limit is reached the change becomes inevitable.

At the end of each cycle the ripened fruits of that era are gathered into the spiritual storehouse. The immature are held by the angels in a state of suspension until ready to be sown anew in the conditions of Earth life; while those fruits that are too utterly destroyed to grow anywhere again are left where they have fallen, and to the release

which death will finally bring, although death may not come to them for long years.

In the end of the Astral World, and the sinking down of its nature soul into the conditions of the lower polarity, all those unprogressed, or those evil men and women of that era, would sink with it.

The astral element is of the nature of a fluid that etherealises into the thinnest of air at the Plane of Expression, and forms planetary globes that are quite objective to even a limited degree of clairvoyance on the astral plane. Cloud lands, with lakes and seas of translucent purity, form dwelling-places for the aerial beings, who belong to the astral era, and are attaining the power of expression in that element.

At the extreme lower pole the astral fluid has become very heavy, though still transparent. It is even denser and less penetrable than water. Thus, in sinking away from the Plane of Expression, the dying Astral World would be immersed in ever more and more consolidated fluid; withering as it sank, deprived of all that radiant youth in which the astral people had so greatly rejoiced, and which had gone with the spiritual essence of the higher soul that had given it.

Aged and withering now were all those astral men and women who had failed to attain immortality with their higher world; chained were they all to the mummifying shell of a dead world that continued to shrink and shrivel up, as an apple shrivels when it dies, yet holds still within its core

the vital seeds of new entities yet to be born. The increasing pressure would cause a greater and ever greater hardening and consolidation of the shell, or husk, of the Astral World, and thus give increased protection to those astral seeds.

To the unfortunate people this sinking down of their world would be akin to the sinking of a ship in mid-ocean, carrying every one down with it. They could not escape, because their spirits were imprisoned in the astral bodies they had worn so long and preserved so carefully, and made so essentially a part of themselves that they could know no existence apart from them. The very nature of the astral element would prevent them from dying as rapidly as material men die when drowning. An over-developed body of the astral plane now shows a similar and terrible tenacity in its hold upon the spirit. As they sank down and down, imprisoned in that astral shell, they would experience all the horror and anguish of a people overtaken by a world's catastrophe ; a flood that was engulfing them all while they were held helpless, caught in the meshes of their entanglements to the lower polarities to which they had affiliated, and still more firmly held by their vices and their cherished sins, that were all as strands of rope tying them down.

At last the mass of consolidated fluids—like ice-floes that exist at the lower pole of the astral element—would crush the shell of that lost world, and all its people would drown in very truth,

immersed in the deep waters of oblivion that are at the extreme negative astral pole. Extreme negation is oblivion to all things.

The story of a flood that covered the whole material Earth, and destroyed every one, save Noah and his family, has a counterpart in the records of the extinction of the Astral World by a flood that left no survivors.

That the people of Noah's day were submerged in a flood from which he, with his family, were saved by Divine command, does not negative the possibility of a similar termination for the astral era, because that era refers to quite a different phase of the planet Earth's evolution.

In the earlier ages of the present phase of our Earth's evolution, the astral conditions would be more dominant than now, and those lost spirits would be more closely in touch with mankind, and from those spirits might come the account of the creation of a Universe that emerged from darkness and chaos, yet in the account failed to give that astral period as a distinct era of progression, because of the great difficulty encountered in trying to present a picture of a world so different from that of Adamite man's. All accounts agree in the leading features, and that it was at the command of God that Creation, in relation to our planet, was accomplished.

The law of change that brought the end of the astral era will in due course bring an ending to the present material era ; and, whereas the first world

ended in a flood because the astral element is a fluid, this—the second world—will end in fire, because the element in which we are evolving is the physical element and its extreme expression is fire. The lower pole is a vast lake of molten matter, resembling the interior of a volcano.

Between the condition of our Earth to-day, and the fiery lake at the lower pole, there is a density of matter, beside which the apparent solidity of the Earth's bulk is like that of a honeycomb compared with quartz rock.

Wherefore our Earth will never reach the fiery lake in complete form. Long before it arrives there, it will be pulverised as an eggshell would be ground to powder between millstones. The end of the Earth for man will come with the falling of the rocks, the rending of the mountains, the crashing down of the great buildings men have reared in the pride of their power over material things; and there will be the final engulfment of the fragments in that lake of fiery mud.

Where will the lost spirits of our era be in that last day?

Our Earth at present is on the Plane of Expression, and the physical globe is our envelopment. The conditions of that Plane of Expression are so far from those at either extreme pole that men find it difficult to realise the exceeding density of matter possible at the lowest degree, or the exquisite ethereality that prevails at the highest degree to which matter becomes sublimated; nor can

material man easily comprehend the still more subtle nature of pure spirit as seen in perfected evolution through matter where it reigns supreme.

The seers of old were haunted by visions of a world that had been destroyed by a flood, and that would be consumed by a fire, so that all living things upon it would call upon the hills to fall upon them and the seas to cover them, and end the anguish and horror of their fate. Does this not show that the soul would survive when the material Earth had perished, and that man has always had warnings sent to him, foreshadowings given him that there is a period set to the time in which the immortal ego may dally with the fate that must surely overtake the Earth he loves so well ; a limit to the time he may spend, either as mortal or as spirit, in evolving his spiritual personality ; an inexorable Nemesis that will overtake him, and appoint those future conditions to which alone the degree of development of his individuality that he has attained by then will give him right of access. .

Every doctrine and every ideal that has come down through the ages and survived the vicissitudes of time and the expansions of men's thoughts, has its origin in some germ of truth ; not always a perfectly comprehended truth, but still truth in its essential statements.

The idea that an end of the world would come in a day and at an hour when men looked not for it has its essence of a great truth, and its explanation in the law under which the higher soul, in spite of

its power to govern its evolution and choose its path of progression, comes, nevertheless, under the operations of the purely automatic laws that govern the evolution of the entities of the lower soul that have no such choice ; automatic laws that are as an inexorable fate, bringing the end of the evolutionary process of all in the lower polarity at a given period that is the climax of the evolution of the nature realm, and brings its ending when the purpose for which that nature realm existed is accomplished.

The higher soul is dependent upon the lower soul for its means of attaining full expression in any element, because objectivity belongs to the domain of the lower soul, and is *attained and retained* only when the higher soul has conquered the element in which it would express itself in demonstrative form. The soul that wastes its higher powers and loses its opportunities, fails to attain any such conquest.

Thus, although the higher soul has apparently an absolute power of choosing its methods of evolution and its periods of activity, the higher soul is yet so deeply involved in the fate of the lower soul, that is its partner, and is so limited by the limitation of its inferior, they are both finally involved in the same fate, unless the higher soul has become the true master of its own destiny.

As surely as the Astral World ended suddenly, so will the present world of Earth end suddenly before the evolution of all the souls who have lived upon it is accomplished.

Where will all those spirits go? What will be their fate? Will they not be the lost souls of whom the theologians speak? Will there be for them any other era of progression in connection with our Earth, and with all the friends they will have to leave, despite all the love, and the longing, and the bitter tears that will be shed on both sides of that barrier—that wall between the higher and the lower states that will separate them one from the other at last?

Earth will have passed then through both the subordinate elements; there will not be, as with the Astral World, another condition before the final mergence in the spiritual state takes place, nor the chance that was given to the astral laggards, who were not wholly evil, of redeeming the lost time even at the eleventh hour. Who can say where those who are left this time will find another place of habitation in the wide Universe?

Some persons believe that such spirits will incarnate upon some of our companion planets, that, in fact, there are persons here now who have come from other planets.

That is a very moot point that cannot be decided, but is it well to risk losing all those dear comrades of our Earth life here, or to trust to so uncertain and so alien an alternative, so distant a hope, in order to go on in some evil or perverted path just now, or to join a band of fellow-loiterers anywhere?

CHAPTER IV

THE PRE-NATAL STAGE OF THE EARTH AWAITING REBIRTH

THE LAW OF POLARITY AND THE LAW OF SEX

THE evolution of each era of a planet's progression has been likened to the blossoming of a tree, followed by the harvesting of the fruit gathered from it. The fruit produced each season by the Tree of Life gives the results of each era of evolution in succession, and differs in character, in colours, and in the elements, or combination of elements, that have dominated in each particular era.

The Astral World and its people represent the completion of the planet's evolution through that element, and the fruits garnered from that era still give the seeds of fresh entities on their planes. When the present era is completed the physical races, with the fruits garnered from their stages of evolution, will represent that element, and there will be a third and spiritual era, with a spiritual race, who will carry forward the evolution of this planet into the complete Trinity of power. This new and spiritual race are not yet due to arrive upon the Earth, nor will the conditions of the Earth be sufficiently spiritualised to admit of their evolution upon it for long ages yet to come. Our Earth is far too material, and will require to

etherealise much more visibly before any spiritual race can enter upon life here.*

The planet's nature-soul constitutes its immortal unit, and represents the individuality of the collective whole.

This nature-soul passes, at the termination of each era, from element to element, always in the lower polarities. In every era of evolution the nature-soul has its counterpart in a vast parent root, from which, at each stage, innumerable seeds are sent forth into independent existence.

If man in thought created a plant, and then embodied it in the mental element, his plant (if perfect) would possess this seed-bearing property, but *the conditions of the element*, in which the plant had found expression as an individual unit, would regulate the form in which the seeds from each season's sowing would appear.

In the Astral World everything derived from the seeds of the parent root found expression on the mental plane, and to create on that plane was the natural process. It is not the natural process in this era; therefore, to create on that plane *alone* brings certain abnormalities that will be considered later on in another book of this series.

The soul of anything, as the immortal spirit of that thing, contains within itself the power of germination and of growth. No person in any stage of existence can give the soul—that comes from the Divine alone—and *all that anyone can do is to*

* See Vol. II: Chapter on New Race.

create a form from the particular elements the individual controls. The creation of a form that shall be more than an agglomeration of materials, collected together as one might make a piece of furniture, requires that there shall be the negative and positive forces united on whatever plane the objective "form" is to be created.

This is the law of *polarity*, which is also the law of sex, because sex may be described as the individualisation of polarity.

The evolution of the sex functions proceeds from its lowest expression—as the purely mechanical action and reaction of the opposite characteristics of the vital forces in nature, as they flash from positive pole to negative pole, and *vice versa*, continually—to that which is the highest expression of the same of attraction and response upon the mental planes; and then to the conditions where the mechanical action and reaction are controlled by the intellectual faculties at the will of the individual and by the moral consciousness, and are inspired with ideality and the emotions called love.

Sex operates in response to the higher or the lower laws of the Universe, according to whether the individualities it affects are in the higher or the lower polarities, and it is everywhere in evidence throughout the Universe, linking all creation together in a long chain of living entities, from the lowest to the highest. It finds its etherealisation in the perfected dualities of the angels, and its

origin in the Divine personality of God, the Supreme Father of Creation.

The Catholic Church embodies its conception of the apotheosis of the feminine element in creation in the Virgin Mother with her Child. The Greeks and Romans had their goddess. The Hindus have the sacred cow—a far less elevated conception, because the cow belongs to the lower polarity, and all the beautiful symbology with which the Hindus decorate the image of the cow does not alter the fact that it is an inferior representative of the feminine element.

The idea, prevalent in the East, that the feminine is the inferior, and belongs primarily to the nature world, is at the root of the doctrines that eliminate sex from conditions above the Earth plane, and teach celibacy as the ideal condition of purity—that negative, non-creative condition—and show the masculine type as the supreme survivor. The Mohammedans go farther, and deny the woman any soul above that of the nature realm.

In perfect innocence, which is also complete ignorance, we have the stage of infancy, in which sex exists, but is dormant ; it exercises no influence over the impulses, because it has not been awakened. This is the negative condition that perpetuates infancy, and the dependent—and, in a measure, the merely absorbent—condition that does not *generate life*, but only receives it.

In depravity we have the sex impulse as the mere slave of passion ; it is then a merely selfish

vampirish instinct, void of all the grace that love imparts, and void also of the purifying, elevating attributes of true ideality, with the resultant submergence of self which reverence and adoration of the beloved bring.

In love, that is worthy of the name, and not a veneer over the baser passions, there must be the substitution of another's welfare and happiness in place of the desire for self-gratification, and an altruism that raises true love above the appeal of passion.

There is likewise in true love its corollary in the awakening of the parental instincts and the love of offspring, with a desire for all that is most selfless and holy in the parental relations; that which is the essence of family life, and which makes of that relationship the gateway to the true power of spiritual creation hereafter, with the formation of links that bind families and nations together in the bonds of brotherhood—first as members of family groups, and in universal kinship at last.

In the sentiment of love, as applied to the sex passion, we find both a purifying flame and a consuming furnace.

In the furnace of the passions, the very fierceness of the desires causes them to consume themselves, and burn away the dross of the merely selfish passions.

In the higher expression, as a vivifying flame, love kindles all creation into life and being, and illuminates the depth of the sex nature with the

light of ideality and all the arts, and gives the warmth of deep emotions in place of fierce, senseless passion.

Among the Greeks Cupid's torch was its symbol. That which was mere impulse becomes the love emotion, and emotion is the music of the soul, the mysterious breath of the Divine element in passion, which stirs the chords of the human heart, as the wind stirs the strings of an aeolian harp, and draws weird, sweet strains of music from them.

When Love is of the lower soul alone, his lighted torch kindles only a consuming furnace; yet even in that furnace *Love's* power still triumphs, for it is his flame that consumes the passions by the very fierceness with which it *burns away desire*; and when love triumphs and the soul emerges, the blind slave of mere sex impulse is for ever chained.

In the absolute purity, which knows no sex, we have the condition of barrenness on every plane. It creates nothing, and is dependent for its progress, and then its growth, on the creations of others. This is true of the mind even more than of the body; we find no originality of thought or of activities in persons, or in religions, or in philosophies which eliminate the creative functions. They follow the routine mapped out for them by their founders, who gave the first "thought forms" round which all that is afterwards attracted cluster. They add no new light to the original flame, and they tend to become petrified and obsolete, enshrining

what they possess in a frozen condition that brings an increasing impotence.

All birth and all rebirth bring the subject under the law of polarity and its higher expression as sex, for all types of life must have parent lives to give the new form in which the subject is to find *personal* expression.

The form which the soul wears is always a separate part of the individual ego. Many and varied as are the forms that the soul may wear, their development or their destruction is always governed by the laws of the lower polarity of each element ; while the evolution of man's soul proceeds under the higher laws alone.

It has been said already that all the rainbow-hued elements that radiate from the outer poles of the Universe are the visible expression of the magnetic forces in Nature's realm, and that the power generated by these mighty dynamos give birth to the stars and suns, the planets and the satellites of the solar systems, and all that teeming life of the *lower soul* ; rendering the Universe objective, and supplying the mechanical aspect of evolution. It is on that outer Zone of Life that those magnetic forces mingle in blind, irresponsible demonstration of their colossal power.*

To this zone of lower life forces the shell of the

* NOTE.—This magnetic essence of the *lower soul* feeds only the *lower creations*, and cannot supply the needs of the *higher soul* ; on the contrary, excess of this magnetism is inimical to the higher development.

dead Astral World would finally be attracted by the strong influence that the positive life-force exercises over all negative things.

A grey, withered husk would be all that was left of the Astral World as it lay for long at the negative pole ; and to that grey husk would cling still the spirits of that past era ; a little group of souls unable to break away from that focus of attraction.

So long as the withered husk lay at the negative pole of the astral element, the petrifying nature of that condition would preserve it from dissolution, for the astral fluid embalms all that it holds.

This preservation of the dry husk, and the focus of attraction it formed for the lost souls, would make of it an icy prison-house for them, and its stultifying conditions would cause a frozen sleep to be the state of everything held in that astral shell.

Time in relation to the Universe cannot be gauged by earthly standards, but throughout all the nature realm there are periods of rest, of pause, in the activities of evolution—a negative condition between each positive stage.

The influence that would disturb the dreamless slumbers of those lost souls, and their mere shell of a vanished world, would be the operation of one of those universal laws that had brought change and destruction to the astral Earth, and was now to bring a fresh condition to the seeds of all those fruits grown in the period of the astral era.

Upon the winter of oblivion that reigns at the

negative pole, there would be cast the fore-shadowings of an awakening from sleep—the approach of a springtide in which all the dormant seeds of spiritual lives, which possessed the power of growth in a new condition, would awaken to fresh possibilities of progression in the new conditions.

Not all of the germs of souls from the astral era were capable of a new evolution. There were souls who were so corrupt in their mentalities, so warped in their moral perceptions, so wedded to vile conditions, that for them no fresh power of germination existed. The coming of a springtide could not give ability for renewed growth in any form, but only produce a spurious activity of the kind possessed by the parasite that lives on all the lives to which it can attach itself.

There were many such parasites left as an undesirable legacy from the astral stage. The effects of these survivals will only be known when the Astral-elemental Plane is seen in all its many aspects.

The approach of a change in the season of evolution would cause the fluids of the astral globe to vibrate and ripple into many wavelets; even as a still, land-locked lagoon begins to feel the approach of the incoming of a tide from the ocean. The mirror of the astral plane would experience the ruffling of the placid magnetic conditions so long prevalent. Stronger and stronger vibrations would quiver through that frozen

realm, and all those dormant astral shells would begin to sway and drift, rocked by the waves of astral ether.

Those waves would flow out from the negative pole in long streamers of white flames—liquid, yet a fire in essence, and of a silvery, shimmering light.

On these white flames the dead things of the astral world would be lifted up and carried out on to the vivid, many-coloured region of light and life that envelops the Universe with a rainbow halo.

There these derelicts would drift, as rudderless boats, held in a group by their attraction of affinity.

They would not drift for long. The flaming sword of the Destroying Angel is in the magnetic fires, and its stroke separates the living germs of the soul from the dead shells of past existences. It gives death to the things that have exhausted all future possibilities, and to the imprisoned soul it brings release.

These long streamers of light from the astral globe—clear as silver at their inner core, and dazzling white at their outer edges—would begin to gather volume and power, and to reach out farther and farther from the astral pole in a mass of white flames, spreading away towards a red and orange glow of light, seen as when the first light of the dawning day appears on the eastern horizon. A wonderful light, far flung and brilliant, so that it illuminated even the dark background of that Ocean of Chaos long before the crimson flames from the physical sun-centre could be discerned.

Those two brilliant lights, that were the magnetic elements of life in all the nature realm—the one so colourless, so pure and transparent ; the other deep crimson and orange in hue—would sweep towards each other with stupendous force, alternately approaching and then receding in waves of magnetic fires, but always approaching nearer and nearer ; harmonious to each other, and yet inharmonious at the same time.

Anyone who has seen a forest fire, when one line of flames is being carried towards another line of flames by the changing of the wind, must have noticed that, as they approach each other, they sweep forward as sentient things, and grapple and twist and twine round and round in a column of leaping flames that rise like a pillar of fire, which, by its strong magnetic attraction, draws to itself all the lesser flames, and sucks them into that waving furnace till there is nothing left to consume ; and then the pillar of fire sweeps onwards, gathering power or dying down as it passes ; finally sinking into a dull red glow, and at last into darkness.

In this meeting of the magnetic fires of the astral and physical elements, the colossal pillar of fire—that gives life and also destroys it—would be seen recurring periodically as a stupendous exhibition of creative and also of destructive power on the regions of the lower polarities.

The physical fires alone are the destructive element ; but, cooled and stabilised by the astral

fluids, they give life and form to all that finds immersion in that blended magnetic essence. Hence the seeds of life carried from the astral era, in the envelopment of the astral shells, would now find a new means of expression and fresh possibilities of germination as they were swept into the vortex of the physical element and the physical globe, where our solar system is existing.

In their combination, the physical and astral elements give the impetus to germination in all the embryo forms of life, all seeds of future entities in those worlds that are yet to be born, and which are merely drifting on the magnetic waves of that outer Zone of Life.

In their separation each element carries away on its magnetic tide those soul seeds which are in affinity to that particular element.

In the furnace of fire created by the blending of the elements, the flames would burn up and consume all those dead husks in which no life remained to respond to the creative impetus, so that those astral shells that were truly dead things would be at last destroyed, and release the spirits so long held prisoners to them. Thus the lost souls of the astral era would lose all ties to their kindred and their world, and be swept away with the Earth's seeds and carried into the physical globe by reason of their affinity to the Earth itself. There all would find expression in a new era of evolution, and in a new vehicle for development.

Thus the planet Earth, which was the seed from

an astral-evolved world, would be the parent root into which the seeds of all physical forms of life would be grafted, and the nature soul of the planet Earth would emerge once more into individuality as a twice-born unit, possessed of the heritage from its astral evolution, and dual in all its relations to both physical and astral elements.

CHAPTER V

THE EVOLUTION OF THE FOUR ELEMENTS AND OF THE SPIRITS OF THE ELEMENTS

THE Earth, drawn into the solar system, would be a distinct unit, but only in an embryo stage of evolution, and would be ready to begin the development of all its many types and forms of life, and the varying degrees of materiality that belong to the physical conditions.

In speaking of an embryo world and its germ of a soul, the idea of something comparatively small is conveyed till we remember that every term is relative to the environment of that which it describes ; and, as applied to the finite planet and the vast Universe, the word soul germ should convey the idea of an enormous unit, not merely a minute entity.

In the pillar of fire the nature soul, and all belonging to its polarity, would receive a new supply of vital essence, sufficient to carry the Earth through its physical evolution.

All the astral seeds from the nature realm would be pure germs of life. No sin and no corruption belong to the nature soul ; decay and death come to nature only through exhaustion of the vital essence, and disease in the nature world is caused by the poisoning on the elemental plane of the elements of life by entities belonging to the higher type. The

evils that men do translate themselves into conditions of corruption that breed poisons on the elemental plane, and are sucked back into material forms and the Earth conditions by the plants, and the animals, and man.

Nature itself is a negative ; the laws of Nature are the laws of a machine. It is man who has given good and bad conditions to that negative.

Nevertheless, evil being a component part of the nature realm now it is necessary to recognise its existence, and desirable to trace it back to its source in the influence exerted over the elemental plane by the survival from the astral era of certain spirits of very corrupt and evil propensities.

The great root body of the Earth would produce an infinite variety of seeds, and these would give their types of life to fructify the new Earth. Those types would be of astral origin ; and, as the earliest stage of all embryo life reproduces first the astral condition, all those beings who belonged especially to the astral types would be the first to find expression in the physical element.

Air and water belong to the astral element. In combining with the gases of the physical element, they would assume tangible expression in that element, and form the clouds and the seas ; and in the air and in the water all those types of beings belonging to those elements would evolve from their embryo conditions into semi-material, semi-astral entities. Fire and earth belong to the physical element, and are very antagonistic to air

and water. They also would hold their seeds of living entities that were not dense enough to belong to matter, but would be from types of astral seeds evolved through a stronger combination with matter.

The spirits of these four material combinations of the three primal elements would be rightly called "*spirits of the elements*," but wrongly classed among the *elementals*, which *are not spirits at all*; they belong only to the elemental stage, and do not survive it.

Each of the four elements—Air, Water, Fire, Earth—as they completed their evolution into material conditions, and etherealised from matter again into the spiritual counterparts, would draw away from the central core of the Earth, and separate from each other, to form spheres of their own element again. The spherical form being characteristic of all the elements in their separate individualities, each element would form a globe, and the four are seen as a cross with the circle of the Earth plane, on which they all mingle, as the centre of the cross.

This inter-blending of the elements takes place on what is known as the Elemental-astral Plane, and gives the man who can affiliate to that plane power in manipulating these elements—a very dangerous power to acquire.

These globes are the retorts into which the spiritualised essences of the four elements ascend

from the Earth plane. The Earth plane is the distilling vat, and its aura is the radiation of those finer elemental essences as they separate again, and float each to the globe of its own element that naturally form the dwelling-places of the spirits of the elements. They are a part of the true spirit realms, and not of the elemental conditions, because each of the four expressions of the Earth's elements now has completed its evolution into a perfect type, and represents the first fruits from the germination of the astral seeds sown in the material Earth.

It is entirely erroneous to call these spirits of the elements of Earth now "astral spirits," because, while they are directly derived from astral seeds, they have passed through envelopment in matter, although only in its finest conditions in the elements. These spirits are an intermediate class between the astral and the physical eras of evolution. They are not within the sac of the elemental plane at all, but in a spiritual realm, evolved by themselves, and have each their distinct spiritual condition.

They derive nothing from mortals, and are never in any sense parasites, nor to be classed as dangerous to man.

All these spirits should be visible to clairvoyance, without development on to the *elemental* plane, because they are spirits, and therefore the eyes of man's spirit should see them if there is any affinity to their types. Fairies, elves, nymphs, dryads, etc.,

they are all representative of separate eras of the Earth's evolution in the physical form.

The exceeding grace and beauty of the astral type, its fine mentality, are reproduced in the higher spirits of this class ; those who are found near Earth, and living *in the materialised conditions of their element*, are the stragglers, the loiterers, the childish and foolish, the left-behind because unprogressive members of their races. Once again there is to be noted the operation of that law of evolution, which makes the completion of development in the nature realm the end of that era for the spirits whose period of evolution was thus fixed.

The Ancients, in describing the intermediate spirits, made great errors, because, in starting from the premise that only man of the Adamite race, and his type, had a soul, or was immortal, they confused these beautiful spirits with those elementals who are not spirits, but only the vitalised elements, from which *forms* are being built up on every plane, and of every type of life, from the mineral kingdoms, vegetables, animals, and man.

The number of fairies, elves, etc., is becoming fewer and fewer, because they are finishing their evolution, and going on into their rightful condition in their own spirit realms.

As semi-astral spirits, their auras have highly reflecting properties, and when they are in groups, dancing round a fairy ring, or in the ruins of some

old castle, or on the green sward in the moonlight, the radiance of the moon rays, illuminating the auras of the fairies, does create a cloud of light around their dancing, floating forms, and reflect, as in a mirror, the fairy palaces, the lovely lakes and sylvan woods of their one-time dwelling-places on Earth. Those persons whose souls are pure, as the souls of children are, and whose eyes are clear-sighted on the spiritual planes, do see these ethereal spirits of another race than that of Adam, not as mere dreamers see, but because they have in themselves some affinities to the astral elements and the spirits of that evolutionary period.

The antagonism of one element towards another keeps each sphere of these four as distinct and separate entities, although on Earth a degree of interblending is compulsory to them. A body, built up entirely in one element, enjoys that condition, and lives and functions in it; but it is repelled by an antagonistic element, such as fire is to water. It is because man on Earth, and in the spheres belonging to his line of evolution, has a body composed of all the four elements that he feels so acutely the excess of any of them, and can enter into affinity with all; each balances the other.

Elementals are not representative of any era, but belong to all ages and every stage. They are of all types, and possess no definite type of their own. They may be seen with the aid of a very low type of clairvoyance, because they belong to

a plane that is almost material, and begin in the lowest form of life, reproducing all types and every class up to that of the animal—the final end of the nature world. There certainly is no *spirit* in any of them ; no real consciousness of any kind or degree.

The embryo Earth, in developing, would attract to itself vast quantities of physical materials and magnetic essences ; and, as soon as the evolution of its four elements was completed, the seeds of all the forms of life that began to germinate in this new season of its progression would partake less and less of the purely astral types, and become more and more clumsy reproductions ; for the dense, insensitive matter that began to fill the astral moulds would distort their delicate substance, and destroy much of their grace and beauty. The early physical mammoths were very ponderous and grotesque from this cause ; and a good many variants on the original types resulted, till the more spiritualised condition of the physical element began to adjust the balance, and give the physical type more prominence ; thus, much that came from the Astral World failed to reproduce itself, giving only that astral envelope, which is a part of everything on the Earth now.

In its natural relation, simply as an envelope, that absorbs and blends the magnetic conditions, and elemental substances of those conditions, with the spirit body on the one side and the material body on the other, the astral body is a useful,

harmless, and necessary part of the human anatomy, and of the whole of the lower nature realm ; and its presence has shortened the process of evolution in matter, and given the types of a high condition of civilisation to the present Earth as a starting point.

The conditions of cloud and mists, that preceded the gathering of the waters into their own boundaries, and then the appearance of dry land before even the animals and the birds gave animated life to the material Earth, might well have been the stage of evolution for the intermediate races of spirits, and been followed by the appearance, on the rapidly consolidating Earth, of the fully materialised forms of life in the sequence given in the Bible story.

To say that they germinated in the physical era from seeds derived from the conditions of an astral stage, is not in conflict with the account of the rapid and even sequence of evolutionary progress given in the Bible, for all growth would be rapid in a world so rich in physical vigour, and endowed with the types left by the former stage.

All its conditions of life being fully developed into matter, the Earth might be said to begin its independent existence with the appearance of Adamite man.

CHAPTER VI

THE EARTH AS A MINIATURE UNIVERSE

THE CONTRASTING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE EARTH AND THE GREAT UNIVERSE

THE Earth, being a fully-developed unit, would represent in itself all the elements contained in the great Universe, but only as an infant at birth represents the future man ; the character was yet to be evolved and the history written.

The Nature laws control the lower polarity of a world ; but man, as representative of the higher soul, controls the evolution of its characteristics, and writes its history in conjunction with his own, and even changes many of the Earth's natural features in pursuit of his aims and ambitions.

While our Earth as a miniature universe represents the elements of the Trinity of power, there are, however, certain differences between the Earth and the great Universe which it is well to note here.

To begin with, our Earth is a dependent body ; not the source of life to others. Its activities are controlled by its superiors.

In the Universe all life begins at the Divine Centre, and separates into two lines of evolution, under the higher and under the lower polarities.

The line of evolution of the lower polarities commences its path of evolution at the outer poles, and travels up to the Plane of Expression by a succession of enlargements, of refinements, and of individualisations that gradually give form and character to that which was nebulous at first ; and on the Plane of Expression everything that has assumed form — that is, a distinct type and character that give individuality in a measure—should find attachment to the line of evolution of the higher soul.

If the unit of the lower soul fails to find affiliation to the higher soul, it goes back and down to the negative lower pole once more. There it is drawn onto the outer Zone of Life, and absorbed into the pillar of fire, freed from its dead elements, and sent once more upon its pilgrimage to the Plane of Expression till it has had the experience of evolution in each of the three primal elements.

Failure to attain affiliation to the higher soul in any of these pilgrimages of experience, indicates such absolutely featureless negation that the unit is virtually a dead thing ; and, being thus dead and absolutely negative, it becomes absorbed by the Ocean of Chaos.

This is the law of evolution of the lower polarity and of the lower soul that law governs, and it applies to all the elements in their lower-soul expressions as the *nature world*. The emergence of the unit of the nature realm into a condition of a positive type and a definite individuality, puts it upon an

intermediate plane, with the possibility of attachment to the higher soul, but never of amalgamation with it, save as a subordinate appendage.

Extreme negation belongs to the conditions of the lower polarity and the lower soul. To sink into this condition means ultimate extinction. *Excessive passivity* ends in negation, and where mediums allow themselves to become so passive that their individuality is dormant and submerged, they are on the downward path that leads into the lower polarity. Their higher soul is thus caused to sink instead of rising ; they may descend into the conditions of the nature realm, and become at last submerged in them, losing their individuality, and ending in an excess of negation that will lead to ultimate extinction if the process is not arrested.

This law of the lower polarity is the appointed means for returning the units of the lower soul realm to the Zone of Life at the lower poles, where the violent activities of the fiery flame are destined to awaken all that is capable of being awakened, and to separate the living from that which is so negative that it is already dead.

The law of continual return to the lower pole, or to a condition within its influence, is a law of the *nature world* that has no mental influences to alter its automatic routine.

The *law of rebirth* does not mean a return into the same element again and again, but birth into each element successively till all three have been experienced. This is a law of *the Universe*.

THE HIGHER LINE, or evolution of the higher soul, begins its evolution at the inner pole, assumes density in whatever element its pilgrimage begins (it does not always begin in the astral globe), and finds its complete envelopment in that element on reaching the Plane of Expression; at which point the higher soul enters into a provisional affinity with the nature soul on some world that has attained refinement equivalent to the degree of density, in the element, possessed by the higher soul that seeks individuality and personal evolution in that world.

From this point the higher soul should return to the Divine Centre. The laws of the higher polarity hold the soul in attraction to the Divine Centre, but the influence of the mental faculties, that belong to the higher soul and prevent the automatic operation of any universal law, gives the higher soul the choice of two paths of evolution; the lower soul has no choice, and follows only one.

The path for the higher soul brings return to the Divine by a longer or shorter pilgrimage, according to the progressive or unprogressive character of the individual, but return without any descent into the lower polarity beyond the Plane of Expression.

The outer path means descent into the conditions of the lower soul and the lower polarity, and the length of time the higher soul may remain in what is virtually a condition of imprisonment in the realm of the nature world depends on the soul

itself, not on any arbitrary law that would entail a routine of experiences for all souls.

The return of a soul of the higher polarity into a body of the flesh is a possibility that belongs only to the physical element and to the conditions of matter; the astral form never renews itself once it is destroyed, and cannot again attach itself if complete separation is effected. There was no death in the Astral World, and no putting off or on of its envelopes; but only the thinning or the thickening of the form worn by absorbing extra elements, or by evaporating them again.

The assumption of a fresh form of matter by a soul that has been separated entirely from its earthly body by death belongs to the conditions of matter, and is *the law of reincarnation, i.e.,* the return into the body of the flesh.

Acceptance of the one law does not imply the endorsement of all that is taught by some schools under the other law.

The law of rebirth is a law of the Universe. The law of reincarnation is a law of the physical element only, and belongs to the conditions of the lower polarity of that element.

* * * *

In considering the differences between our miniature universe of the Earth and the Great Universe, it must be remembered that our Earth is a planet and a dependent whereas the Great Universe is the supply source for myriads of dependents.

I. In the Universe the three elements are seen as separate globes that only at the inner poles and the Divine Centre are truly blended in one.

In their separated conditions the elements afford opportunity for evolution in each in succession. In their blended condition they represent the living entities that have progressed through each and attained perfection.

On the Earth planet, which now contains the three elements, but is evolving through the physical as a special experience, the separation of the elements does not exist, although the physical is the dominant one, and the purpose of the whole is to preserve that unity and develop all to spiritual perfection, that spirituality may become the dominant note.

II. As the planet Earth is floating in the physical globe the region that surrounds its outer envelope is that of the physical element, and not a sea of Chaos as shown surrounding the Universe, and the higher pole, that of the Earth's spiritual regions, does not point to an inner circle of generative life-force, but to that spiritual globe of the Universe.

The lower pole of the Earth universe points to the Sun as its focus of attraction and source of material life.

These two poles of the Earth's universe are fixed points in the sense that they do not alter their relative positions in regard to the Sun as one focus and the spiritual globe as the other. They

control the conditions of the Spirit Spheres and of the material ball of the Earth, but they are not affected by the rotation of the earth-ball on its axis, nor its changes of position as it travels round the Sun, although the Earth's Spirit Spheres are carried round the Sun attached to the Earth, and are an enveloping succession of infinitely ethereal films.

The attraction of the Sun for all that is of the physical element as one point of focus, and the attraction of the globe of the spiritual element for all that is of the essence of the spirit, as the other point of focus, causes a dual force of attraction to be exercised over the Earth's universe, and produces an elongation of the outer envelope that encloses the whole Earth and Spirit Spheres. Thus the Earth universe is not of a circular shape, but resembles an egg ; the narrow end of the egg being nearest the Sun is the place where the material ball of the Earth lies at the lower pole of the whole egg. At the wider end the true Spirit Spheres are seen. The apex of this end radiates spiritual life, and also absorbs it from the distant and invisible spiritual globe of the great Universe.

Spiritual life is always passing out from that radiant apex of the Earth's spheres ; and as it radiates it mingles with the physical element in which the Earth universe is floating, forming a protecting cloud of spiritual and physical essences that is like a zone of protection, and a veil between man and the intense heat of the physical fires radiating from the sun-centre.

The difference between the nature of the higher polarity and the lower polarity may be epitomised thus :—

The one generates and radiates its own power. The other attracts and absorbs the power generated by something else.

The higher soul is always the supplier. The lower soul is always a dependent.

While man is in the material body he is in the realm of the lower polarity, and depends for his material existence on something other than himself. All lower nature does the same. Not till man passes out of the conditions of the lower polarity can he be possessed of the power that belongs to his higher soul and create his own supply.

As the entities of the nature world ascend in the scale of power, they begin to generate more of independent life force. Man, standing at present between the higher and the lower polarities, may either descend into the inferior condition as a mere absorber and dependent on others, or he may ascend by becoming more and more independent and productive, and the generator of vitality, instead of a borrower. He may radiate power and attain spiritual individuality, which is the true life force and gives immortality.

The Earth planet, being only partially developed as an individuality, has spirit spheres that are incomplete, especially in the higher polarity. The great mass of individualities are only attaining the higher conditions, and many centuries must

still elapse before those highest spheres are perfectly evolved.

Seen from the Earth, there is a veil over the conditions of those highest spheres.

III. In the great Universe the higher and the lower polarities are separated, and, at the same time, united by the vivid zone of expression, on which both mingle as on a neutral ground, a region on which they may find union, and through that union pass either upwards or downwards.

In the Earth universe the two polarities are separated, and never united, by a dark sea, which disintegrates and destroys everything that enters it; a region that is void of life, and an exact contrast to the vivid Plane of Expression, since it extinguishes individuality in every unit that enters its dark waters, unless that unit is so fully affiliated to the higher polarity that it can pass through it as light passes through a glass screen.

In the great Universe the neutral region is formed by the suspension of the activities of the higher and the lower polarities, and is characterised by the vitalising effects that union between two opposites produces, when the antagonism of the opposition gives place to mutual attraction, and produces an exchange that results in the formation of new types from the admixture of old ones.

In the Earth's miniature universe the negative region between the two polarities is a realm in which Death reigns supreme; a zone of negation

where types become extinct and no new ones are evolved. Its extreme negation causes, not only a pause in the activities of both polarities, but a chaotic condition of disintegration akin to that which exists in Chaos.

Before man appeared on Earth this negative region was simply a dividing zone, marking the limits of the creation of the nature realm, the point where evolution of the lower soul ended, unless a higher influence came to attract and draw upwards the entities of the lower soul polarity.

The law of life is the law of spiritual evolution, and implies eternal progression into higher and ever-higher developments.

That law imposes no return into the inferior conditions, except as a voluntary act ; but, until the soul of Adamite man crosses the gulf filled by the dark sea of negation, it is not of sufficiently advanced power to make the choice of its own future destiny. All that is in the lower polarity, whether of the higher or the lower soul units, comes under the automatic laws that govern the evolution of the lower soul ; and these laws cause everything in the lower polarity to return to its own elements again and again, releasing at each return the spiritual essence, and all that has become affiliated to it, and is thus its possession. Thus each period of immersion of the unit should give additions to the spirit form, built up in etherealised matter, till the full complete form is automatically evolved independently from any mental activities.

It is thus that the spiritual spheres of a planet are built up till they have attained the conditions of ethereality, in which they are fit for translation into pure spirituality as the dwelling-places of those higher souls who have evolved upon the planet as perfected spirits.

It is thus that the spirit of an animal, or of a plant, is also built up and etherealised till it can pass into the higher condition as an appendage to some spirit of the highest types.

The law that governs this automatic process of evolving a spirit body does not, however, give any passport to the spheres of the higher polarity; on the contrary, that law *returns the individual unit* to the same conditions again and again, until the operations of another law of the higher polarity comes into force to arrest that automatic return by attaching the individual unit to some entity belonging absolutely to the type of the higher soul, and thus draws the lower soul unit away into the higher polarity.

It is a mistake for the ego that belongs to the type of the higher, which is the man type, to follow that automatic line of evolution, and return again and again into the body of the flesh and the conditions of matter. There is very great danger that the automatic sequence of such repeated incarnations will cause the man type of soul to become imprisoned in the elements of the nature realm till it loses the power of separating from them and escaping the operation of their laws.

The law of *reincarnation* is really a law of the lower kingdoms, and is the law governing the evolution of the inferior types, and limiting their power of evolution to the automatic development of spirit forms. How man, who belongs by right of heritage to the kingdoms of the higher soul comes under the operation of this law of the lower polarity is told in the story of Eden and of Adam and Eve; their temptation by the Serpent, and their fall from the conditions of the higher polarity to those of the lower soul and its plane of evolution.

The great error that was made by the old occultisms, and all those old religions that have incorporated the wisdom of the Serpent in their system of teachings, was in *affiliating* to that elemental-astral plane—from which alone reincarnation is possible—so that the conditions of that plane became so interwoven with the lives and the development of those races who adopt that line of teaching, that they became imprisoned by a network of entanglements between Earth life and the elemental conditions. Thus they could not escape into the true spirit spheres, but were returned again and again into Earth life, and from Earth life back, at death, into that Elemental-astral Plane: with its strange life of myriad unrealities and bewildering illusions.

Why should men to-day be so foolish as rivet the chains of those old errors round their souls merely because a powerful body of occult teachers, founding their teachings on old religions and old

philosophies, present an attractive and plausible scheme of occultism to the seekers after communion with the spirit world?

The law of eternal progression—that is the law of the great Universe—resembles a mighty wheel that revolves always in the direction of onward progression, with no return to an inferior state, but on our Earth planet this law of progression is varied by many periods of retrogression.

Some persons contend that such retrogressions are in reality another form of progression, but that is only partly true, for, while experience is gained on the one hand, other experiences that would have been also of value are lost. There is a time-limit even to the *stages of progression*, and those who fail to attain a certain standard of evolution when the inevitable end arrives must pass on with all their imperfections on their souls. There is a law that imposes this limit upon every unit of creation, and brings annihilation to those entities that remain in the inferior polarity after that period has been reached.

It is the operation of this law that ultimately effects the elimination of those types that are not worthy of survival, because they are evil and corrupting, and thus leaves good at last as supreme in the survival of the individualities that find expression in the spiritual evolution of a planet.

The law of the spiritual evolution of the higher soul is the law of eternal life, but it has its counterpoise in the law of death.

CHAPTER VII

THE ANATOMY OF THE EARTH ITS VARIOUS REALMS AND SPHERES

THE accompanying chart shows the miniature Universe of our Earth planet as a whole. (See Frontispiece.)

It will be observed that the Earth, as a dark brown ball, is surrounded by a ring of brownish grey. That is the region of the Earth-bound spirits of most physical degree of evolution, and is also the region in which the life of material evolution is in its formative stages. It is the most dense expression of the Elemental-astral Plane, and has so much of the material elements in its composition that it forms a barrier against the inflow of the astral fluids, which play a quite minor part in the activities of its creative forces, although sharing in them. It also resembles a wall of matter, opposed to the conditions of the astral regions of the Elemental-astral Plane.

The extended pinnacle of that plane is seen as rising above the grey-blue regions that envelop the brown Earth plane; and sometimes suggest mountain lands in the sky. In reality that pinnacle is like the stump of a dead tree, whose roots spread out and travel round the upper circles.

of the Earth's mental region, and are directly above it.

That dark stump, or cone, is the sinister side of the legacy which the Astral Era bequeathed to Adamite man. It forms a negative region, where all activities are suspended and perpetual night reigns. It is surrounded by what appear to be cloud lands, travelling in long, ascending spirals, round the dark cone, and so ethereal that they look like veils falling over the dark centre. At the apex there is a crescent of white and silvery mists ; that is all that now remains of what was once the true astral plane of our present Earth. The so-called Astral-elemental Plane is, in reality, so mixed with the material emanations from the Earth that the purely astral element is only obtainable in that pale crescent land.

Surrounding this astral-elemental envelope, and dividing the lower polarity from the higher, there is everywhere the dark sea described in the last chapter, as resembling the Ocean of Chaos. This dark sea even flows between our Earth ball and its spirit spheres. At the point that is farthest from the rays of the sun the dark sea is very wide and deep, but where the direct rays of the Sun reach the Earth it is only a narrow line, like a river.

Beyond the dark river the spirit spheres are seen as narrow belts of light that are, in reality, part of vast globes, each one greater than the one it encloses, and extending from our material ball of Earth (enclosed in the astral-elemental sac)

to the seventh envelope, which is the highest of our spheres.

It is not the purpose of this book to give an account of the spirit spheres, except in relation to the Earth and Astral-elemental Plane, but it must be explained that those *narrow* belts of spirit life all lie in the lower polarity and constitute that spirit realm, which is easily reached from the Earth life, and by spirits who, even when they have attained the Seventh Sphere, are still only in the polarities of the nature world.

A reference to the chart will show how this can be. (*See Chart: Higher and Lower Polarities.*)

The *wide* realms of spirit life that are in the higher polarity can only be reached by spirits who have developed out of that lower polarity. A spirit who enters the Second Sphere in the lower polarity can, if he is progressive, develop into the conditions of its higher polarity, and so pass upwards without leaving that sphere. He can attain the highest condition in it, or he can simply remain where he first arrived.

Every sphere must be attained in its higher polarity before a spirit can enter upon that encircling zone that includes all spheres, and gives the power of communion with the whole of our miniature Earth universe.

The desire to reach the higher polarity of the spheres directly from the Earth life, instead of entering those narrow belts, has led men in all ages to attempt to do so by means of those long

spirals of ascent through the Astral-elemental Plane that *appear* to afford so swift a road, so obvious a stairway, to the dividing line of the two polarities—an illusion, because there is no passage there, only an exit into the dark sea, and *extinction of the individuality in it*.

A reference to the chart will show the Earth as a brown ball, surrounded by a greyish brown region, almost a fogland. This is the place where the Earth-chained spirits live amidst the astral-elemental replicas of the things they possessed in life. The higher regions of this fogland are much brighter, and the spirits who live there see the *reflections*, both of earthly and of spiritual things, and appear to be surrounded with the creations born of their desires, as well as of the things they accomplished while on Earth.

The *colour* shows the *spiritual relations* of each condition, colour being a spiritual expression of a stage of spirit life, but it does not imply that everything in that region is brown and grey to the objective sight of the material eyes. It requires the development of the spiritual senses to discern the colours of each condition of spirit life. Many of the spirits who are Earth-bound are as much of the material Earth still that they do not see the *spiritual* colours of their surroundings, nor their true spiritual conditions, but only the reflections of many colours, and the images of many things thrown *down upon their own auras*, and enveloping them in a halo of many-coloured lights and many-

illusive appearances. This is especially true of spirits who are in the upper regions of that Earth plane, and subject to mental influences.

Enveloping the Earth plane, there is a series of blue-grey realms that show a silvery shimmer in their highest regions, and a deep steel-grey with brown tints at their lowest. This is the mental plane of the Earth, and in it are many spirits who were of too developed mentalities to remain nearer the Earth, but too feeble, as spirits of the true *spiritual* development, to pass into that Second Sphere which is the first of those conditions that are really representative of spirit existence.

This mental region reproduces the earthly surroundings of the spirits in it with great fidelity, and gives an added power of fresh creation on the mental planes at will. But nothing thus created remains if once the mind relaxes its concentration upon the object desired: all melts away like things built up in smoke. Hence spirits who come from this realm may truthfully say that in *their experience* the spirit world is a mental creation only, and has no tangible existence apart from mind. They do not realise that they as spirits are still only in a part of the Astral-elemental Plane, and have not seen the true spirit world at all. If they have been leaders of thought on Earth, they will repudiate such a suggestion; nevertheless, that is the explanation of their experience of the future state.

Most extraordinary and fantastic are some of

the lands found within the Astral-elemental Plane, but these are only reached by persons who have affiliated to the astral side of nature. The majority who pass into an Earth-bound state see only those brownish-grey, bluish-grey, and rainbow-hued regions ; and conditions akin to Earth life.

As the spiritual perceptions awaken, these spirits begin to be more and more conscious of the real nature of their surroundings, and see as visions one after another of the blots and stains, which their sins or their errors have left on the *spiritual* replicas of their earthly possessions, and on the robes their spirits ought to wear in the higher life. They become conscious that they are only in an Earth-bound body, and that they only see the surroundings of an intermediate state—that which Roman Catholics call the Purgatorial condition of the soul.

If they are earnest, and anxious to atone and to progress, this becomes the starting-point from which they will spiritualise themselves out of the Earth plane and into affinity to Spirit life instead.

The spirits in an earth-bound condition all derive their sustenance from the elements in the Earth itself, but in a more and more refined state, as they progress farther and farther from the Earth ball. Everything in the very material region that envelops the Earth—so closely, indeed, that the two conditions are intersphered, and passage down into the Earth itself is possible for some spirits—is a reality, not an illusion, nor a thought creation,

as in either that light grey, or in that blue-grey realm. The things are a reality because so strongly materialised and joined to the material stage of existence.

The envelope, or body, of an earth-bound spirit close to Earth is so thickened with material elements that the astral conditions and astral spirits on that plane are no more visible to this type of earth-bound spirit than they are to mortals who are strongly entrenched in material bodies.

Enclosing all that earth-bound region there is the Astral Envelope, and within it and intersphered, even though invisible to normal clairvoyance, there are a series of refinements of the astral-elemental conditions, and many lands and strange abiding-places that belong to the astral line of evolution. Strange places and strange conditions, where the illusions of the astral element are so numerous and so perfect, it is difficult to convince those who affiliate to this realm that they are not beholding the wonders of the spirit lands, and the great and beautiful spirits who control the spirit lands.

This strange astral-elemental region is the creation, not of spiritual evolution, nor of the working out of spiritual laws of progression, but from a perversion of them.

All this strange realm, together with the Earth and its earth-bound regions, is contained within the astral sac, and separated from the next condition of life by the dark sea. It all constitutes the

First Sphere of life ; matter and spirit existing together.

The Second Sphere marks the stage at which spirit begins to dominate and etherealise into conditions in which matter will be no longer an impediment to the desires of the spirit ego, but an added power attained.

Once the Second Sphere is entered there is *no return* to a lower condition, but a continual progression. It is only within the confines of the Astral-elemental Plane, and its envelope, that the law of *re-incarnation* operates ; entrance into the Second Sphere closes the door on reincarnations.

The fine mentalities who have reincarnated have all come from the higher astral-mental planes within the elemental-astral sac. *Highly-developed mentality does not necessarily confer spiritual growth*, nor give a passport to the Second Sphere, for many who are in that Second Sphere are inferior in their mental development to others who stand without its portals, *because they have failed to attain the development of the spirit body*, which alone can live in the true spirit world. The reasons for this apparent paradox have been the subject of studies that have produced this book.

The spirit who has entered the Second Sphere cannot return into a body of the Earth again, but he can control those who are in the body of the flesh. He does it from the distance of the sphere he is in, and it is only the reflection of his appearance that he throws down upon the aura of a sensitive, and the

projection of his mentality, and only on the mental plane of the Earth and the mind of a medium can his thoughts be impressed. Hence the difficulty of direct communion with these spirits, and the explanation of why so many attempts are made by spirits who are among the earth-bound to give their aid in transmitting messages from the true Spirit Spheres. Hence also one of the reasons of so many disappointments and failures, so much confusion and so many errors: for the conditions of that Astral-elemental Plane are always a barrier between man and all conditions above it.

The seven spheres that comprise our *Earth Universe* give the seven notes of the octave in music.

The five intermediate conditions between the seven spheres are half-tones that come between the full notes and blend them. The semi-tones can be used either to raise or lower the pitch of the full note, *i.e.*, as a sharp to raise the pitch, or as a flat to lower it.

These seven full tones and five semi-tones have been called the twelve spirit spheres or planes, but this is an incorrect description, because the Spirit Spheres are only seven, with the five as intermediate conditions.

These seven spheres each contain expansions of their tonalities that give the repetition of the octave in higher and lower positions of their harmonies.

The laws of vibration that govern the communication between spheres depend for their accuracy

upon the harmonious response to the laws that govern the musical scale; and the infinite varieties of harmonies that can be evolved, the limitless possibilities for combination of full tonalities, give the multitudinous conditions in the spheres into which the soul passes when freed from the earthly body, while there are, in addition, the intermediate conditions or semi-tones that belong to all persons in whom the astral element predominates.

Man ought to pass from Earth life through the First Sphere into the Second without delaying in either an earth-bound condition or in that astral-elemental region beyond it. A ripe soul ought to traverse that narrow River of Death, leaving behind him the all of his mortal form and its astral-elemental envelopes, and should pass in his "soul essence" alone into that Second Sphere that lies beyond the dark river. Very few do this, for many, indeed, are either earth-bound for a time, or, worse still, are so deeply entangled in the conditions of the Astral-elemental Plane that they remain in it for many centuries, mistaking it for the true Spirit World.

All the spheres of spirit life have their higher and lower polarity, as will be observed by a reference to the chart. The nature realm is in the lower polarities, and a spirit who is not very progressive may remain as a spirit in that lower polarity, and still possess the immortal heritage, which entrance to those spheres confers on even the humbler entities; while those who pass into that Astral-

elemental Plane, and reach in it fine mental development without the true spiritual accompaniment obtainable only in the *spirit spheres*, are **not** possessed of the same heritage; because they are not in the Spirit World, but only in that *semi-astral* region that leads *back* in the scale of evolution, and not forward.

The mysteries of true spiritual evolution, and of *growth* in the *spirit*, belong to the study of the Spirit World, and must be given in the books that will follow this volume, space and the vast number of conditions to be considered in the study of the Astral-elemental Plane, to which this book is primarily devoted, prevent any full exposition of spiritual conditions except to show that they exist, and to give the contrasts between the true spiritual conditions and those of the Astral-elemental Plane, so frequently mistaken for it.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ASTRAL-ELEMENTAL PLANE

THE Astral-elemental Plane is shown on the chart as a transparent film that envelops the entire First Sphere.

From its most material admixture in the Earth itself to the highest apex of the tall cone, it is always an *elemental* region, in which the *astral elements* are the refining media for all within it.

Whether they are mental or material substances that are refined in this plane, they are *etherealised* by the astral ether, but are *not spiritualised* by it, and are only of the same nature as the elementals. Hence they come under the same law of evolution and of the lower polarity, a law that brings destruction as the correlative to construction on that plane. Only to the fossilising character of the astral element itself is due the apparent permanence of any form etherealised in that plane. The seeming spirituality of the form is one of the illusions of that plane, for, when the end of this Earth comes, as come it must, those so apparently immortal and so beautifully ethereal lands, and those gossamer bodies of the astral regions, will melt away as snow melts in the fierce fires of the physical furnace. Even as the Astral World perished in a flood of that element, so will this Physical Earth perish in the fires of its element, and *all those*

entities of the astral plane will also perish in that fire. There is no immortality to be gained by affiliation to its conditions.

If we study the anatomy of the astral plane and of the Earth together, we shall see that this astral sac covers the whole Earth plane as a man's astral envelope encloses his Earth body. That astral sac bears a strong resemblance to a spongy network, the meshes of which contract and expand daily and nightly. Where the sun's rays fall this astral region is thin and very transparent, but at the portion away from the direct rays of the Sun it forms a deep, wide reservoir of the astral fluids that flow into this region daily, and are drawn up into that tall cone that floats over the Earth plane, and sends out its long root-suckers to drink in the astral fluids.

The tall cone seems to stretch up towards the Dark Sea as if rejoicing in its stillness and darkness—its negation. It is as though the cone is repelled by the activities of those myriad forms of semi-astral life that gyrate round the Earth itself, and then are sucked up by those giant roots of the bulb-cone, and carried round and round in long spirals, drawn on by a strong current that flows towards the Dark Sea of Death; forming that vast cloud around the cone that assumes the appearance of many lands.

Although the astral envelope encloses the whole Earth and the Earth plane, it is only at this region, away from the sun rays, that its vast size and the

extent of the realm it encloses can be seen. Its bulk far exceeds that of the Earth, although its exceeding ethereality renders it like a cloud-realm only ; and its peculiar shape, as extended by the presence of that tall cone, tends to confuse the sight of the Earth-plane clairvoyant, accustomed to think of the spirit spheres as encircling the Earth in equal rings.

As the Earth turns on its axis daily the astral fluids flow away from the approaching sunlight and under the sac, or skin, in which those fluids are contained. As they flow, they cause the astral envelope to expand, and swell in the way the gas-bag of a balloon expands as the gas fills it ; and as the astral fluid flows on the film envelope shrinks together, and falls down again over the Earth and into the Earth, permeating the whole realm of matter in the way a fine oil saturates even stone and oozes through glass.

This causes a daily and nightly flow of astral etheric waves all over and into the Earth, and a blending in the soil of astral and physical magnetisms. It accounts for why all astral things become visible by night and not by day, and why the night side of life has so many mysteries the day cannot help us to fathom ; why there is power at night for phenomenal exhibitions upon the elemental planes : a power that comes with the darkness and ebbs away at daylight.

The elemental plane and the astral plane blend as one, although the elements in it are of

the physical as well as of the astral embryo materials.

The Earth ball turns on its axis daily, floating in the fluids of its elemental plane, just as a ball might turn over and over in a glass filled with water.

The " sac " of the astral envelope does not turn with the motion of the Earth ball ; the fluids within it simply flow under its coverings, agitated by the motion of the Earth, and the effects of the sunlight on the astral element in those fluids.

The whole of the real Spirit Spheres are stationary. They rest above the Astral Sac, and are polarised to the Spiritual Element, and thus are not affected by the influences that regulate the motions of the material Earth and the astral fluids. They are, however, carried round the Sun with the Earth, because all are enclosed in that outer envelope of the planet that gives to the whole its separate individuality as a distinct, self-contained, unit.

At the point where the tall " cone " of the Astral-elemental Plane is seen, rising from the browner mass of fluids, the appearance of this region is that of a protuberance on the spherical form of the Earth plane ; it rises up from it in fact as an excrescence, a fungus growth on the body of the Earth and under the astral film.

It is, in truth, a parasitic region, the result of the presence of a group of parasitic spirits surviving from the Astral Era as an attachment fastened on to the Earth seed, and not any necessary part of the anatomy of the Earth.

This cone is the bulb root developed by the spirits from the lost astral world, who were too corrupt and evil to find incarnation at any stage of the Earth's evolution, yet were too strong as individualities, too powerful as mentalities, to be extinguished together with the corrupt entities of the lower soul alone.

The cone has the appearance of the bulb root of a water plant, floating on the fluids of the Elemental-astral Plane, and is under the enclosing sac, which it lifts up into that curious pointed shape. Seen from below, it sometimes presents the semblance of a cloud land, as well as of a water plant ; it floats on the sky like a mirage, and from it innumerable fine threads, like root tendrils, reach down to the Earth plane and draw up life essence. Those fine fibrous roots, far more ethereal even to clairvoyant sight than the finest spider's threads, extend themselves all across the Earth region of the elemental plane, as it is carried past them by the revolving Earth at night, and forms a net of subtle attractive power that draws to it all persons who allow magnetic affinity to become established with the conditions of that plane.

This floating realm assumes many metamorphoses. Floral islands of the most luxuriant tropical plants and trees and vividly beautiful flowers, marvellous vistas of mountains and valleys, of magnificent buildings and lofty palaces, great cities more wonderful than any upon the Earth, wide oceans and lovely lakes, clear rivers and sandy plains,

unfold in one panoramic effect after another till the seer imagines all creation must be passing before his eyes, and all the marvels of the spirit realms unveiling their beauties to his sight. Sometimes great spirits appear to pass, or pause to hold converse with the seer. The most magnificent, the most colossal forms belong to them, and suggest that they can only be from the highest spheres of spirit life.

In very truth, the whole is of the nature of an illusion. The visions and the majestic spirits who seem so vivid with life and power, are merely *reflections* on that marvellous astral aura of the Earth that has been sucked up by that strange bulb root, and serves to illuminate the *thought pictures* thrown upon that focus of attraction by the minds of the lost spirits of the Astral World. These pictures represent quite truthfully the dwelling-places of these lost spirits, but *those dwelling-places exist no longer anywhere, save as memory pictures*, because they belonged to the lost Astral World, and have perished with it.

With these memory pictures the former appearances of the astral spirits *as they were in past days* can be shown also as living and moving amid those scenes that were, indeed, fair beyond the power of mortal man, immersed in dull, insensate matter, to conceive of them.

The whole fantasia is as if a man in the depths of degradation and squalor were to call up visions of his youth and day of power, and throw those

visions upon a sensitised mirror, on which they would be reproduced as existent verities, so that they might even cheat the man himself with the hope that they were not lost to him for ever.

Sometimes, if attention is focussed upon this lotus land steadily, its flowers become huge octopus plants, with long, snake-like roots, extending from each blossom ; giant suckers emerging from the dark centre of the cone, and absorbing with greedy avidity everything that is carried past them on the astral tide.

Grey and white mists envelop that tall cone, and gyrate round the black central zone. The appearance is of sheath over sheath enveloping the dark centre, as skins of a bulb infold one another ; and every sheath is a semi-transparent grey and white film through which that inner darkness may be seen.

The enfolding sheaths suggest that they enclose the heart of the blossom, that inner core from which the seeds of new lives will be perennially born ; in truth, there is nothing within that darkness that can give life at all. All that is within that hollow cylinder *absorbs life, and never gives it back again.*

The darkness of that cylinder is like that of a ring, a tall circular column of such opaque blackness that it forms a background for those semi-luminous grey and white mists that gyrate round it in long, broad spirals ; it serves to give the effect of a mirror to those luminous mists of astral vapours.

Where the tall, dark column looms through these mists, it gives a deep shade of greyness, and multiplies itself into myriad pillars as of black marble ; broken shafts melting away in an endless vista—a strange illusion, caused by these magic mists, that also multiply a thousandfold the images seen through their agency. Endless panoramas of infinitude these seem, and yet they are only the magnified and multiplied replicas of fragmentary things.

This effect, from those faintly luminous mists, and the tall, dark column within them, is that of a mirror that is circular, and has no ending, so that one may travel round and round it and behold on both sides that endless panorama of living realities, past histories, shadows of future things, all blended into one phantasmagoria that drifts round the tall column in a long chain of ascent from the elemental plane of the Earth.

It is these luminous transparent astral vapours, like liquid air, gyrating round the central cone, that form the mirror, and are the media for the reflections seen in it. They also serve to throw those reflections down on to the Earth plane and its astral fluids, which forms another mirror. All that is thrown upon these luminous vapours from without the dark column, and all that is projected on to them from *within it by the minds of the powerful mentalities*, who live in the darkness as in a prison-house, find equal power for expression in objective visions.

Affiliation to this mirror gives the power of seeing in the black mirrors used in evil magic, black being the colour that is its affinity.

Hence black is by no means a desirable colour to include in any part of mediumistic visioning, either a black velvet background for a crystal or any other purpose.

The dark spirits who live within the astral cone, having no vital essence of their own, no media on which to express anything, have, nevertheless, by great skill and ingenuity, developed this grey land as a distinct condition of existence and made it their domain.

They obtained the original germ from some astral seeds of what was called the "Lotus Land" of the astral world: a region in which the spirit inhabitants were not wholly corrupt and evil, but only passive and negative, drifting into good or into evil at the suggestions of external mentalities, or in mechanical response to undisciplined desires—the lotus eaters, the dreamers of sensual dreams. Hence comes the name of the Lotus Land, and that flower as its symbol.

Many unprogressed spirits from the lost Astral World contributed to the building up of this strange land that forms a series of sheaths enclosing the dark cone of the Astral Men. The Mystics gave a large percentage of the elements of which these lands are composed, and the beauty and symbolism that take form and objective existence in the thought creations of that plane are due to the Mystics.

A high degree of mysticism does not necessarily imply a corresponding mental and spiritual development ; on the contrary, it frequently means that brain and spirit body are being robbed of their means of growth, in order to feed and develop excessive visioning on the mystic planes.

Thus the mystics of the Astral World, who became entranced in contemplation of the beauty and ideality mirrored in the heart of the Astral Star, would become in themselves almost petrified, mentally, by its influence. Extreme contemplation of one theme, or one line of thought, no matter how high is the ideal, or how beautiful the religious or philosophic truth that is enshrined in the subject of contemplation, is paralysing to the mind, and arrests the evolutionary process ; in effect, suspends all activities.

The tendency is to live in the spirit while lost in contemplation, and not to exercise the functions of the material body. The mental powers become the agent for the supplying of the life essences, which even the most ecstatic condition require. Ergo, the dreamers, unless in the conditions of suspended animation that constitute one type of trance state, are certain to draw on any source of supply available, and to do so unconsciously, because mind and body are acting separately ; the machinery of the body is merely that of an automaton.

In the Astral World the supply of vital essences would be in the atmosphere surrounding the dreamer, and would be in great abundance, so that

no vampirism would be required to obtain it, nor would vampirism be developed by thus acquiring the sustaining fluids. The dreaming mystic of that era of the Earth's evolution could allow every power of his mind to concentrate upon his visions, and absorb both his mental and bodily sustenance at the same time, while in the semi-entranced condition.

The astral body of Adamite man to-day shows ability to reproduce this power of absorption, if development on certain lines is followed ; but the astral body of Adamite man is not exactly the same as the body of the mystic of the astral era, and man is apt to become a parasite, if he lives by the agency of absorption, instead of by the normal means pertaining to material conditions.

The perfect condition for the reception of mental impressions from other minds is, however, that of the passive absorber, in whom all but the mental perceptions are at rest.

That is, nevertheless, a negative state. The individual is not using his own mental faculties at all, but is allowing his mind to become simply a mirror to reflect the results of the activities of other mentalities. The powers of such a brain will first stagnate, then atrophy: because it is a law of nature that everything that is inactive withers away.

The mentality of the perfect mystic, who carries to its extreme possibilities the condition of passive receptive contemplation, becomes a frozen pool

in affiliation to the motionless centre of the astral element, that most perfect of all mental mirrors.

There are, and can be, no emotions in the mind thus passively contemplative. The calmness and purity are those of a statue, not of a living, pulsing entity.

There can be no progressive evolution in such a character, for the whole object of evolution is attainment of the highest degree of sensation united to power of control over the expression of the emotions, and regulation of the actions that arise from strong emotions. To kill or to petrify emotion is to go back to the conditions of the lower polarity, in which there are no emotions, but only automatic response to magnetic influences: the conditions of the rocks and the fluids.

The mystics of the Astral Era, who became lost in meditation and oblivious to realities, would have gained no share in the spiritual evolution of their world, for all that is possessed in the spirit must be won, grain by grain, through stress and conquest and unremitting labour. Periods of rest are the necessary counterpoise to activity in the spirit, but rest must not degenerate in a negative condition barren of all save dreams.

Many mystics of the Astral Era would be carried away in the conditions of the lower polarity, even as flowers and fair things of beauty in many forms were carried away as part of the nature realm.

All these negative, unprogressed souls would forfeit their heritage in the Spirit Realms for the

exact opposite reason that the Serpent-men lost theirs, and all would form a group of souls in elemental affinity, although widely different in moral character and intellectual development.

For the spirits who were merely negative, and not evil, there would be a far more rapid release from their intermediate state, and during the period, when the *elements* were evolving into their present conditions, these spirits of the astral world would find opportunity for incarnation in the ethereal stages of the Earth's evolution in matter.

Before Adam appeared, these Spirits of the Elements, who were almost of the Astral Era still, would inhabit those cloudlands of the developing Earth, and their cloudlands would be driven back and back, farther and farther from the material ball, and gather in long spirals round the astral cone; drawn nearer and nearer to it in response to the desires of the Serpent-men.

The Grey Land, with its crescent of light, represents all that is now left of that semi-astral realm. The dark cone owes its existence to the Serpent-men of the lost Astral World. Both realms represented types of life in the astral era, and as such formed the focus for attracting all that there was, and is now, of the astral fluids, which crystallise upon those semi-mental creations, and give them an intermediate condition between mind and matter.

Both the Grey Land and the Dark Cone possess tangible existence on the mental-astral planes; but, whereas the Serpent-men have had no spiritual

essence to transmute into conditions of true spirit states, the mystics and other negative spirits of the astral era had spiritual essence, and thus could give a *semi-spiritual* condition to their grey lands, and *truly spiritual* conditions to those intermediate planes that are *not part* of the grey lands of the Elemental-astral Plane, but a series of spiritual regions that *ascend from Earth life* by another line of evolution than that which leads to the grey lands.

It is these intermediate planes of semi-astral, semi-physical evolution that have been likened to the semi-tones in the musical scale.

The gateway that bears the symbol of the rainbow arch, and leads into the grey lands, does not admit to the intermediate planes of spirit life. One of the errors that have done much to confuse the study of mediumship, and pervert the path of normal evolution is the error that has led many psychics in all ages to choose the false way that leads only to the Grey Land, instead of the true and narrow way that leads to life in the Spirit Realms.

The power that is in a spirit to attract spiritual life, and radiate it again, suggested the clever scheme by which the souls of the negative mystics of the astral era were first made the focus for attracting life to their "shell" of an astral realm, and the idea, that through them a line of union, with man of the Adamite creation, might be formed that would link the Serpent-men with the world of Earth once more.

To keep supplying that astral shell of this Grey Land with life as a supply source for the Serpent-men; and to keep it as a screen against the encroachment of the physical element, that is so antagonistic and destructive to all purely astral entities, was the primal purpose of the institution of all those lines of vampirism under the guise of religions, or philosophies, or sciences of occult origin that have appeared in all ages of the Earth's history, and which are continually being renewed in fresh forms of appeal to men's minds as fast as their true nature is exposed, and the old lines of teachings destroyed.

Not only is that Elemental-astral Plane an example of the power and evil influences of the Serpent-men, but the Dark Sea owes its present aspect to them, for it is fed with all those nullified and destroyed personalities whom the evil spirits have literally absorbed in prolonging their own existences.

When the Earth was first evolved into material form there was no dark sea separating the merely elemental region from its higher evolution in spirit life. There was only transition, step by step, from sphere to sphere, by an unbroken ladder of progress.

But when Adam and Eve fell into the trap set by the Serpent-men, and involved themselves and their descendants in the meshes of the network of those astral influences, that elemental region assumed an importance previously unknown, and the Dark Sea began to grow in volume and

spread as a ring of separation and death between man and his Spirit Spheres.

The elemental plane ought to be the Placenta Region, and nothing more. It is designed to give form and expression to all types of living things. There ought to be no return into its conditions once that region of embryo life has been entered and passed out of into objective existence ; it is because of the affiliations to its conditions that have been established since the Eden days that so many persons become chained to that region.

Every old occultism has recognised the existence of a danger zone, and of vast hordes of evil intelligences of all types of men and strange beings as dwelling in it, and one of the most vexed problems of mediumship in all ages has been the difficulty of protecting the psychics, who essayed to explore that zone of evil in the attempt to reach the spirit lands. The earliest spiritualists were repeatedly warned of the dangerous class of spirits that surround the Earth, but no one has yet viewed that realm in all its myriad aspects.

The spirits who carry the Serpent as their symbol of power are the true overlords of that realm. They have many varieties of henchmen and humble slave souls under their dominion ; and, while only to a few daring students have glimpses of these spirits been given as *actual verities seen as they exist now*, their all-extended influence is a constant menace to mankind, and

must be recognised as such by every mediumistic person.

Once the existence of the Serpent-men is recognised, and their relation to the wonderlands of the Elemental-astral Plane is known, those strange floating cloud realms—those islands of gorgeous flowers; those marvellous vistas of great civilisations, whose histories seem to unroll before the eyes of the psychic like an endless panorama of creation—become as weird and awful visions of illusionment, hiding within them and their luxuriant beauties other visions, too dread to be contemplated, with æsthetic pleasure, when the true character of their unearthly splendour is known. The dark secrets of unholy power, and the tragic mysteries that those splendours shroud and the flower lands hide, change their aspect to that of a charnel house, when the truth is discovered by the clear sight of the higher soul.

The Dark Sea, as it surges round the enclosing sac of the first sphere and its outer rings of the Elemental-astral Plane, holds the results of the evil fruits, that, since the days of Adam, have been grown and ripened and harvested by the Serpent-men as the produce of those seeds of wisdom and “secrets of power” that were given to Adam and Eve first, and have been offered ever since to their descendants.

CHAPTER IX

ASTRAL SPIRITS

THE MASTERS AND THEIR POWER OF PROJECTION

THE term "astral spirits" has been so often misapplied that it will be well to define its meaning. The effects of the influence of the spirits of the Elemental-astral Plane is so strongly marked in all exhibitions of mediumship to-day that it will be well to define their position also, since both possess power on that plane.

The astral spirits—*i.e.*, the spirits of the Astral Era—are not upon the Earth at all. They have entirely passed away from it. The only representatives of that era are those "imprisoned mentalities" who are in the dark centre of the astral cone.

All the other spirits from the lost astral world have long since found a measure of incarnation in the semi-material stages of the present Earth. *The shells*, or sheaths, of those lands that they once inhabited, *before* they found incarnation in the semi-material era of the Earth's evolution, were left, like the cocoon cast off by the butterfly; and these shells, or films, were retained by the dark astral spirits, just as the astral shell, cast off by a man in the flesh, is sometimes artificially

preserved, and retained in the vampire condition of a mere spongy absorber of vitality.

Thus the Grey Land that was *once* a land of many colours, much beauty, is *now* merely a realm of semi-moribund existences, grey as ashes, and a place where the abnormal sponge-like properties of the vampire have attained abnormal powers of sucking in all that comes within reach of its attractions.

Those astral spirits of evil lives have filled that grey realm with vitality, stolen from many sensitives all through the ages. They have made it animate with this borrowed life, so that psychics who become able to see it imagine it to be a realm teeming with vital interests. Nevertheless, year by year, it is beginning to shrink and wither, in spite of all the arts of the super-vampires who control its destinies.

Those Serpent-men, whose sign manual is the Serpent, and who are imprisoned in that sheath of greyness that is at once their fortress and their prison, can never leave the shelter it affords. They could not endure the effects of the physical light for an hour; to leave their prison would be to court annihilation.

They can, and do, however, project their mental *influence* all over the Earth, and can reproduce a variety of pictures *mentally created* that show themselves as they desire to appear in the sight of man.

To do this requires the media of persons in the

flesh, whose mentality is on a plane that approximates to their own, and whose auras possess the necessary degree of astral fluids to receive the imprint of the astral visions.

In this way *they usually show the appearance they possessed in the astral world by recalling it to their own minds, and transferring the mental picture to the medium's mind.*

If mediums will consider that it is these spirits who lost their heritage in the higher life by their evil desires, they will realise that no true guidance is to be obtained by gaining the power of seeing any of the astral spirits of our Earth ; and may also realise the exceeding danger of allowing them to establish affinity.

In animating these replicas of a former stage, they can give expression to their pictures and vivid action by the power of their own minds, acting through the mental image as a mask, that they hold over their true appearance, veiling its dreadful realities by the illusionary effects of those "memory pictures" of themselves ; pictures such as an old man can call up in his mind when he remembers his appearance as a youth.

If man had this power, that is possessed by an astral spirit, of *clothing himself* in thought-created garments and a thought-created form, and of changing at will the impression of his appearance that he desired to give, man also could create illusions as to his *personal* appearance. An actor does this, in a measure, when his whole expression

and, for the moment, his whole character becomes that of some personality he is representing.

To an astral spirit, the power of whose intellect far transcends that of any man on Earth, the process of casting over his true character this veil of an illusionary personality is as simple as the art of the actor. He is, for the moment, the character he would represent—be that a saint or a devil. He can repeat the process of metamorphosis at will, but only *where there is present, on Earth and in the personality of some earthly medium, the elements he requires to assimilate and assume to cover over his own personality as with a cloak.*

Mental and moral attributes are reproduced on the astral plane as objective realities ; thoughts, good or bad, become things there, and the aspirations of a good man, who acts as a medium, or those of an evil man, will alike give materials to the spirit, who *uses the elements* of all these things in the aura of the medium.

Good, healthy magnetism will reproduce itself in the perfect physical form that is “etherealised” from the elements given off by the medium, and those elements that he is absorbing from the atmosphere. The moment a medium begins to throw off elements and generate magnetic power, he begins also to absorb from his surroundings ; and thus, not only what he is in himself, but what he obtains, will affect the appearance of the visions built up in his aura ; or (to go farther still in the process of creating a thought form, and then

semi-materialising it) to the objective appearance given to the master spirit, who is manipulating the machinery of the astral-elemental planes.

Everything being only borrowed from the medium, and through the medium from the surrounding conditions, will inevitably reproduce them in clothing the thought form.

Thus it will be understood that any evil spirit, or one of the Serpent-men, with all his power of creating illusions, would, nevertheless, be limited by the nature of the elements that he was able to obtain, and that the purity of those elements would be a vital condition if he desired to show himself in the character of a good and pure spirit and personate a high religious individuality.

It is quite a mistake to imagine that evil, and persons of evil lives are desired as the mediums for the propagation of the Serpent line of wisdom ; good persons are far more useful, as affording pure and attractive elements to manipulate, if once those good persons can be rendered so negative and so trustful that they will allow a convenient veil of illusions to be cast over their own eyes, and will resign their mentality to the guidance of a dominating personality representative of the Serpent-men.

That which is *in itself* pure cannot be made to assume any evil disguise, nor can it be contaminated by impurities. It cannot amalgamate with that which is false and vile ; so that nothing can be shown of the pure and good spirit by a false or

illusionary process. We do not *see* God, because we have no conditions on Earth that can reflect His perfect purity. What we do see sometimes in very exalted states is the mental image of one of His messengers ; Himself we cannot see.

In evil conditions, or those that are partly evil or unhealthy (unclean, because impure, for health means purity in the material elements), we should see no appearance at all of a pure spirit ; *we would not see such a spirit clothed in an impure garment, for such a spirit could never assume it.* We would have no manifestation at all.

If, however, the spirit was not pure, not good, but only assuming the elements of a good person to produce an illusion as to his real condition, *an appearance of something* would almost inevitably take place, but show first the nature of the elements in use, and next the damning fact that the spirit was as ready to manifest his appearance through impure as through pure elements, and was quite able to amalgamate his personality with them and assume them. That, in truth, while he had power to appropriate the elements, he had not power to change their character. He could clothe his thought form in the elements he collected, but do so only as a man might dip a candle wick in melted fat again and again till the required consistency was obtained ; the candle would be rank or fragrant because the fat (or materials) used was foul or was wholesome.

No pure spirit could use a foul amalgamation of

elements. Spiritualists know that if they desire communion with pure spirits they must give them pure conditions to enter, even as mental projections, whereas the evil and impure can, and do, manifest readily in all sorts of conditions.

It has even been proved that an evil spirit who has gained entrance to a circle can cover his evil personality with a white robe drawn from the pure among the circle itself, and so shield his true aspect. Even white draperies, once held to be proof of the purity of a spirit, are not found to be an infallible test.

Does not this go to show that something certainly responds to the invocation, but that "something" has a dual aspect. The resultant appearance is representative, not of the power of the spirit who responds, except in regard to his ability to show some tangible appearance, but of the *limitation of his power to the conditions of the elements surrounding the person he employs as medium*. The power of creating an illusion of beauty is limited and subordinated to the conditions round the medium, *and still more certainly by the reality of the spirit's own condition* when nothing of a purer and higher character can be appropriated and used.

That which applies to the spirits of the astral plane applies also to the Masters who teach their formulas for development and the production of forms of manifestations.

The term "Master" has many applications,

according to the subjects in relation to which it is used from the Super-masters of the Serpent line to all those adepts and teachers who represent the Oriental School of Occultism, and those "Masters" of the witchcraft eras whose lines of teachings show many points of resemblance. In regard to the Masters whose presence may be invoked by a mystic syllable of power, it may be pointed out here that if the Master were himself of a high type, and possessed of perfect moral radiations, he would not be dependent on the conditions of the medium's surroundings. He would not be sometimes seen as a perfect being, and at others as a form representative of vileness unspeakable. It is admitted by the Orientals themselves that this is possible, and there are pupils of that school who have thus seen the "Masters" both as beautiful and as vile. The Master would either show himself always as a fine personality, or not manifest at all.

It is evident that, while the Master's mentality controls the agglomeration of elements he employs, he cannot change their essential constituents. He is himself only on the Elemental-astral Plane, and the forces he controls are only the elemental forces.

This being so in relation to both the Serpent-men who have made that plane their kingdom, and also to all the spirits and mortals they influence and control, the best protection a psychic can have against their insidious influence is in the material envelopment of the earth life and body of the flesh,

and no medium ought to allow himself to be drawn out of that zone of protection.

It is persons who can be influenced on the mental planes who are in most danger. Hence prolonged meditation, merging often in a trance state, or of suspended thought; fasting to weaken the physical hold on life; contemplation of religious ideals; and power of visioning on the mental plane, are all questionable, if great care is not taken as to the objects of the meditation. So strong a barrier is the material condition that the astral spirits require to find mediums who are of semi-astral, semi-physical lines of descent in order to transfer their astral-created illusions into material objectivity, and it is always among races who are of the mixed lines of descent that the teachings of the Serpent-men begin to show their influence over the leading lines of thought that find dominance in each succeeding era.

Once affiliation to the Serpent-men has been established with any group of thinkers, the network of their teachings and their instructions for developing psychics on to the Astral-elemental Plane is soon spread and securely attached; and in some cases so strong is the power of the Serpent mind that sensitives are actually drawn on and on and *into the* dark realm of the Serpent-men, and are thus destroyed.

The Bible speaks of the "net" that is to be broken that the enmeshed souls may be delivered; this is the net referred to.

These astral spirits cannot enter the elemental plane, being, as already stated, imprisoned in their own dark vacuum. It can be understood why they desire to draw men towards themselves, and why they prescribe formulas for development of the section of man's anatomy that corresponds to their lower polarity, and especially that which corresponds to and can be made to vibrate in response to their dark vacuum and its vibrations.

Man's anatomy, corresponding section by section to the anatomical development of his planet; each region in the Earth bearing its relation to some part of the material body of the man on Earth.

The Serpent-men are the only spirits of the purely astral evolution attached to Earth now. All others are now of a more or less mixed degree of semi-material developments.

There are many degrees of these semi-astral spirits around the Earth, but they cannot claim the title of "astral spirits" any longer.

There is, however, another class of spirits who have been sometimes called "astral spirits" and sometimes "angelic beings," and other attractive titles, and who have usurped a great deal of control over the minds and bodies of men and women who essayed to enter upon unrestricted intercourse with the astral planes under the delusion these planes were the gateways to the heavenly realms. To some mortals these beings have even presented themselves in the character of astral brides or bridegrooms, for they are able to enter into very

close affinity with Earth's material conditions. They have been the controls during the witchcraft eras, and the inspirers of some of the old occult, semi-religious, semi-scientific associations of European evolution.

These spirits are not astral spirits at all, and have no title to the name. They are simply men and women of the days before the Flood of Noah's era, and they had developed their astral bodies into so perfect an affiliation to the elemental plane that they are now chained to its conditions, and can never leave it again; for not till the end of the Earth comes in physical fire will their so-called astral bodies be destroyed and free their souls.

Spiritualists who have adopted and used the means of development that were enshrined in those old occultisms have thereby done infinite harm to what should have been the pure, true line of *natural* evolution of mediumship that the inspirers of modern spiritualism attempted to establish, but which has now become sadly mixed with the old and dangerous and discredited errors.

Those bodies of the Elemental-astral Plane that are built up from material elements as well as astral fluids, and with the two in equal combination make forms that are as iron cages, indestructible except by the fiery furnace of the physical element at its lower pole.

These are the beings who can truly dominate on the Elemental-astral Plane. They can protect or they can destroy, and against their edicts there

is no appeal, for they are the kings and queens who are as deputies and sub-rulers on that plane ; beings whose mentalities the Serpent-men control with an imperfect measure of success.

Very magnificent are the appearances which some of them present when seen in light of the astral plane ; but appalling in the grossness of their passions and the colossal evils of which they are the parents.

They are a mongrel crew, none the less, and do not represent the Astral Race at all. They possess marvellous power over the elements, and can build up almost anything they desire to construct on the elemental plane. In conjunction with mediums, these are the master-magicians of that plane. It is with them that partnership has been entered upon by one great magician in the Earth body after another, and the marvellous powers of those spirits has thus been transmitted. They are both evil and dangerous to form any affiliation with, and seldom, indeed, have their Earth partners escaped a tragic termination to their careers of powers. Every old writer on the magic arts recognises the dangers of intercourse with these beings—one time, Earth men themselves.

Some of them are seen as colossal men and women. Often with large *luminous halos* enveloping them and astonishing powers of flight, due to the fact that they are the champion vampires of their plane, and can, and do, absorb from a multitude of spirits out of the body, and hosts of sensitive psychic

persons in the flesh, and thus obtain all that magnetism that gives these evil beings their superabundant supply of luminous ether. In beholding these "Shining Ones," the seer beholds the quintessence of evil vampire power developed through the ages upon ages since they lived on Earth. No wonder a sense of overpowering awe and fear is inspired by the sight of their passing across the plane of vision of the sensitives. The very power to see them indicates a great danger, for it shows the sensitive has acquired an affiliation to their plane, and may be drawn on to it at death of the mortal body. That body forms the barrier against absorption by these beings, but at death that barrier will be removed, and the unfortunate psychic will find it difficult—sometimes, alas! impossible—to avoid being drawn into the vortex of that magnetic whirlpool that these vampire spirits create around themselves, and set in motion by their powerful will-force.

The rotation of the magnetic elements around these beings may be observed as a series of corkscrew spirals, the central pivot of which is the vampire spirit. The progressive revolutions of the screw inevitably carries anything that has been caught in the whirling vortex nearer and nearer the central pivot, till it is brought into direct contact and *absorbed in that centre—i.e., the vampire spirit.*

These spirits of the Elemental-astral Plane drive in chariots, and ride upon winged horses,

and can throw over their personalities the appearance described by the Greeks and Romans as that of their Gods and Goddesses, until the clear sight of the *truly spiritual* clairvoyant reveals to the seer the vileness of the true appearance of these spirits when stripped of the glamour of the illusions with which they drape their forms, and the *mental pictures* of themselves they project around them.

It is difficult for the average mortal to understand the power of creating an illusionary appearance of beauty and brightness around an evil spirit whose true personality is dark and vile, but it must be remembered that on that *elemental plane* everything is in a formative condition, and can be used to build up the semblance of anything, that is still no more than a mechanically-constructed form that will remain intact only so long as fresh elements can be added to it. Hence the vampirism.

Like the Serpent-men, they can assume many appearances ; show themselves as living in magnificent palaces ; crowned as kings ; draped as sages ; devout as saints ; winged as are the angels ; yet all these are mere illusions, in which they envelop themselves by a power that is transmitted to them from their overlords, the Serpent-men. They cannot, however, assume any appearance of any era that *post dates* the period of their incarnation upon Earth, because to give any appearance of any type of spirit, or any era of the Earth, requires that there be the foundation of an actual phase of existence experienced which has left the

film of an accomplished thing. Even the Serpent-men, with all the falseness of their natures, when they project an appearance of one of themselves that is beautiful, show the *characteristic features that they once possessed*, and, in idealising their appearance into a perfection they never possessed in reality, even in the astral world, *they take as their foundation features that were their own, and wear the semblance of drapery that was the fashion of their era.*

It is a law of the Universe that no one can show, as a spirit, anything to which he has not established affinity first as an actual possession, and these beings, who are on the elemental plane, had no share in Earth life after the Deluge. They were all by their own acts imprisoned on the elemental plane in the bodies of that plane, which they had so carefully constructed and developed from the astral root. They cannot show as men and women of any later period, for all possibility of reincarnation was destroyed in the process of diverting all their powers to the building up of these gigantic astral bodies.

When a spirit shows himself in the dress of a certain era, that fashion has a very important bearing on his condition in spirit life to those who understand the laws of spirit evolution.

These beings, some of whom have called themselves "Astral Bridegrooms," have a great desire to establish themselves in that relation to mortals in order to gain from Earth life renewed powers on

their own plane. These also are of the nature of the vampire, although they can give power from their plane in exchange for that which they absorb.

No spirit who shows himself as a man of any period subsequent to the Deluge belongs to this class of beings, for never since then has there been the same astral conditions present in the Earth. Any spirit who has incarnated since that period cannot belong to their order which has distinct powers of their own evolving.

Neither should any person who is descended from any of the semi-astral lines be supposed to derive descent from any of these beings, *because nothing has ever descended from any unions they contrived to form*. They never have had the power to create anything in the mortal form, or of its type. The very process by which they transferred all their creative powers to the Elemental-astral Plane destroyed finally and for ever all power they ever had in matter.

Those races and those classes of mystics and mediums who claim astral descent can only derive their power from some of the unions between the semi-astral spirits of the elements and the Adamite race. These would be good or the reverse, as the Adamite race, with whom they united, would be ; but in no sense, and at no time, could they ever have been what these co-called "astral" bridegrooms were and are, for these are incapable of becoming parents on any plane, and are, indeed, unnameable abominations, worse than mere tra-

vesties of the name of "astral bridegrooms," which they assumed in derision of mankind.

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The Spirits of the Intermediate Planes must never be confused with any of these so-called astral spirits of very mixed types.

The Intermediate Planes do not belong to the Elemental-astral Plane at all; they begin above that stage, and are intermediate or borderland regions between two different spheres of spirit life.

The races who descended from the union of astral and material conditions, via the spirits of the astral era, who found immersion in the etherealised conditions of the elements of matter, would possess a right of heritage in the Intermediate Planes, but would also be in greater danger of becoming entangled in the conditions of the Elemental-astral Plane, because of their affinity to astral conditions. For such persons mediumship would present very special problems.

CHAPTER X

THE EVOLUTION OF MAN'S MATERIAL BODY THROUGH MATTER

THE SOUL OF MAN WAS NEVER IN THAT MATTER FROM the moment of Adam's appearance upon Earth, the higher and lower soul are seen acting in conjunction.

Before that there was in the whole nature realm of matter only the inferior soul with its types, automatic, unconscious in its operations. When Adam fell, he took upon himself and for his offspring the conditions of that lower soul in all that pertained to his material body. So strongly does the nature soul dominate man's earthly form now, so automatic are its actions, so closely do its responses to the cravings of the lower soul correspond to those of the nature world, the idea has arisen that man, the higher soul, has come up through all those inferior conditions and lower types of living things to find culmination in his own superior type at last.

This is a great error, not the less serious because it has found so wide an acceptance with those who advocate the Theory of Evolution. That theory is right in essence, but partially wrong in application, because it does not recognise that there are three separate forms combined in the one personality—the personality that we call a man in the flesh. That

their evolution may proceed from three starting-points, and find union in the one personality because the form man wears is no more a constituent of his soul than the garments he puts on; and there is no more necessity for man the spirit to have been in all the lower forms of nature than there is for him to personally spin every thread of the yarn from which his coat is made.

As presented by Darwin and his coadjutors, the theory applies to all that realm of nature from which man's material body is derived. It was in that realm of nature that the explorations and experiments were made; the material body was the subject of their study, and with it their experiments ended.

In expounding a broad principle of evolution, from the lowest condition to the highest, Darwin and his school gave testimony to a law of the Universe that is a truth, but they did not take into account the spiritual possibilities of a plane of evolution distinct from that of the material plane: or that there might be a law of a higher evolution pertaining to that plane and to man, but not to the nature realm, although man, when in the material body, came under the operations of both laws.

Darwin left his theory at the point where the link between man and the lower kingdom is found to be missing; indicating that there the parallel ceases. The idea that an ape-man existed, but has become extinct, is merely an hypothesis; and,

although a plausible explanation, it is not the only possible one. It has been left for other persons who adopted Darwin's theories to carry them on from the point at which he left them, and to expand and apply Darwin's discoveries to conditions of existence not included in his work; and, further, to adapt and dove-tail them into schemes of religion and philosophy that were no part of his original theories.

Man's evolution is a threefold process, because man has three bodies, each of a separate element, and all three as constituent parts of his personality; just as he wears several garments at the same time, yet can take each one off separately. The garment man wears on Earth is the body of the flesh—*i.e.*, matter derived from the physical elements.

This *matter* of which the body of the flesh is formed has come up through all the stages of evolution in the nature world, each stage refining and sensitising it a degree more till it became of a condition that man, the spirit of the higher polarity, could assume it.

The last factor in that refining and preparing process is the elemental-astral body derived from a seed from the Astral world.

That elemental-astral body is the missing link that unites man of the higher soul to matter of the lower. It is not of the ape-man type, because man's higher soul, with its dominant individuality, transforms the sensitive, sponge-like materials of the elemental form into the likeness of the man

who wears it. The elemental-astral body is merely a film, covering every part of the physical body, and is void of all features of its own. It is composed of elements of the astral and the physical planes, and is capable, in a normal condition, of absorbing and assimilating them.

In an abnormal condition this elemental-astral body becomes a very different thing ; and it is exactly for this reason that the study of the astral element, and all that it means in conjunction with the elemental form of the material ego, becomes of so much importance to mediums, because that is the machinery in nine cases out of ten which the methods of the old occultisms brought into active co-operation with the will and desires of the psychic.

True mediumship, which is that of the *ripe spirit*, needs no development, no elaborate process to render it available. It is the spurious mediumship, that acts only in conjunction with the agencies of the elemental plane, and through the development of this elemental-astral body, by abnormal lines of evolution, that requires artificial development.

True mediumship is a possession of the spirit : spurious, abnormally-developed mediumship represents only the powers stolen from others, and bought from the spirits of the elemental plane at the cost of the future freedom of the unfortunate psychics, who have thus entangled themselves in the net of the Serpent-men.

The materials that compose man's earthly form have passed through many stages and all degrees of evolution ; and through it all the *nature soul* was the animating principle up to the point at which the higher and the lower soul reach the dividing line.

There the process ended, leaving the materials in the ape-man stage, which is the nearest to the man that nature can evolve in conjunction with the astral seed-form to give the type.

Man of the higher soul had no need to be in any of those lower types. He never was in any of them, the nature soul being sufficient to animate and control the evolution, on those lower planes, of the mere form of flesh man wears.

Man's soul never will be in any of those lower types. Although he may sink to the lower conditions, and become ever so degraded—so much of the mere brute in his instincts and his actions—and may even become as the lowest of the aborigines, he is still a soul of that higher polarity, that higher creation made in the image of the Divine, and as such he retains, even in his lowest stage of degradation, a thread of affiliation to the higher type to which he belongs.

The idea that only the man-type survives through eternity is again responsible for the erroneous doctrine that man as a soul unit has *come up through all things and all forms of created life* to find his climax of evolution in the human type, *absorbing all the others in his personality,*

and extinguishing them thereby. This vampirish conception of the human type is not supported by any evidence of such extinction of all other types, because on Earth man and the lower types are existing side by side, and assuredly there is the same testimony to the continued existence of all types in the Spirit World that there is to the existence of the human—that is, men and animals, and all forms of things on Earth, are declared by spirits to be existing in a higher stage of evolution, and are seen by clairvoyants as existing co-equally with the existence of the man-type.

This material stage is not the end of evolution, but only one step in the long ladder of progression ; wherefore the tedious process of passing through all those lower forms, from rocks and plants and insects up to man, would surely be a waste of time for a *soul of the higher creation*.

Souls of the man-type, who have yielded to temptations again and again, and who, when returned to the material body to obtain a new chance of redeeming their lost superiority, elect instead to repeat their former mistakes and renew their degrading practices, their brutish cruelties, do at last incarnate in forms that reproduce the character of the spirit : and thus they emerge into material life in such degraded replicas of the Divine Image, in a type so closely akin to the gorilla that naturalists may be forgiven the erroneous idea that such men are the next stage upwards from that missing link.

Such souls as have sunk to this lowest point do display the bestial ferocity and worse than animal passions, but they are not a proof that man *originally*, as created by God, was of that character, nor that man has come up through all the lower types to culminate in a state of aboriginal brutality as a necessary part of evolution.

Such souls as are of that low type are old in evil ; not young in evolution in good. They are, it is true, climbing up again where the desire to climb dominates ; or it may be that some will sink even lower than any earth condition can support, and will pass to those hells of the spirit spheres of our planet in the nether polarity that are destined to destruction in the final end of the planet Earth.

What the ultimate fate of such souls will be cannot be dogmatically asserted. The fact that the *soul* is in its nature immortal would indicate that, even for those spirits in the depths of hell, there is a possibility of redemption at last.

Man in his original state was never of the lower polarities. He does not enter into their conditions now, although he affiliates himself to them and controls them. He has his type, and they have their types ; and it was not till man, in the personality of Adam, lost his kingship over the lower nature realm that the man-soul *entered into* the dense bodily form of the lower nature elements.

Types are lines of demarcation between entities. A *perfected* type does not amalgamate with any

other and survive; it becomes extinct in the attempt to amalgamate.

It is only in the *formative stage* that fusion of types takes place. *Individuals of different varieties of a type do amalgamate and produce new variations on their original types*, but the broad features that mark out the *separate types* remain: as, for instance, the man-type, which is always that of the human soul, although climate and other agencies produce an immense variety of the human types.

The lower we descend in the scale of evolution, the less powerful becomes the influence of type. Hence, in the vegetable kingdom, it is possible to produce combinations that survive and form new types. That, however, is because the vegetable world is very closely akin to the elemental plane, and it is on the elemental plane that types are formed and perfected before they emerge into separate individual units. It is also on that plane that one type devours another, and the higher absorbs the lower and extinguishes it. The elemental plane is the vampire region, and it is for exactly that reason that the astral-elemental body, being the connecting link with that plane, shows a vampirish, parasitic propensity, if it is in any way artificially stimulated by the magnetism of that plane.

The idea that man has come up through all the lower forms of life, and absorbed them into his personality, has surely originated with a seer who has the power of vision on the elemental plane, and

who has watched the process going on there, and then imagined that he was beholding the process of man's evolution as a *soul*.

Matter, having come up through the lower types, retains a certain degree of affinity to the type through which it was evolved originally, and the idea that a man was a tiger, a stag, a fox, a rat, a wolf, a lamb, an ox, and that he reverts at times to the brutish sentiments of his type has a foundation in the fact that, if man allows his higher self to be subordinated by inferior influences, and yields to the passionate impulses that he shares in common with the brutes, and expresses through the bodily form derived from the lower nature realm, *the affinity of the material body with the animal types* will cause the man-soul to be drawn down, and lose his full control over that material body, so that it, in partnership with that elemental-astral body, will re-establish the rapport between the material form and those conditions of the lower polarity through which the form of matter was evolved.

The werewolf, the ox-man, the satyr, the mermaid, and other combined types in the Elemental-astral Plane, do become visible to clairvoyants of even a very small degree of power on that plane, because the Elemental-astral body is so nearly material that it can easily be seen *while* it is attached to some living personality in the flesh.

Those combined types are parasites, and they are always attached as obsessing influences to

some psychic person if they are visible to clairvoyance.

These are certainly not astral spirits, but elemental ones. To see them indicates danger to the seer ; they are haunting some one in the flesh. They are expressions of souls that have known incarnation in far back ages when amalgamation on the elemental plane was more possible than it is to-day. Even with these spirits, it may be observed that the human type dominates, and is preserved as a link to that higher state these unfortunates cannot re-enter.

When you see a spirit of the man-type joined to an animal, a bird, a fish, a plant, a reptile, you may always know it is in the conditions of the Elemental-astral Plane, where alone such combinations are possible, and that the spirit has sunk into amalgamation with the lower-soul polarity, and lost a part of his heritage as the man-type.

So also do all symbols that combine the lower and the higher types show their affiliation to that plane, and *the controlling influence to be that of the ruling spirits there*. Both the spirits and their symbols indicate thus the lower plane of evolution as their realm. Such spirits are in the polarity of the *nature soul*.

The same statement applies to those Gods and Goddesses who are represented by these *mixed* types of animals and humans.

No matter what symbolical interpretations are given to explain the mixture, nor what beauty and

ideality, and even truth, is enshrined in the teachings that are built up around the images of these Gods and Goddesses, nor what wealth of philosophic truth and religious mysticism are incorporated in the teachings of their occult schools, the use of these combined types as representative of their Deities is the damning fact that, to a spirit of the higher spheres, gives the clear indication of the origin of the whole in that Elemental-astral Plane, *which is the only region in spirit life where that combination is possible.*

Volumes might be written upon this one subject alone, and its important bearing upon, not only mediumship, but those religions that seek to control men's thoughts of God and the Eternal Truths.

The lesson for mediums is in the indication that teachings derived through these sources are of necessity tainted, and a means of misguidance, not of help, and all awakening of such dual consciousness is a danger signal. Hence, when a man or woman has that curious sensation of having belonged to some type of the nature realm, that is a sign those persons are allowing too close affiliation between themselves in their higher soul and the magnetic conditions of the Elemental-astral Plane.

For some reason, either through a course of development or proximity to some one who radiates that form of magnetism, they are developing on to that plane, and are *going back* in partnership with their elemental-astral body to the conditions of the past state of the materials of their Earth forms.

Every kind of mediumship ought at once to be given up if this is taking place, for it shows that an abnormal stage exists.

If no conscious development is taking place, and no intentional effort to gain mediumship is being made, then a complete change of conditions and of associates should be made, because there is some magnetic influence at work—possibly quite unintentionally—that is producing a development on to the astral plane.

There are many signs by which development on to that plane may be known as foreshadowed. It is in the first stage that such development can be arrested without great harm having been done, but every step farther means three times the difficulty in turning back again; and at the present day, when so many persons are affiliated to occult societies, and developing every variety of magnetic affinities, the importance of associations cannot be too clearly emphasised. No one ought to allow that reawakening of consciousness in the inferior body.

When the Eastern schools teach that the soul of a man came up through the lower realm, and can, or did, ever *return* into that of a rat or any other creature, those teachers show ignorance and not knowledge of what true evolution means, or why there is such a law as that of polarities. It likewise shows that the seer who describes that mode of evolution is looking at the Elemental-astral Plane, and is in affiliation to its conditions.

Like a rat in character the man may be, but even so he possesses something the rat never had. That something remains, even though it survives only in a submerged condition. It must be repeated over and over again, that even the most degraded of the human type possesses something no lower type ever did or could possess, and by virtue of that *one indestructible spark of God-given manhood*, that no submergence in lower nature conditions can totally extinguish, man will again some time arise, and find, through the path of repentance, the way back to the Divine heritage he has forfeited.

In the New Testament there is a passage that relates that the Christ spirit in those three days that intervened between His death and His resurrection visited the spirits in prison. May we not believe that the Redeemer gave then, even to souls so lost, that vision of Himself which no lesser power could convey to those dark realms, and showed the way of possible redemption even for the lowest sinners?

No one may dogmatise as to the interpretation to be put on those brief statements that have come down through long centuries, but the broad law by which the higher soul can redeem and draw up those who are in the conditions of the lower soul has more than one explanation possible. Redemption is a law always insisted on, as well as the laws of judgment and of condemnation.

CHAPTER XI

THE STORY OF EDEN

WHY THE SOUL OF MAN WAS UNITED TO THE BODY OF THE NATURE REALM

THE first man and woman are the representatives of the higher soul of Earth, and are shown in their Eden stage of perfectly negative good and evil possibilities.

The higher soul on Earth has the right of choice, and can elect to follow the good or the evil path, but has not the power to select the conditions in which that choice will be made. Only the guardian angels can decide so all-embracing a question.

Perfect Good is a positive quality, and implies conquest over temptation; not merely that innocence that has not known temptation and trial. Adam and Eve were only negatively good; and, whether we regard the story of Eden as an allegory, symbolising the story of the first race of physical man, or as the actual history of a first man and woman, the lessons to be learnt from it are equally valuable.

Their first state was that of perfect innocence that was only ignorance of the possibilities of evil. Then came the tempter, instigating first the woman, then the man through the woman, to taste of the pleasures of the senses and the passions of the lower soul; those debasing pleasures of which the lost

spirits of the Astral World had made themselves past-masters.

The story is, in fact, an account of how Adam and Eve were induced to put themselves into affinity with the lowest conditions of the Elemental-astral Plane. The Bible account is quite clear in its statement that the temptation came from an evil source ; no garbled version can put any other aspect on the action of the Serpent, who tempted the first man and woman.

The bodies Adam and Eve wore at first were derived from the physical element, but were an expression of matter in an ethereal condition, such as belongs to the Eden stage of evolution. They were the crowning type of physical creation. As beings of the higher polarity of the soul, that is the type of the Divine Creator, they possessed those more etherealised bodies of the Earth materials—dust, but the dust of that Eden realm. The animals in the garden would also be the highest of their types.

The Earth in its infancy would have a very deep envelope of astral fluids in a pure and negative condition, intersphered with the elemental plane of embryo life, and covered by a thin rime of pure spirit essences that had been distilled by all those spirits of the lower soul of nature, who had already evolved their spirit spheres.

All the spirit spheres pertaining to man's evolution would be only faintly foreshadowed, not yet accomplished states. Transition to spirit life

would be easy at first, for the elemental plane was only as a wide, clear river, with no entangling weeds to imprison the soul in its passage through it.

Man of the Adamite creation before "the Fall" was so much above the inferior creation that his light body could travel over the Earth as a cloud floats across the sky, and casts only a shadow as it passes. He was not impeded in his actions by a dense body of the elements in the lower polarity. He was on Earth to learn its conditions, and his body was of fine earth materials, but was like the earth-bound body of the Earth plane, which is composed of matter, but in so fine a condition it is seldom visible to the dense degree of sight that the conditions of the matter that clothes man now requires.

As man of the higher polarity, nothing in the nature realm could harm Adam; no ocean drown him, no fire consume, no beast of the forest or field injure. His will was the controlling power over all the lower forces that constituted man's kingdom.

Vast possibilities awaited Adamite man if he had resisted the temptations of the Serpent Race, and had turned instead to see what God had to offer him in the form of knowledge and power. There is always for every soul a choice of paths.

Adam and Eve were warned. They were not shown what was the nature of the forbidden fruit. If they had been shown, they would probably have eaten of it just the same, because the desire

for personal experience is very strong in most people, and all the warnings given, all the most impassioned appeals that can be made, seldom serve to hold men and women back from sampling the flavour and discovering the nature of the forbidden fruits: especially is this so when mystery surrounds the tree of knowledge, and vague suggestions and many allurements envelop it with promises of powers to be gained, the desires of the heart won.

The tree of forbidden fruits in the garden of Eden was developed from the vast roots that belonged to the Astral Era, and was the product of the knowledge of Astral men.

Physical man was intended to evolve his own scheme of life, and acquire for himself knowledge in conditions that were different from those of the Astral World.

All the seeds of astral things that could be of service to Adamite man were already evolved into material expression, and Adamite man was to solve for himself Nature's problems, and win his crown of knowledge in doing so. There is false knowledge as well as true; things that a man may learn that only bring death as the fruits of the powers conferred. There are illusions that appear as secrets of power; wisdom that is of the evil line, and brings only destruction in its train. Such was the knowledge of the forbidden tree.

That evil knowledge was the only possession the lost spirits of the astral race, who were attached

as parasites to the astral plane, had brought with them, and it had taken root and flourished as a mere broken stump of a tree in that astral plane. It was not really on Earth, but was of semi-mental growth, and it embodied that affiliation to the nature realm, which the astral spirits, who were not all evil, but only unprogressed, had acquired in passing into semi-material envelopment.

This tree of astral knowledge had its counterpart and correspondence in certain of the astral roots. Its fruits were the ripe fruits of men's experiences ; to taste of them was to know the pleasures of the lower soul and those sex passions to which the lost astral spirits had become enslaved in their own world—pleasures that they could present in almost any guise that would allure mankind.

On the forbidden tree Eve saw what seemed a perfect fruit, luscious, tempting to the eyes ; an innocent and harmless fruit that could surely have nothing evil in it.

Guarding the tree was the appearance of a serpent.

The affinity this astral tree would possess to all astral things would enable one of the lost spirits to throw around the tree the appearance of the Serpent, as though he were actually in Eden. The aura of the astral tree would act as a mirror to hold the reflection from the astral plane, and make it vivid with the semblance of a reality ; the echoing properties of the astral fluid would give to the reflected form of the Serpent a voice that was also merely a projection.

The whole machinery for projection at present lies in the astral fluids ; whether it be a wireless message sent from a material instrument and received on another, or the far more subtle projections sent on the astral fluids from the discarnate minds of spirits.

The voice of the Serpent seemed to come from the branches of the tree, but there was, in reality, no Serpent in Eden ; the Serpent was in that dark void that has been already described as rising from the elemental plane.

The Serpent spoke with the voice and speech of a man, but he could not show the form of a man, only that of a reptile. He had no share in the life of Earth, nor of the Spirit World. He had lost his hold on the man-type of evolution, and could only show himself as one of the lower forms of created things. He could only show himself in the form of a serpent, because the subtle, death-dealing, treacherously evil thing that the serpent has ever since that time represented was the expression of the mentality of that tempting spirit ; a spirit man who was mind without body, possessed of nothing, and who was in that lower polarity of the nature world in which man can assume the form of the lower creation, but not that of the higher, from which he is shut out.

The Serpent in Eden has been called "Satan, the Prince of Evil." That is a misnomer, for Satan only prompted the Serpent-man to act in tempting Eve and Adam.

The Serpent was merely the slave of Satan ; only the servant of the Prince of Evil. The Serpent symbol represents the slave souls of evil ; while Satan is Lord of the Evil Realms.

There is a kingship of evil as well as of good, and the supreme tempter, who is a spirit of the Universe, and whose province is to test the quality of man's virtues, is possessed of a splendour of intellectual powers only second to that of Supreme Good ; and has, moreover, the grandeur of personality and dominance in individuality, which the controller of the mighty forces of evil in a great universe would of necessity possess. If evil were only of the slave-soul type of the Serpent mind, it would never have possessed the power it exercises over many fine mentalities.

It is this Divine spark of true greatness, seen even in the Prince of Evil, that gives to Evil the immortality that makes of it a twin force in the Universe, and an eternal shadow that follows always on the path of Good, until the perfect realm of the Divine is reached, in which even this majestic presence is thrust back and shut out and Good reigns supreme.

The Serpent is not Satan, but it represents all those lower polarities of evil in their most treacherous aspects. When we see that symbol, we need have no illusions as to the realm that it gives affiliation to, nor as to the character of the knowledge the Serpent imparts. The whole story of Eden conveys to man to-day the message

of a warning against the Serpent and all his wiles.

The Serpent shows all the twisting, wriggling, prevaricating subterfuges of coward evil that will not fight in the open, but seeks by subtle ways to injure and destroy. It shows the secret methods by which evil poisons truth and perverts its message. It expresses the deceptive character of the poison that is spread in darkness, yet can be made to assume the guise of Truth and the aspects of Light ; and the illusions by which it secures dominion over body and soul, even as the Serpent threw the glamour of many illusions around the forbidden tree, and gave the semblance of beauty and wholesomeness to its corrupting fruits. It shows that from the Serpent line come those suggestions of deep mysteries and half-hidden power on the occult planes, of which the whole has never yet been revealed, even to its highest initiates, but only that semi-revelation of secret powers that, as it has no boundaries to mark where it ends, allows of the Serpent minds advancing their claims to anything and everything that the progress of the world gains for mankind, as a part of the hidden knowledge they do not deem it wise to reveal to that world until some other mind discovers those things and makes them public : a partial revelation that allures by its suggestions of so many mysteries still to be revealed, and implies a boundless power held always in reserve.

The Serpent also represents the type of the

ruthless destroyer that once it has coiled its soft, yielding, creeping form around its victim never relaxes its hold again until it has crushed all life out.

It shows the smooth serpent-tongue that beguiles, persuades, and lies with the aspect of truth; the servile deference to good, with the suggestion that the Serpent is not really the servant of evil, but one who comes to give knowledge that will awaken the dormant powers; that, although the Serpent seems evil and a tempter, it is none the less itself a seeker after the way of morality, and a worshipper of truth, on whom the hard task of appearing in a repelling form has been unwillingly imposed; in the very suggestions conveying the poison of distrust of the motives that had inspired the prohibition of that mystic tree and its alluring fruits.

There are likewise the gentle, patient suggestions of the possession of a knowledge that is not in reality evil, but only greater than that of the God who had forbidden the eating of the fruit that could convey the knowledge which the Serpent guarded because it was so great a treasure it must not be lightly and freely given away.

There was thus the subtle suggestion that, if Eve and Adam ate of this fruit, their ignorance would vanish, and they would be as the Gods themselves. It is the age-old appeal that evil makes to ignorance and innocence, and to that desire for wider knowledge and greater power that ignorance and innocence is conscious of lacking.

Is not the whole future history of the line of evil occultism, that was to link Adamite man to the Serpent-men and their type of "wisdom," and corrupt one religion after another, and pervert the powers of mediumship again and again through all the ages, foreshadowed in this very brief story of the scene in the garden of Eden, with the Serpent as the servile procurer of the Devil and all his brood of evil spirits.

Can we not understand, in reading the story, how the pure line of the higher mysticism of the superior soul, and its beautiful power of visioning the things of the spirit, which was to be the link between man and the angels, and all the capacity for receiving the inspirations of the Divine Mind, that were a part of the natural heritage of Adam and Eve as man and woman of a new era and a fresh creation of that Earth world which those Serpent-men had in their era defiled, became poisoned at their source by the affiliation to that Serpent line, when Eve, and Adam following her, yielded to the suggestions of the Serpent and accepted his fruit.

Communion with the denizens of the Spirit Spheres should be the natural heritage of every one; a possession of the higher soul of man, who alone of all creation has the power of communication with those from whom he is parted. He would have retained that power if he had not yielded to temptation, and sunk himself in the conditions of the lower polarity in which till then he had no share.

That apple in Eden was no fruit at all. That tree bore no fruits. Its period of productivity was over, and all the fruits it had borne were garnered into the spirit world of the astral era. The seeds from its fruits had already been sown in the soil of the material Earth, and all that was left of the tree itself was this, its astral shell existing as a parasite on that elemental plane. A vampire tree, belonging to the super-vampires and extending its root fibres out all over the elemental plane to suck up life from everything that could be affiliated to it. No wonder Eve and Adam were forbidden to touch it.

The apple on it was purely an illusion, such an illusion as is created to-day when once concentration on the Serpent Tree has been accomplished. That apple was created on the mental plane by the Serpent himself, and given a temporary form and substance, as a materialisation of a thought form of anything can be given by the physical element blending with the astral fluids *through the mediumship of some living person in the flesh to unite them.*

The *suggestion* of everything that appeals to and delights the senses, and the lower sensory fibres of the soul was embodied in that visionary fruit.

That which it did contain, however, was the quintessence of the fluids on the Elemental-astral Plane; those fluids that give life on that plane to brain and body in the elemental-astral envelope: that spongy, absorbent body that is the link between

matter and the astral fluids, and between man of the higher soul and the whole creation of the lower.

Those astral fluids, distilled through the physical elements on the elemental plane, were an elixir of the magnetic fires from the outer zone of life, the creative essences of the lower polarities from the pillar of fire ; and with that elixir was combined some of that heavy narcotic essence from the negative regions of darkness that gave a numbness to brain and body, and could produce the suspension of the will power. Lastly, there was the mental influence of the Serpent himself that this draught of strange juices conveyed to all who would drink of it, and that made instantly a link between the Serpent line and Eve and Adam when they tasted that forbidden fruit.

It may be noted here that hypnotic treatments from anyone who has affiliated to the Serpent line will connect the subject of those treatments with them also, however good and innocent that person may be ; the operation of the law is the same to-day as in the days of Eden. The results of hypnotic treatments from some persons has shown this to be so.

The juice of the apple in Eden would be like strong wine to exhilarate and stimulate the emotions on the lower plane, and a narcotic drug to stultify and paralyse the faculties of the intellect, the reasoning powers, and the moral consciousness. That magnetic and hypnotic combination has the same power now, and can also

be translated into material drugs that come from the elements in the astral plane, and are absorbed by certain plants.

That fluid from the forbidden fruit would permeate the whole body and blood of the first man and woman of the physical line who ever tasted of it. It would transform their very constitutions, giving to them a share in the astral element at once ; and by the inflow of the astral ether, the power of vision on that plane would come also—a power of visioning astral conditions that *physical* man does not possess, unless he has also put himself upon that plane by absorbing the magnetic fluids distilled on it, even as Adam and Eve absorbed them.

In a flash, as of lightning, they would both see what that tree really was. Its origin ; the Astral World ; the gigantic evil that the Serpent and all his line represent ; their own helplessness in the face of such colossal power upon that Elemental-astral Plane as was then revealed.

It would be well if the aspirant for psychic powers to-day could realise also the colossal power possessed by the evil spirits on that plane, where man is a pigmy beside those mental giants.

Adam and Eve would suddenly be conscious of their nakedness and lack of all covering for the mysteries of their sex ; and of the possibilities of evil passions to which they had been blind, even as children are blind in infancy and innocence, and as happily unconscious.

No wonder that they trembled at the voice of God calling to them, and that they hid themselves in their excess of shame and horror at the revelation of evil that their disobedience had invoked.

The knowledge and subtlety of the Serpent mind is shown in many phases in the Eden story. The lost spirits of the astral era were imprisoned in the dark void within that cone, which is their hollow tree. They had no share in the life of the physical Earth, and could have none. They were attached to Earth but as parasites only. They had the strong life of positive mentalities that made their evil souls dominant in spite of having lost all but their mental possessions, and thus they had survived in union with the lower soul of Earth. Their powerful minds keep intact their individualities, and the dark negative region of that hollow cone gives them a home.

All things in the lower nature realm that had sprung from astral seeds were so immersed in matter that they were quite impenetrable for these astral spirits. They could assume the likeness of an animal, but they could not enter into affiliation with any animal, nor do more than clothe themselves in a thought-created picture of the only thing on Earth that was akin to their mentalities, and that was a serpent, a reptile.

Man's instinctive recoil from the reptiles is not due to repulsion to the irresponsible creatures themselves, but to the thing they symbolise.

The dark spirits desired mediums who might

bridge the chasm between themselves and the active lives of Earth, and they understood the laws of affinity, and by what law mediumship is governed ; also how mediums might be developed.

They knew that Adam and his wife, once affiliation was established, could be made an avenue to power on Earth again, and their offspring be links in a chain of lives that would restore some measure of affinity between mankind and themselves. Botanists know that when a new element is introduced into plant life it is the succeeding reproductions of the plant in which the stronger influence of the new element can be perfected. Thus Adam and Eve would sin not alone for themselves, in establishing affiliation to the Serpent-men, but for their posterity.

Wherefore, when God banished the first man and woman from Eden, and put an angel with a flaming sword to bar the way to their return, it was not as a punishment, but as an act of mercy in cutting them off from that tree of evil knowledge, and from the power of the Serpent-men. The Serpent had created between his tree and his dupes a force of attraction that would have drawn them back again and again to taste of its intoxications when the horror passed and the shame became deadened by familiarity ; and he could have held more and more free intercourse with them as time passed on, and evil became gradually an attractive instead of a repulsive thing.

God sent Adam and his wife down into the

conditions of the lower polarity to which they had affiliated, but He gave to them the same protection He had given to all things in the nature realm—the protection that is given by envelopment in matter in its dense form. Never again would Adam and his offspring possess those light ethereal bodies of matter that were as gauze is to steel armour in relation to the materiality of the Earth ; not till death frees man from his dense form can he realise what that finer body was like.

Adamite man, in receiving complete immersion in matter, is shielded by it from attacks from spirits of the lower planes. That body also deadens the acuteness of his spiritual perceptions, and makes it more difficult for spirits to tempt him. He is thereby also cut off from the spirit side of life, and left to his own initiative to a great extent. He can develop originality and the powers of his own intellect. Moreover, the material body protects the spirit form within it from the irritating effects of the conditions of the lower polarity in which man on Earth lives ; conditions that would otherwise be very acutely felt by the sensitive spirit of the higher polarity. Persons who have developed to the extent of thinning this protecting envelope are quite conscious of this irritating result of unwise development.

Man should value his Earth body very highly, and preserve it carefully till in the natural course of events his spirit is ripe for transition to the next stage of existence.

Adam and Eve, in descending into the denser conditions of matter, took on them all the conditions of the lower polarity. They ate and drank of the lower elements as the animals do. They reproduced their species under the same laws; wore their bodies of the denser materials, without being able to free themselves from them, and in doing so lost their power of holding communion with the spiritual realms; and between them and their Eden land there flowed a river of Death, and there was interposed between them and the higher spheres that sac of the Elemental-astral Plane that is as an elastic net, yet of too tenacious fibre to admit of the passage of any spirit incarnate upon Earth that would pass to spirit life. Not till death severs the ties can man free himself from the elements of nature realm, and the conditions of limited power that belong to his probationary period of detention in the lower polarity, nor escape his share in the heritage of Adam's sin.

CHAPTER XII.

DEVELOPMENT ON MENTAL LINES OF MEDIUMSHIP.
ITS RELATION TO THE ELEMENTAL-ASTRAL PLANE.
THE ASTRAL MIRROR OF THAT PLANE. THE RELATION
OF CLAIRVOYANCE AND CLAIRAUDIENCE TO THIS
PLANE. TRUE MEDIUMSHIP AND THAT WHICH IS
ONLY THE EFFECTS OF VAMPIRISM.

DANGERS OF DEVELOPMENT ON CERTAIN LINES.

ALL persons of fine mental powers or artistic temperaments require to understand the true relations of mediumship and the Elemental-astral Plane, its mental regions and the mirror produced by the astral aura of that plane, because there is a very great delusion prevalent concerning the safety supposed to be insured by developing mediums on the lines of mental power rather than on the lines of the material expression of all forms of mediumship. In reality, mental development opens the door to a host of dangers on a very subtle plane, and the possibility of projection of many illusions and much false teaching.

The Oriental schools of occultism, as well as those psychic associations founded under the guidance of spirits of the old Antediluvians, give directions for development on mental lines that all tend to put the students into affiliation to the astral zone by thinning the material envelope.

These errors have become so firmly incorporated in those systems, and in the East are made part of their religious teachings, that it is hopeless to combat their effects among those persons who have accepted those teachings; but there are many who are on a neutral plane in regard to these things, and for those people warnings of dangers may avail to arrest their trafficking with the dangers incurred. There are various signs by which psychics may know when they are on dangerous ground, and should go back, if possible, into the safe shelter of their material envelopment.

The thinning of the aura till it becomes as a gauze veil is one sign. The hearing of voices in mixed murmuring of meaningless waves of sound is another, for both states indicate that the physical element in the body has become diluted with too large a proportion of astral fluids, and is ceasing to protect the ego.

When therefore sensitive persons begin to hear those myriad voices, or waves upon waves of harmonies, that are repetitions again and again of the same theme or successions of the same set of harmonies; when they hear the chanting of songs in an endless chorus of voices; or see stars falling from the sky and changing into angels' faces or flowers as they fall; or any other metamorphosis taking place as by a species of legerdemain; or if they see rainbow lights, rainbow paths, that radiate away in all directions as from the centre of a great wheel; see the halo of a rainbow over

themselves, or have it described as over them—such persons may know they are on the verge of entering the conditions of that higher Astral-elemental Plane.

The rainbow is its symbol, and the rainbow arch is as its gateway. The rainbow's reflections are shimmering over the astral body of the sensitive, because the envelope has become so thin, so transparent, the astral fluids have become so predominant in the aura and radiate so freely, that it holds the rainbow light reflected on to it from the astral mirror of the Earth plane, and reproduces them. Such an astral body is far too thin for protective purposes, and far too much in affinity to the astral plane to give any results of a psychic nature on any other plane.

That rainbow gateway is very beautiful to behold, and suggests many most interesting mysteries as hidden behind it. It has a great many appearances. Its attainment is like opening a door with a key obtained by reaching a certain degree of astral etherealisation.

The person who attains it and passes above that rainbow gate, or arch, enters the full conditions of that higher astral plane of the elemental stage. *It is in no sense any part of the true Spirit Spheres.*

To attain it means to lose the power of entering *spirit* life.

To attempt to enter and fail to do so means that *the sensitive cannot again re-enter the Earth body,*

but will remain attached to it during its span of life without control over its functions.

A clairvoyant would see the spirit in the astral form, outside the physical body always, but attached to it, so that the Earth body lives, but as a paralytic, absolutely helpless, yet alive ; with the automatic functions of feeding and sleeping in active operation, but with no mental powers—a condition of living death.

The public do not know how many pupils, trained for the “rainbow path,” have ended in that way, or died in the struggle to regain their bodies.

When therefore a person finds that he or she can hear those weird musical harmonies, or voices in perpetual conversation, the words confused and rambling, or can see rainbow lights or rainbow anything, every sort of development ought to be at once stopped.

If the individual is not consciously developing as a psychic, but is using excessive power in brain work or prolonged mental study, it will be no less needful to pause and discover whether a total change of environment and of labours will not effect a cure. Excess of mental stimulus, whether as a course of study or in connection with business or professional life, will tend to cause over activity of the astral body, even when the individual is not consciously developing anything.

Even living among psychics, or joining associations where psychics are, and associating with

persons already developed on those lines, will begin the process if there is a predisposition to such lines of evolution, due to the conditions of a former incarnation.

Mediums all radiate magnetic force, and blend their forces with others, and the results are by no means always good.

In any case, the appearance of a rainbow is a danger signal.

The sensitive ought to change all his conditions, leave his present home and associates and, if possible, live elsewhere for a time. Any moment may bring a catastrophe, and the power over the Earth body be lost suddenly.

Change of magnetic conditions is most important—change of climate, of occupation, of everything.

Spiritualists know the importance of keeping the conditions of a circle unbroken, and the group of persons unchanged in order to keep distinct the one type of magnetic aura they are generating. A family group, a company of workers, a community, a nation, all form smaller or larger circles, generating a type of magnetism that is their own distinctive aura ; an aura that has magnetic conditions to which each member of the group unconsciously responds sympathetically.

This being so, a complete change means for a sensitive the introduction of new magnetic conditions, stranger elements.

To go away from the familiar group breaks off the responsive state for a time, and ends any

artificial development due to the magnetic conditions of a circle of persons. Change of air for an invalid means more than change of scene and of climate ; its curative effect is often of a psychic character.

If the value of the material body were better known, its protection would never be thrown away either consciously or unconsciously.

There are, at the same time, many persons who may be classed as psychics who are, nevertheless, incapable of going beyond the stage at which their astral bodies become active absorbers—although they possess good mental powers and spiritual ideals.

For ninety-nine out of a hundred who practise occult formulas there is never any power developed beyond that of going out of the body and onto the elemental-astral region that encircles the Earth ball. They may be in a semi-conscious state, or they may develop full consciousness, but they cannot go beyond that region ; and, while they develop a limited degree of clairvoyance in relation to that plane it is always an artificial production, and depends on their being in association with those who are true seers, and from whom the power can be appropriated.

These persons are, in fact, very exhausting parasites, and, even if good and moral, are still harmful to the community, because by exhausting more truly sensitive persons they cause those persons to lose their protecting shield of matter,

and, by connecting them with the astral plane, may open the way to ultimate obsession by astral intelligences. Where these semi-parasites are *not* moral, or are semi-sensual, self-indulgent psychics, they become a very active danger to any community, even if they are refined in type and of fine mental powers.

Such psychics are the medium for the dissemination of very questionable suggestions, and lines of teaching in which the evil is carefully veiled under quasi-culture and ideality. During their visits to the astral plane of Earth, they enjoy the society of many kindred spirits imprisoned on that plane, and serve as links to connect those spirits with sensitive and receptive persons in the flesh.

There are, it must be remembered, many associations of "brothers and sisters" on the occult planes, and their correspondents in the earthly replicas of those associations, who allow themselves to indulge in all the pleasures of the senses when out of the Earth body and in the astral form. One and all of these are not only immoral, because of those indulgences, but are the active agents in connecting others with their own conditions.

Whether these psychics see themselves as among a company of gallant knights and fair ladies, great masters of the magic arts with their attendant students, and persons from every era of the Earth's evolution and many countries, or as pilgrim souls initiated stage by stage into deeper and ever deeper mysteries and more and more elaborate symbolical

rituals ; or whether, as the pupils of the Oriental priesthoods, they enter upon their experiences under the ægis of religious aspirations, it is still that Elemental-astral Plane that they are affiliated to, and none of them can attain to any other more spiritual state.

All those foolish mortals who ages ago acquired the power of functioning in their astral bodies, and all those pleasure-loving, semi-astral entities who compose that part of the population who derived their origin from Earth life, together with such persons now as can "function" in their etheric bodies—all live in the wide belt of elements that sweep round the Earth nightly ; held by the Earth's attraction, but repelled by the Sun's rays ; so that these elements are like a vast sea, flowing always in the direction away from the Sun and enclosed in that astral sac, or skin of the Earth, that has been described as so very elastic and possessed of such an amazing toughness and extraordinary ethereality of texture.

Those persons who are in their etheric bodies and on this plane do see a wonderful shimmer of light over all things there that resembles the effect of moonlight, or even as of sunlight in some places, when seen through mists. An effect that has only a faint parallel in those magical mists that hover at sunrise and at sunset over swamps in tropic lands, and also produces prismatic effects.

The reflecting properties in the astral element of this semi-material, semi-astral ether, do cause all

sorts of reflections to be thrown upon the luminous atmosphere, and to appear as realities surrounding either spirits or mortals who have developed these etheric bodies.

Good religious persons entering this plane, instead of spirit life, will see all those rainbow lands, rainbow bodies ; will hear waves of harmony borne to their ears with no visible agency for their production ; will see beautiful visions of every conceivable kind, till they may be forgiven for not knowing that the real origin of all these wonders is the astral aura, and that they are, in truth, only *reflections* from the spirit spheres of the true Spirit World, mixed with thought creations from many minds, and thrown onto the astral mirror of our Earth to float on the rainbow-hued mists, and find reflection as myriad visions and as waves of multicoloured sounds. Light seems everywhere, as if thrown down by an invisible agency ; luminous draperies clothe the spirit forms seen walking in that light, that is, in truth, a mirror—the mirror of illusions—that gives everything objectivity on that plane by reflecting it from somewhere else.

Beautiful haunting shapes are seen, or horrible abortions, born alike from brain and body on Earth. Things that are of the spirit may appear if the seer be of a spiritual development, but these also are only reflected onto this plane ; they have no existence there.

Clairvoyance developed in the astral body by absorbing the astral fluids in large quantities in

excess of the *spiritual* development of the true spirit ego, gives only power of visioning on this plane, and accounts for the great multitude of things seen clairvoyantly that are still valueless, because illusions from this plane of mere reflections. Mental culture tends to develop this form of clairvoyance, because it is so affiliated to the mind.

Persons with this development can be shown true visions reflected onto the surface of this astral mirror, but in that case a curtain of physical elements must be drawn over all but the one point of focus. In this way past events are shown as records, and future possibilities as mental pictures projected onto it.

This form of visioning, however, requires the co-operation of spirits who are of high abilities, and can be used by both good and evil intelligences, it must not be forgotten. Neither must the average clairvoyant assume that he or she possesses the degree of clear sight that is required to enable the mortal to co-operate successfully with the spirit's guides, or that guides from the good planes will always be found ready to assume the task of co-operation ; far oftener it is selfish and vampirish spirits who are ready to assume the position of controls to all and sundry who wish to exercise clairvoyant powers.

Even the true visions seen on this plane are, after all, only reflections from Spirit life, and to cultivate the power of vision on this plane tends to divert power from development on the true Spirit

realms. Spirit life is reached by another path than that which leads through this plane.

Nothing has done more to confuse communication with the Spirit Spheres than the existence of this astral mirror, and the enormous mass of things imprinted on its recording films during the lapse of ages. Joined to this we have the further influence that is exerted by the spirits of that plane, whose kingdom it is, and whose power to manipulate the conditions of their realm to produce an infinite variety of illusions is boundless.

For example, a person who is affiliated to this plane and in the negative, semi-conscious state of half asleep, with all his bodily functions resting, will, nevertheless, feel as though he were travelling with that astral current that is, in reality, flowing past him.

The response made by the astral body to the pulsations of these wave-beats on the material Earth form sympathetic vibration from the one to the other, and transfer this sensation of travelling from the rushing astral current to the astral body ; and these vibrations will repeat themselves in waves of wider and wider extent, as the arc of influence is extended out from the point of departure.

The reflex action on the body of the seer continues recurring with rhythmic motion, as of the rise and fall of a tide, till the consciousness is carried out on those waves, although nothing but the consciousness is really affected.

Persons who have felt the magnetic vibrations pass through a platform on which they were standing, will know the sensation of movement where, in reality, there was none.

The visions are carried past the seer, as the panorama of the sky and the stars is carried past the disc of a stationary telescope ; and no vision remains, however eager the seer is to stay in the scenes he finds so beautiful, or with the friends he is so glad to meet again.

Sometimes, where the vision is very clear and the thought body of the seer is strongly developed into independent powers, it will go out as a separate personality, thrown onto the astral screen by the eager desire to be with the friends seen there, and appear as a *reflection* that is part of the scene enacting, and the seer will behold *himself* as if walking, talking, conveying his thoughts, and sharing in the lives of friends once more

This form of projection of the mentality is akin to shouting words with the voice that the air carries to the point of focus, and repeats again as an echo, while the actual mechanism that produced the voice is still where its owner rests, it may be in bed, or other place of repose and in the mixed consciousness of the mental ego, and only the astral body is affiliated to the wonder world of the astral mirror.

There are certain tests that can be applied to the visions thus seen to give the key to their origin, and to show whether they are reflected messages from spirits, or merely a succession of film records

that are more or less meaningless and illusionary. The danger is that one true message obtained in this way will give the seer confidence in false ones that may follow it, and the mental methods of development that gave the key to this plane prove no safer than any other. It must be remembered the power can be used just as easily by spirits who are not good, and who desire to mislead. Such a spirit may first attract the attention of a seer, and induce him to focus his thoughts upon a picture that is animated by a spirit, and will respond to the thoughts of the seer. The deceiving spirit will then use the same machinery to create a mere illusionary appearance, probably of himself as he desires to be pictured in the mind of the seer, or he may use the power to convey most false impressions of Spirit life, and give very dangerous teachings which he desires the student to follow.

A still greater danger exists, for, if one of the great master minds among the old, old astral spirits has gained control of the line of projection, a tie will be formed, from the focussing of the mentality upon the projected appearance of the "Master," that will open the door to control of the mind of the seer at all times when the spirit chooses to use his power.

There are also a great many so-called Masters on the occult planes. These are dominant men who lived long ago, but still possess Earth bodies of great age and miraculous stage of preservation,

and call themselves Masters, but these are really deputies from the real "Masters," who are none other than the Serpent-men.

The great age of the wonderfully-preserved bodies of the Earth stage, which these deputy Masters wear, ought to be proof enough of the origin of their knowledge and power, for only the serpent mind could devise the process by which those bodies of the Earth have been preserved so far beyond the normal span of man's allotted stage of materiality existence.

It must be remembered that none of the Astral spirits attached to Earth now are desirable controls, because all came from the lower polarity of that era, the higher Astral spirits having passed away from our planet.

It has been stated that the visions seen on the astral mirror can be controlled by spirits who can use the physical element as the shutter of a camera is used, the veil of matter being dropped over the vision that is shown on the astral mirror and reflected on to the aura of the seer, thus preventing a second image from being received and blurring the first one.

It is, in effect, the veil that the Spirit guide withdraws to allow a picture to be seen, and allows to fall again when he considers enough has been shown.

If the veil of the Physical Element, which is really in the aura of the seer and one of its magnetic constituents, has been thinned and diluted with

astral fluids to such an extent that the whole personality of the seer has become a transparent and involuntary receiver of impressions from all sources, this power of shutting off undesired pictures ceases, there being insufficient physical magnetism present in the aura. When this is so crowds of images of all sorts of things will be imprinted automatically with the coming of night, and the waves of astral fluids ; and even by day thought impressions will be received in endless sequence by the brain that has lost its physical protection.

The wealth of visions thus seen, or merely "sensed," is highly injurious in its effects on the brain and the body, and has too often impressed the seer with such a consciousness of "power" that it is almost idle to try to persuade him that such visioning is of the nature of luxuriant weeds, and is simply defrauding the spirit ego of its vital essence—of which it has only a limited supply, it must be remembered—in order to give objectivity to this parasitic host of images reproduced from the astral mirror.

When a wise teacher finds a pupil with this abnormal faculty for all sorts of visionings on that astral plane, he will direct all the vital forces away from that practice, and use them on the material plane, and for normal occupations. After this is satisfactorily accomplished, and the seer is as nearly normal as is possible to him, the teacher will then try cautiously to bring the visioning

power *up through matter* into the true spiritual power of sight.

This cannot always be done, however, and when that is found to be the case it is better that the seer should not use the faculty at all, but allow it to wither away as a weed the preservation of which ties the soul to the astral plane and increases the over-development of the astral body such a condition indicates.

There are cases where the whole development of the psychic powers has been, in some past or present era, so purely of an artificial, parasitic character that nothing normal or useful can be obtained by the aid of any other process, and the best interests of the student himself are served if he is induced to abandon all attempts at psychic study. The only effects ever obtained in such cases by continuance of spurious development is to put the subject into affinity with the mirror of illusions, and make of him or her a super-vampire, because the true spirit sight belongs to the spirit body, and cannot be artificially developed. It is an attribute of certain races and a certain stage of ripeness in the spirit ego. The only thing that will and does respond to artificial culture and the desires of the mind is the astral body, and its powers of affiliating to the astral plane and receiving impressions from it.

Persons who have affiliated themselves to the astral mirror may be very easily deceived, because their own minds will cast reflections on that mirror, and the results will be given back as actualities.

Sometimes their thought creations will be returned to them surrounded by a number of other thought creations from other minds, and mixed with pictures of realities that were already stamped upon the sensitised surface in hopeless confusion.

Thus a man who believes in reincarnation, and has much interest in, say, the Crusaders, may see himself in his thought body as one of them. The concentration of his thoughts upon that period serving to bring that film before his mind's eye, and the projection the reflection of his thought body on to the astral mirror surrounds it with that scenery. So with many other occasions, when the scenery, being there as a background, serves to give confirmation to the illusion that the individual belongs to that era, or did so once. So onwards through epoch after epoch as the astral films drift past.

Perhaps the scenes are not even historical, but merely the records of stories written in connection with these periods by minds that were sufficiently dominant to leave their mental creations as pictures. All the great writers of every age leave the records of their mental conceptions imprinted on the astral films as part of man's legacies from the Astral Element. There is no end to the visioning possibilities of that form of clairvoyance, that means clear sight in the astral vehicle, when put into affiliation to the recording films of the mental planes that are reproduced in this astral mirror,

some of which are realities and many that are illusions.

Is it to be wondered that courses for the development of psychics on the lines of mental clairvoyance, and through exercises directed to the union of mind and the astral planes, result in so much confusion and error ; half the self-styled teachers being only students themselves, often, indeed, pupils of fallacious schools of Oriental occultism, the whole power of which lie in their abnormal ability to put the student directly on the astral planes. Need anyone be surprised that so many catastrophies occur and so little real progress has been made.

Misleading systems of psychic culture are continually being launched upon the world by persons, whose only claim to teach is overweening self-confidence and such information concerning the psychic conditions as can be picked up from the study of the records of old, often secret, occult societies: all of which brought about their own downfall by reason of the practices they indulged in that were simply pathways to the Elemental Planes.

Spiritualists have been far too ready to resort to this means of acquiring knowledge, and too impatient to follow out their own and, at first, new line of exploration. *It is not the principles of Spiritualism that are at fault in this relation, but the constant importation of teachings that never belonged to the plain purpose of its founders, and the grafting*

on to the spiritualistic root of many seeds of ancient errors and the weeds of past misconceptions.

It must again be reiterated that, while only a limited number of persons are sufficiently ripe as spirits to hold communion with the Spirit World of *realities*, an immense number have affinities to the Elemental-astral Plane. It is not desirable that these persons should cultivate that affinity, because it indicates that they are reincarnations from its conditions. They will do well to enquire why that affinity exists, for if it is a legacy from some pre-incarnation, dimly remembered, their present Earth life has been given to them to break those ties, and not to rivet the links more closely by a return into those conditions.

The old occult societies that derived their knowledge from the Eastern schools, and which literally honeycombed the civilisations of the past, some of which have survived to very recent times, were fruitful in producing persons who could learn to float and swim in the astral current, and fly in the finer ether, and project their astral forms with the conscious egos in them all over the Earth ; and thus enjoy all those pleasures of the senses and intercourse with other persons in their astral bodies that gave so sweet a consciousness of power and freedom from the hampering body of the flesh. Not all were witches and wizards ; many motives besides evil desires caused sensitive persons —born of families in which the descent from those semi-astral spirits gave by heredity a power of

functioning in the astral body—to wish to use those powers and lift the veil between the two stages of existence : the idea that they were thereby developing their spirits would give assurance of high motives in thus experimenting. Again, the course of meditation and solitude, and the developments that were prescribed for the mystics would all produce the same result of placing the subject in affinity with the astral plane, unless in those *rare cases* where a truly ripe spirit was present in the mortal body.

A great many of those unfortunate persons who enjoyed the pleasures of entering the conditions of the astral plane, or who merely became able to “vision” the things belonging to it, would simply lose themselves and become absorbed, their individuality destroyed and the power of return into the Earth form lost, so that premature death, while the spirit was totally unfit to pass into the Spirit Spheres, would be the fate of these poor foolish persons. The unripe spirit, unable to break the toughened husk of the astral body, would be carried down in a semi-conscious state into those slumber lands of the astral elements, where they would lie as if buried till there was a sufficient recovery in the spirit seed to germinate again in a fresh form of Earth.

The dim horror that haunts some people with a sense of being buried alive is a surviving memory from this condition and ought to serve as a warning.

There is nothing dreadful in Mother Earth,

and such a soul would not be in the grave with the Earth body but in one of those semi-material regions where the souls, like the seeds of the plants, lie as in a garden of sleep.

The sense of imprisonment, however, is there, just as with a paralytic body that has no power of motion. Long intervals of oblivion mercifully intervene ; but, even so, that fate should surely not be voluntarily encountered again.

The Elemental Plane offers a very wonderful subject for study of its conditions, and some of those spirits who had been in it would possess a natural power of visioning those conditions in consequence of having literally germinated in them like a plant.

Such an extreme experience would, however, be very abnormal, the majority of persons only possessing very limited powers of entering on that plane.

In normal evolution consciousness should begin above that stage, and never be submerged in it.

It should hardly be necessary to say that in the case of sensitive psychic children, who show evidence of clairvoyance, or any other form of mediumship, every care should be taken to prevent the development of such powers, at least till maturity shows of what nature they are ; but too many persons are so ignorant of all the conditions on that astral plane that they imagine the exhibition of such psychic " gifts " indicates the child is like the infant Samuel, set apart for some high destiny, whereas it too often happens such children are simply negative sensitives, with abnormal affinities

to the astral plane, that result in obsessions and not in great powers.

Personal vanity and religious fervour often go hand in hand ; lack of logic may accompany them, for faith is apt to exclude the criticisms of cold reason, and refuse to be hampered by questionings and doubts. Given a psychic person, conscious from childhood of those vague powers of super-normal receptiveness, with limited intellectual training, an emotional and enthusiastic temperament, and an overweening confidence in a great destiny and high guides, the person who can see and hear, and well-nigh live in the conditions of the Elemental-astral Plane, may be forgiven for regarding each new step on the way back to full powers in the astral body and each added exhibition of phenomenal demonstrations of that power, as a clear proof that the right course is being pursued, until it is too late to turn back again.

All this time the "*guides*" may be simply *protectors*, who are trying in vain to arrest the progress, and to break off the controlling influence of spirits who are not wise nor "*high*," but merely ignorant and conceited, even if well intentioned ; and of yet other spirits who are prompting, suggesting, helping on the abnormal development from motives that are purely selfish and evil. That boundless and dangerous plane has an infinite variety of influences, all working their "*wills*" on its conditions.

All who cultivate the artistic faculties are peculiarly liable to find the way to the astral plane,

for true art always has affiliation to the mystic side of life. Art is suggestion of much that is sensed but not seen, nebulous and half formed and of the nature of wider "possibilities" that may or may not evolve into realities. Art is always semi-mysterious, and a striving after that which is beyond and above the present accomplishment ; but art that is to live and become a power for future inspirations must be as that of the great masters, whose compositions live for all time because their authors were true creators, not mere visionaries. They embodied in material forms the inspirations of their art, transferring them from the elemental stage to that of the complete unit, giving them birth into matter ; and in doing so they took their conceptions from the astral condition, in which all mental creations are a species of parasite living on the brain of their creators until they are given objective form in matter.

It is a matter of common knowledge that myriads of thoughts—creations thrown off by the minds of authors, artists, religious enthusiasts, philosophers, scientists, any and every person who thinks deeply enough to become a creator of thought forms—drift about on the astral plane, and become objective there if they do not find their legitimate consummation in material expression. These thought forms do a great deal to confuse the sensitives who develop clairvoyance on the mental planes in an erratic fashion.

Too many creations of mere dreams and visions

on that plane result in great exhaustion of brain power: for constant mental creation uses up the vital essence in endowing these fictitious presentments with life, and thus destroys the balance of development in all phases of the individuality that ought to progress equally.

Mere "visioning" is a mistake; the vision is merely the foreshadow of what may become a reality. If it is not allowed to do so, it becomes an obsession in nine cases out of ten. The result is the same, whether it be the mystic in a convent cell or on a desert plain, whose visions are all of the most ecstatic character, or those of an inventor, a scientist, an artist, a philosopher, or the ordinary individual. Each person may even become haunted and oppressed by his mental creations, if he allows them to grow on the astral plane by dwelling on them in place of working out even the most imperfect of material reproductions in which to embody these mental offspring.

The very activity on the material plane that is required to give them expression there serves to check their astral development and to transfer the vital forces to matter as the focus. It requires a material effort to paint a picture, write out the score of a composition in music, or transcribe a book, or sketch in the details of an invention, or to act a character in a drama. The effort to do so breaks up the crystallising condition of the astral elements that gather round the meditating passive mind as round a magnet, and scatters them.

The subjects of creation on the astral plane and of thought forms require a volume alone, and only a general warning against the dangers of doing anything of the kind as a mental exercise or in connection with psychic development can be given here. Under all circumstances, it is highly dangerous, and never beneficial, because all mental creations on that plane produce parasites. The astral element, being merely the medium for transferring the thing created from the mental to the object condition, and thus transferring it from the stage of an elemental to that of a distinct unit, has nothing of its own with which to complete the process of creation apart from the physical element. The process of creation is arrested at the embryo stage, if it does not pass from the astral plane, and all embryo life is parasitic—dependent on its creator's life.

The school of occultism that teaches pupils how to create on the astral plane from a mental conception to the conditions of a semi-materialised object—flowers, plants, a piece of drapery, other small objects—is either under the direction of a very ignorant occultist, or has received its inspirations from a serpent mind, for nothing could be more fruitful in evil results than such a course of instruction, whereby myriads of parasites are created by the students, and left to prey upon anyone to whose brains these monstrosities can attach themselves. If we could see the auras of such students, we would find that the most successful

of them were clustered round with the animated parasites they had so ignorantly built up, and which, like the animalculæ in a globe of water, were gyrating round and round inside the students' aura, like moths dancing in a sunbeam, and absorbing the vital essence in it, till they became like the collections of a rag shop.

The whole of which astral entities go to form focus points for the astral ether, and again act as little weights to attach the spirit ego, to whom they belong, to the astral plane. Could anything be more injurious to the spirit ?

The exceeding ease with which an artistic temperament can be put *en rapport* with the astral plane, the immense increase of power which that plane appears to bring to the imaginative faculties, is very misleading, because, while it suggests added powers, it is, in reality, only the stimulation into abnormal activity of the existing power, and the increase of productiveness only exhausts the supply the sooner.

The mental faculties stimulated into abnormal activity by the exhilarating effects of the astral fluids soon become exhausted, and it is then that the astral body begins to waken up into abnormal activity and display its latent powers in response to the mental craving for a supply of mental essence.

That is the beginning of the career of a parasite. It may not go very far, for many astral bodies are only capable of limited development, and the

busy lives of material existences do not give enough pause for that consolidation of the astral powers that would develop that body into complete activity.

On the other hand, the process may go on very far indeed, till the individual becomes a veritable vampire, exhausting every one and robbing all who have any mental power to give.

The cure is again material activity in place of mental productiveness. It may, however, be that the case has gone beyond possibility of cure, and the individual is on the way to imprisonment on the astral plane, when death shall come and separate the material body from its over-developed astral partner.

A true creator on the mental planes has no need of the astral stimulants of that plane ; the astral fluids will be simply a mirror to reflect to himself his creations, not to multiply them and thus imprison them on that plane.

So with the true mystic. So long as no abnormal development takes place the visions seen in the astral light will be no more than reflections from realities that are evolving into spirit existence : for the *true* mystic is a ripe soul possessed of the true soul sight, not merely of astral power of visioning nebulous things, and can behold the vision in any media without losing his or her individuality in that media, or becoming submerged in the intermediate conditions.

The true mystic sees with the eyes of the soul

(or spirit sight) the things that are conceived in the spirit, and not yet upon the plane of positive expression in any element ; hears with the spirit ear sound-waves that are not yet vibrating through the inferior elements. It is spiritual consciousness *in excelsis* that constitutes the true mystic, and is therefore a rare gift, for there are ten thousand seers who can sense and hear and see the things that are on the Earth plane and the astral plane for one true mystic who perceives the things that are purely of the Spirit. The world is not yet ripe for the production of the true mystic, because the world is still in the polarity of the lower soul, and man on Earth only finds union for his body of the Earth and his spirit of the true Spirit World through the agency of the astral body. All things in the astral condition still serve as the media in which matter and spirit interchange consciousness.

The astral element has had its day of power ; it is in the process of going back into the subordinate condition as the physical element ether-ealises and advances to its hour of supremacy. Both will retire finally into the subordinate condition again when pure Spirit reigns on Earth over all things evolved into spirituality.

When that day comes man will be able to exercise all those powers he desires so ardently now. That day, however, comes to each individual soul as it passes into the higher realms of Spirit life, and will come to all as a collective whole when their era of evolution is completed. The process of

attainment is not hastened by going back to pick up again all those threads of ancient wisdom that were broken when the era of that astral power passed away to give place to the dawn of a new age of physical achievements.

Everything pertaining to the astral power is withering ; everything pertaining to the physical power is developing and etherealising. Why, then, should man go back in order to study the records of a wisdom called from a power that is vanishing ?

CHAPTER XIII

VIBRATION IN ITS RELATIONS TO THE GREY LAND AND THE KINGDOM OF THE SERPENT-MEN

FOR the sake of all those persons who are so eagerly accepting the teachings of the Oriental masters to-day, and also for the people of the East themselves, it would be well that this problem of the Elemental-astral Plane, and the reality of the existence of these Serpent-men as its rulers, with the crowning heights of that plane as the grey land of the astral element should be considered; not merely regarded as a curious freak of the imagination but studied in the light which past histories of the old occult religions and the eras of the witchcraft power, together with the writings of the magicians who studied that plane, can throw upon its conditions of existence.

It will be a benefit, instead of merely a catastrophe if the invasion of the West by the old occultisms of the East results in a wider, broader study of the whole question of an unseen Universe and its conditions of life, its laws governing the evolution of man's higher self, and the consequences to mankind of his inter-relation to that vast unseen realm are better known. Still more beneficial will it be if a flood of light can be thrown upon the inner mysteries of those old, old forms of religious teachings that are trying to find proselytes all over the Earth to-day.

The very atmosphere of unrest that is in the East to-day is partly caused by the efforts that the soul of the Orient is making to cast off the fetters of ages of caste prejudices and religious enslavement.

Every race has a right to evolve its own systems of religious or philosophic thought ; to establish its own social and family customs ; to make and administer its own laws *within its own boundaries* and so long as that religion and those customs affect only its own citizens. But when, as now, the citizens of one nation come as teachers to other lands, it becomes a matter of common right to challenge them. This is true, whether it is Christians spreading the light of their Scriptures over the Earth or Orientals doing the same with theirs.

God has not denied the light of truth to one people and given it to another, but some have allowed their light to become dim and obscured by the inclusion of many falsehoods, which, by being incorporated with the truths in a religion, make it more dangerous than anything wholly false could be. It is in this sense that the sins of the fathers are visited upon their children, generation after generation, if veneration for the fathers prevents the children from questioning the nature of the wisdom and the religious systems bequeathed by their progenitors.

It is for this reason that men and women to-day must ask themselves not only what is the truth and the value in these teachings of the old religions

that are being offered to them in a revived and adapted form, but what legacy shall we leave to the generations that are to come after us if we accept a particular religion or occultism as true and fit to be our guide, and if we follow out the formulas for development of our psychic nature that they offer us.

To understand the source and the purpose of the diffusion of that class of wisdom that can and will produce these experts of the elemental plane, one must look again at the Serpent-men, and at their realm that lies between the faint light of the Grey Land and the iron door that gives entrance to their inner kingdom.

From the faint crescent light to the iron door there is seen to be a very fine thread. In the blackness of that vacuum it scintillates like a line of light. It is the Thread of Life to which the Serpent-men have attached themselves as to a rope. The dark door is like a sieve through which the fine threads of light pass, drawing up the vital essence, and, in passing into the vacuum, twine themselves into a rope of three strands.

The secret of the art by which that rope of life for the Serpent-men is woven is in the mysteries of vibration.

As the great pendulum of the Earth swings to and fro from right to left, with gentle swaying motion, in response to the pulse-beats of the Earth magnet, the rope of the Serpent-men swings with it into the lower polarity and out again ; into the

higher polarity and out again ; gathering from both the life essences, and drawing them up through the fine network of that mystic iron door.

Higher polarity, lower polarity, alternately, gathering lives from both conditions, and drawing their essence into the astral cone as the net swings to and fro, and all the root fibres of those floating islands on the higher astral plane reach out and out long, greedy suckers to drink in the vital fluids distilled by the Earth. Out into the sweeping currents of the astral waves nightly those suckers go ; their fine network expanding enormously, and at night look not only as floating islands of flowers but metamorphose into a hundred illusive appearances.

When students are taught to "vibrate in unison," and, as they imagine, "in tune with the great heart of Mother Nature," it would be well if they could see this nightly vision and its daily counterpart, and realise that there may be more than the one conventional aspect to the subject of vibration ; an aspect the Orientals, in all probability do not see, because their minds are filled with the delusion that vibration gives a path to power, and is the key to psychic development.

On the astral plane we see the net of the Serpent-men swinging to and fro in response to the vibrations set in motion from the Earth by those students who are "vibrating" there, and far out on the edge of the Ocean of Chaos we see the same pulsing motions on a vast scale : the pulse of the Universe beating

response to the magnetic attraction and repulsion of the nightly creative forces of the *lower nature realm*. It is this great pendulum of creation to which all are attuned, and to which the Serpent-men desire to attune as many persons as possible, so that they may vibrate with themselves and act as magnets to absorb and radiate those magnetic forces of the world—those *lower nature forces*—that are thus drawn into the Lotus Land.

Perhaps some persons will understand why vibration frequently arouses the lower nature forces in those who practise it, and thus reawakens the half of man which is derived from the lower realm, and throbs its response from one plane to another plane of mere sensation, and gives that extraordinary awakening of the animal nature and its cravings.

God did not give such teachings as vibration in unison with the lower polarity.

The countless millions who have passed to Spirit life in Western lands never heard of "vibration," never practised any formulas for development, yet they reached the Spirit Land of realities; while those who followed that illusive path have only found their Lotus Lands, and the Elemental Plane has been peopled by a thousand times ten thousand more who could not reach those grey shadow-lands.

From time immemorial that has been the fate of those followers of the religions into which the teachings of the Serpent wisdom have been grafted.

Always is there stamped upon those teachings the sign-manual of the Serpent-men. The Serpent is present somewhere in it all. Sometimes as twined round the central figure ; sometimes worn as part of the clothing of those who follow that wisdom. In Egypt it was seen continually. In the East to-day it is no less prominent, and wherever it is seen it should be recognised as stamping the hall-mark of its origin upon those who use it and the teachings they endorse. It is like the pirate flag of the psychic oceans, and ought not to require further description to make it a danger-signal than the first introduction in the Book of Genesis, where its true aspect is shown by the tempter of mankind—the Serpent in Eden.

The Serpent is challenging the world to-day, strong in the power over men's minds that the control of the elements can give to an expert occultist. Its votaries are willing to unite with any religion or philosophy, any scheme of life or system of occult propaganda, that will admit them to affiliation, because they know that union with them means absorption by them ; and that they can easily poison at its very source any teaching that conflicts with their own once they win the confidence of the public.

In those old mystic religions, that are being made the fountain just now for the distribution of pernicious teachings, their keeping, as sacred truths that may not be analysed or revised, all the dogmas and mystic doctrines of bygone ages, renders it

a very difficult task to say exactly where and when the seeds of the Serpent wisdom were introduced to poison the whole.

Is it not then far wiser to leave the whole Oriental teachings alone, and follow the plain, clear school of Western thought, even if it has none, or only some, of those mystic beauties of symbolism in which the East is so rich ?

As for the associations inspired by the Serpent line, is it not easy to understand how every one who joins them contributes something towards keeping the Serpent-men supplied with an inexhaustible source of life. The lower polarities and all the nature realm being drawn upon by one set of "students"; the higher polarities and the domain of the mind being sapped by another type; while the great mass of followers, from the enthusiasts to the merely curious and interested, all unite in forming that great company that brings with it power of numbers, power of wealth, power of attracting ever more and more members.

The old, old religions of the past that followed the illusive light on to that astral plane all perished in corruption; so will those that have incorporated it now. The shores of life are strewn with the wreckage in human lives, and the lost spirits of many lands who were engulfed in the maelstrom of its hidden mysteries.

Against those who are born into an old faith, and have their past or present ties to it, there can be no criticism directed; but for those born in a

newer age, and with the light of freedom always before their eyes, it would surely be a wilful blindness that would cause them to ignore the warnings that have already come to deter the foolish and unwary.

In nine cases out of ten, those who accept these occult teachings to-day do so inspired by an idea of the *power* that lies behind it all, a share of which may be possessed by themselves by uniting with those who control it. Many are allured by the prospect of escape from the dead level of material existence into the imagined higher conditions of some spiritual plane.

By the time these persons discover their mistake, and the complicated variety of evil things that lie behind the *apparent* ideality and truth, it is too late to escape from the toils—the net holds mind and body fast.

Fortunately for some there is never any great power of entering the elemental planes during life, *but even for these*, who are only as triflers on the fringe of the danger zone, affiliation will involve their future freedom, and prevent them from passing into the true Spirit World at death.

Many unhappy spirits have tried to come back and *warn* those in the flesh, but it is difficult to make the world heed and realise the danger. Though one rose from the dead, the living will scarcely listen. Even to many broad-minded persons, the passionate appeals that emanate from the unhappy spirits, inspiring preachers and

teachers to speak for them, seem as the outpouring of fanatics or neurotic pessimists, and few recognise that the error of entangling ourselves while we are on Earth with this network of the Serpent-men may result in ages of imprisonment on the elemental planes and the loss of those whom we love but whom the automatic routine of evolution into spirituality carries on while the poor entangled souls are left behind : never forgotten, but tied so that love and anguish, and many prayers cannot serve to release them ; and weary ages of separation become the lot of those who are thus parted.

Do we need to wonder that to-day so many spirits return to try to lift the veil and show the truth ?

It is, indeed, desirable to learn all that the clairvoyants can show of the results derived from the following out of the old religions, and what independent testimony the fresh minds of the West can glean concerning the psychic conditions created in their own lands by these Orientals, who are come to spread their teachings everywhere.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHAT CLAIRVOYANCE SHOWS OF THE PSYCHIC
ASPECTS OF THE EAST: ELEMENTAL TYPES
CREATED BY MAN

ABNORMAL EVOLUTION AND ITS RESULTS IN THE
EAST

To the materialist who visits the East, and especially those regions in which the old occult religions have dominated for ages, there is a curious veil of mystery over the countries and the peoples; a something that the materialist cannot define, but which can be sensed, even through the insensitive shield of the physical element that so completely envelops a materialist; and when we are told that "East is East and West is West," and never can they unite satisfactorily, expression is given to that vague, indefinite consciousness both of the mystery of the East and its fundamental inharmony to the line of evolution that has been followed by the West.

Astrologers express this inharmony by saying such and such persons are "square" to each other: that is, magnetically in opposition.

The psychic who visits those regions is either magnetically and mentally attracted by the sensed, but imperfectly seen, conditions of great power on the mystic planes that belong by evolution to the people of those regions; or if the clairvoyance is

strong on the spiritual plane, and also on the astral, a sense of fear and repulsion will be experienced, and grow in intensity as the spirit of the seer, who is of another race, and has no affinity to these regions, becomes more and more conscious of the true nature of the power that has been developed, and of that mysterious hypnotic influence that pervades the whole atmosphere for the psychic.

The effect on a Western psychic of this type is first this sense of mystery, and the veiling of all clairvoyant powers as by a heavy fog. Then a consciousness of inharmony to the conditions, and fear born of that inharmony.

Gradually the inharmony is conquered, power of visioning begins to manifest itself again, and the spirit side becomes visible.

With very highly sensitive mediums the total inharmony of conditions produces illness. If there is little physical envelopment the spirit will suffer acutely, and where the parasitic conditions are strongly prevalent the sensitive Western psychic, who has not the artificially developed astral envelope of an Oriental, very soon begins to fade away and dies if not removed to more suitable conditions.

In other cases the ego may become acclimatised and affiliate to the conditions, but in doing so will inevitably develop the astral body—just as the natives have done—and from that time will gradually lose the power of true spiritual sight, and see through the medium of the astral body

and on the astral plane, instead of on the spiritual planes.

This has been the history of scores of Western psychics, who during the past eras became absorbed by the Oriental schools of occultism, and even so far affiliated to their magnetic conditions that they returned to Earth from the Elemental Plane to reincarnate among Oriental races: having, in fact, lost their own type and their natural line of evolution, and wandered into another.

The idea of "caste" is founded on the knowledge of the importance of preserving type, in a pure, unmixed condition, because all mixtures tend to return the ego to the Elemental Plane, to find there again a *definite* type.

With the Jews the constant injunctions as to the preservation of race purity was intended as a means of preserving also their own definite line of evolution, and their means of communication with the spirits of that line.

The same law applies to all lines of psychic development that are to be clear, definite, and reliable, because *unmixed* in their conditions. After the Elemental Plane is left behind, the spirit may seek fellowship where it desires, because it has become positive, fixed in type, and thus no longer in danger of submersion or absorption again in the elemental conditions it ought to have left behind.

If the psychic is strong individually, and can resist the powerful mental atmosphere around him,

and can separate the impression and the visions seen, so that he can tell which are merely thoughts crystallised in the astral ether into actualities for the moment, and which are true spiritualised visions of things non-existent in his own aura but of the spirit itself, he will be able to study the conditions which the course of development followed in the East for ages upon ages has produced in the immediate surroundings of the Earth in those regions.

The Western psychic, with no hereditary veneration for any school of thought, no predisposition in favour of any line of religious teachings to colour and distort the character of the visions seen, will behold those Oriental lands, and that part of the astral plane that is affiliated to them, as a very different picture from the first glimpses seen through the haze of impressions thrown off by many minds in many ages.

The first consciousness the Western seer has is of a *thick* aura, instead of a clear, slightly brown or grey vapour. The next is a sense of being surrounded by myriad creatures of all types up to men and women in their astral bodies; even animals of curious mixed types are seen that are evidently parasitic creatures, many of them quite horrible types, of voracious character, that are tearing each other to pieces, and devouring one another continually, as one may see animalculæ in water do. Even the animal life of the East has shared in the effects of the too close intercourse

on the Astral-elemental Planes of man and the soul of lower nature, and the results are soulless abortions belonging to neither type.

Elemental life ought to end in the animalculæ—that is, all that belongs to the material evolution. It is when matter forms a link with the elemental-astral types that those weird shapes between so many incongruous beings are created.

Plants, animals, fish, birds, men, mixed in inextricable confusion, are seen on that plane.

It is, nevertheless, only where human lives that have assumed matter have given it off again in an elemental state that these semi-human types of elementals are seen; the humanised elements, being discarded in a state *below* that of the embryo, would amalgamate with the elementals of the nature world on that astral plane.

The other classes of elementals simply fuse together and absorb each other, and are absorbed again by some higher type in the ascending scale. These other strange creatures may be seen literally *devouring* each other as cannibals, and preying on anything they can obtain. These are the most rapacious class of all elementals that can be imagined.

These are the results of perversions of the creative powers, especially of attempts to divert those powers onto the astral plane as a means of avoiding the material and natural results of creative functioning in the material body. That which fails to achieve material expression, even as

an embryo, becomes an elemental of the type of its creators, and *in the likeness of the impulse* that gave it being.

Among vegetarian races the creations on the elemental plane show affinity to types of plants and men combined; while among carnivorous people they resemble animals and men. They go back, in effect, to their source of origin in the nature world, but retain the semblance of the higher type that created them.

In Europe, in districts where witchcraft flourished, clouds of these elemental beings were created, and might be seen hanging round people in the flesh, and living on them as parasites. In reviving practices that affiliate to the witchcraft eras and join immorality to occultism men are creating once more crowds of these abortions.

There are other classes of elementals that are also the creations of man and that elemental plane in unison, and these may be seen very numerous in the East to-day, because a great deal of intercourse with that plane is practised from many motives, and also in connection with some of their religious rites.

These many types may be seen by clairvoyants. Some as resembling men and trees, rooted in the soil, with long tendril roots, like feet with feelers extending as toes; long gnarled limbs, that resemble arms and hands with long outstretched fingers, that reach out and twine round the passer-by with almost human responsiveness. Others are as tall reeds in

marsh lands, fantastic things, neither plants nor people, but as one sees them in a nightmare when wandering on the astral plane of those Eastern lands.

And there are weird creatures that can walk on the Earth, or hop, or crawl over it. Some that can swim on the astral fluids or fly in the air. Almost every type is represented, with strange combinations that belong to none; and all these creatures show a horrible responsiveness to the presence of mortals, clustering round a sensitive like a swarm of noisome insects.

There are also a class of creatures that are purely vampires, and that may be seen drifting round a graveyard and hovering over the graves, as do the ghouls also. These absorb the inferior vital essence that is evaporating from the dead bodies; and, as they absorb it, they may be seen to swell up into bulbs—big transparent forms that drink in the vital fluids, and then are in turn suddenly absorbed by some strong vampire that comes drifting there in search of its nightly supply, or by yet another class of vampire that is derived from some mortal whose corpse lies buried in the grave.

All these weird phases of elemental life may be seen. A thunderstorm will kill these elementals in crowds, and electricity is a useful agent in destroying them. They will, however, multiply again from the causes that originally created their types through the intercourse of man with Elemental-astral Plane.

These things are not links in the chain of evolution at all. They are not a necessary part of the evolution of the human body. It is an error to classify them as part of normal evolution, because they are an artificial product—the abnormal results of unnatural lives.

The other types of elemental beings belong to a table of ascent, it is true, but they end in the animalculæ that do not produce a human type.

A type is produced from a mould, and varies according to the circumstances that have created that mould. A type does not exist till the elemental stage is passed, and then that mould remains to produce repetitions of the type till the exhaustion of the mould—or root form—causes that type to become extinct.

The human type in the elementals comes from men themselves in a process of going back to the nature form—devolution, not evolution. Such elementals are all soulless ; no human ego is either coming up through them or going back again in any one of them.

There is a class of vampires, however, who have souls, but these are always attached to some person in the flesh, and prey upon the public when they wander over the Earth in their astral bodies.

The formative stage of all created things being the Earth and its elemental region, that plane expresses all the imperfect examples of creative power, and all the perversions of the laws of sex.

From that stage onwards through Spirit life the sex organism develops in conditions that no longer require expression in the elemental stage. Nothing is eliminated, but all is developed into higher expression of power.

Constant interference with the laws of nature, that pertain to that elemental plane and man's relations to it, are responsible for the myriad of abortions seen as elementals; and to destroy or blight and wither an organism is not to develop it into a higher expression of power. The attempt to nullify the sex functions simply arrests the process of true evolution, and keeps the individual ego, as the subject of arrested development, on the elemental plane, and in its conditions in a rudimentary and imperfect stage of powers.

It cannot be too clearly emphasised that man on Earth has in all his organisms the first conditions of spiritual powers and the mechanism for the development of his *spiritual* body. Nothing will be left behind as discarded, but *all* will be spiritualised in its expression of power, and translated into ever more and more spiritualised expression—the sex organism as certainly as any other attribute of the human race.

To pervert or to destroy the creative powers is to imprison the ego on the Elemental-astral Plane. The constant interference with nature, and the laws of nature, that all the occult religions have been guilty of, explains why and how so many fine mentalities are found among the spirits of the Orient

imprisoned on that elemental plane, and in all conditions from those of the grossness created by persons of evil desires to the ethereal and pure state of that beautiful but deadly realm of the Grey Land.

From all time the East has kept unbroken the multiple lines of psychic culture that lead through the elemental plane, instead of that single line which *passes over it*. That line belongs to the Jewish people primarily, and to all those tribes who derive origin from the Jewish primogenitors back to the days of the Flood of Noah's era.

The East has made a sacred dogma of the means whereby communion may be held first through that plane, and then, as they believe, with the heaven lands ; but, as the investigations of Western seers would indicate, that belief is erroneous, because their methods do not carry them above the elemental planes, but only into the highest astral region of it.

The Eastern schools have perfected their methods of absorption from nature upwards on every plane, and all they have done, or can do, is to make of whole races and great continents vast storehouses of the astral-elemental magnetism ; great distilling vats for the supply of the essences of the nature realm alone ; mighty focus-points for every variety of weird and awful creatures evolved on that plane, and between its conditions and the material Earth's.

The reproduction of the same results have followed, in a modified form, in Western lands,

when the same formulas are practised, the same teachings adopted.

In their mediums and their mystics they possess very marvellous exponents of the power that is derived from the elements; and their temples have become the haunts of Earth-bound spirits, imbued with the old errors that have led to their imprisonment. Spirits these are who can give no new light, but who do connect the worshippers with all sorts of beings that haunt the temples and similar focus-points for attracting human magnetism and men's thoughts.

These earth-bound spirits in their astral-elemental bodies complete the chain that connects man with the lower polarities.

The astral-elemental magnetism has been generated for ages round these places till the whole aura of the East is saturated with it, and phenomenal exhibitions of power are simple affairs; *and the attendant consequences of these conditions can be felt by almost any really sensitive Western psychic.*

In the hill countries there is some relief, and among Orientals who do not follow the line of development that embodies the Lotus flower and the Serpent in its symbols, but as a general effect this peculiar atmosphere pervades the whole Orient, and is especially dominant among those religions that have made a science of the methods of vibration, thought creation, deep breathing, and so on.

In those regions the aura resembles a grey fog, with brown tones through it, and is lit up by the strange ghostly astral light that is reflected onto that aura from the Grey Land.

To watch clairvoyantly the Astral-elemental Plane is like trying to study the phantasmaform of a nightmare dream ; so many of the things that drift by are so much of the elements that it is difficult to realise they were once men in the flesh.

Those dull, almost-black bodies that resemble huge slugs, with a little dry form in the centre of each, like a pea in a mass of dark sponge—these were low-caste fakirs once, and these dark forms are their carefully developed astral bodies. Do mediums wish to develop similar prisons on the astral plane ?

Those weird phantoms that are definite in form, but transparent as glass, were created ages ago between the early races of men and astral spirits of the elements of a low type of mentality. Their bodies are almost indestructible ; they are so purely of the astral line of evolution, and are little more than petrified thought creations.

Then there are aerial forms, some dark grey, others light in tone, and some pure white. All so tall, so very, very tall, so attenuated, so ethereal, they look like smoke wreaths seen in the moonlight. These pass with incredible swiftness ; almost as thought flies. They are psychics, who have etherealised their higher astral forms into these lightest of “ sheaths.” Some of them are still

attached to Earth bodies ; while others have passed away from their mortal forms.

These are the experts on the astral plane, who go to and fro at will, and *their ethereal forms are what they have developed in place of the true spirit body*. They are chained to the astral planes, but do not realise it while such power of flight is theirs.

They are quite ready to be the guides and instructors of anyone who desires their help. To affiliate to any of these means the loss of the normal chance, possessed by every one, of going to the spirit planes, and involves the risk of becoming chained as these psychic experts are, and to them.

There are likewise to be seen huge bloated figures, like great balloons, with a thing the size of a pea and resembling the human form inside. These come drifting past on the astral currents. Some of them resemble snake skins inflated ; and, while they can float on the astral waves, they cannot rise into an upright position when left on the Earth, but trail themselves along, and turn and twist and wriggle as the serpents they resemble would do.

These latter elemental-astral beings were once men who sold themselves, body and soul, for power on Earth, and on the elemental planes by all of those occult avenues to dominion over other men's minds that affiliation to the Serpent brings, and thus they have their reward.

There are likewise multitudes of the earth-bound

spirits, such as may be seen in all countries where men have lived—east or west, north or south.

And there are many beautiful and fantastic types of semi-astral spirits to be seen by those who possess the clairvoyance of the true astral planes. Beings that never were, and never will be, in the mortal form are seen forming a “border regiment” between the earth-bound spirits and those types that are merely elemental.

These carry up the line of evolution on that plane, and link mortals and elementals, and those long chains of lives that constitute the spirits who are travelling up the long spirals to the Grey Land.

Seen from the Earth the tall cone of that mysterious land looks like the snow-capped peak of an ethereal mountain, crowned with a halo of beautiful light. Yet from it there blows a chill wind as from a land of death.

Below the peak lies the Lotus Land, with its wonderful panorama of tropical luxuriance and myriad illusions.

Well may the seer be allured by the beauty of that higher astral plane, and by all its pictures of great souls who once lived on Earth, and left the imprint of their lives and of their personalities as images of perfect types, that are mirrored on the astral film as on a record, and shown by the exquisite rays of the astral light thrown down from the mystic land.

And yet it is not well to see these things. The power to do so comes from affiliation to the

Elemental-astral Plane, and shows that the seer has developed the astral body. To see *this* land too vividly is to lose the power to see the true Spirit Spheres, for man in Earth life has not such spiritual power as would supply *both* astral and spirit form at the same time, and because affiliation is dangerous.

To see this beautiful aspect of the Astral-elemental Plane is so alluring that the clairvoyant is apt to lose sight of the other side of the picture and that realm near the Earth that is repulsive. That nearer zone, even with all its repulsive aspects, is not so fatal a region to become entangled with, because, while to do so will chain the soul there, it will not be for such an eternity.

The law of *destruction* reigns on the lower plane : that is in the denser elemental region. That law brings release to the imprisoned soul the more swiftly the less there is of the pure astral fluids in the reconstructed elemental body ; and the dissolving character of the formative zone of the elemental plane brings death to the elemental-astral forms there in automatic sequence.

If the ego has by occult arts constructed an iron box for his spirit, so that the disintegrating process cannot take effect, there may be long ages of residence on that plane, but only while, as a vampire, it is able to renew the elements by absorption of more as fast as they are dissolved.

Old European cities have in their day created astral-elemental conditions that are existent still

and detrimental to the community, but there is this much less of a danger in that the development on psychic lines uniting men in and out of the body of the flesh and a host of psychic and astral entities has not been made a science or a part of the religions, except at the witchcraft periods and of recent years. Only a limited number of persons have ever studied the occult planes in Europe ; myriads have done so in the East.

The coming of large companies of Orientals to the West brings the conditions of their races with them, and forms in a new country a fresh focus for those unseen crowds of earth-bound and ancient spirits who follow their countrymen ; and brings also the elementals of their types, besides forming congenial points of focus for similar entities belonging to the Western races.

It is a dim consciousness of these things, and also the experience of unpleasant " happenings " following in the wake of the Orientals, that creates a certain degree of prejudice against them. The importation of those exhausting conditions, that create a craving for stimulants and find relief in drugs, mark the coming of large numbers of psychic Orientals, and the establishment of their schools of occult development.

Ordinary drunkenness is not common, for alcohol does not give the super-stimulation to the powers of the elemental body that drugs give ; nor those periods of illusionment that are due to the subtle envelopment of mind and body in the influences to

which drugs open the door ; thus putting the personality onto that Astral-elemental Plane when ordinary methods fail, because there is not sufficient response in the astral body till drugs are taken. Drugs act where hypnotic methods fail, because drugs are one degree nearer to the material stage.

It is this subtle evolution of an elemental-astral aura of great power following in the wake of the Oriental teachers that makes of the places where they establish their power strong points of attraction for all kinds of elemental-astral beings, and for the radiation of unseen, but not unfelt, power on the occult planes, and the influence of those old religions, with their hosts of semi-astral spirits that belong to their line of evolution now.

It is the unseen subtle influences that belong to the elemental plane that are daily and hourly absorbed when men are brought in contact with these depots. The *spiritual essence* is never radiated by the soul ; it is only the *mental influence that acts on other minds to create agreeable impressions*, while the soothing, semi-narcotic drug—that is in the magnetism of that nature world reservoir of the Earth—gives the sense of rest and peace that is so welcome to tired mentalities. The beautiful peace of the “influence” radiated is narcotic. It soothes and dulls the mind ; as it soothes, the intellectual faculties offer less and less resistance to the gradual domination of mind and body that follows.

The stronger individualities resist the absorbing

influence longest, sometimes altogether repudiate it, but the weaker, who are the more highly sensitive, soon become submerged ; their very constitutions changing under the influence of that subtle magnetic drug, till, where there was little affinity to the astral planes shown at first, the gradual soaking in of the subtle astral-elemental ether produces an astral body that can be put into affiliation to all that region near the Earth and on it.

The thinning away of the physical element exposes the spirit more and more, and allows of the attachment of crowds of astral creatures, and brings many other dangers in its train that were non-existent at first.

There are a great many reasons, besides racial prejudices and commercial jealousies, that cause people of one race to exert a repelling influence towards another and diametrically opposite, one.

The millennium, when all shall unite in harmony, cannot arrive till all are out of the lower polarity that controls all now, and the laws of the lower polarity place barriers between races to prevent them fusing their types and losing their individualities in the very dissolving conditions of the elemental plane.

Men of the Western races have no special claim to plume themselves upon their moral status ; too often their advent in a strange land has meant the importation of their vices, as well as the amenities of their country ; but so long as men do not add the aggravated horrors of a redevelopment

of the astral body to their evil actions, there is, as a rule, the termination that Death brings to the multiplication of the evils. Where the occult practices are added to any imported evils, the end cannot be foreseen.

The Hindus are active just now in their exploitation of the occult wisdom they have gathered through the ages. In common with others, they may be said to have colonised the Elemental-astral Plane, both in its lower and its higher regions ; and to have so united its conditions in their own auras and that of their country that there is an unbroken line of evolution through it possible for a Hindu, and the condition of repeated re-incarnations from it ; but, while the air of superior wisdom and the vast storehouse of occult knowledge of that plane that these men do possess is a guarantee of their power to manipulate the forces of that plane, the results they have obtained in consequence of their knowledge do not justify an unlimited confidence in either the character of their knowledge, nor in their power of controlling those forces ; nor are their spiritual powers found to be of any superior order, when once the veil of mystery is stripped from the history of the results of the teachings of the Oriental Masters.

CHAPTER XV

THE RELATION OF THE ELEMENTAL-ASTRAL PLANE TO MEDIUMSHIP TO-DAY

THE POSSIBILITIES OF GREATER INTERCOURSE WITH SPIRIT LIFE IN THE NEAR FUTURE

MEDIUMSHIP that opens the door on to the Elemental-astral Plane is far more often met with than the true mediumship that has no affinity to that condition of discarnate existence.

Wherefore, it is of the utmost importance to all mediumistic persons, as well as to the world at large, that the true nature of that plane be widely known and the character of the powers it gives recognised.

It is well to state here that there are many spiritualists—some of them very fine mediums—to whom only the bright and beneficent aspect of psychic powers ever presents itself; and for these persons no words of warning are necessary, since no danger finds any intermediate link of connection; not because they are more moral or more highly spiritualised than others to whom mediumship brings constant dangers. Many of them are by no means so *very* spiritualised, nor are they developed on to a high plane; their safety is due to absence of magnetic affinities to the Elemental-astral Plane, and to nothing else.

Between man in the body of the flesh and that danger zone there is the barrier of that realm around the Earth that may be said to enfold it with a blanket of protection, and is known as the region of the earth-bound spirits. The constant radiation of very physical elements that goes on in this region serves to make a condition too dense for the elemental-astral beings and spirits who have been drawn into its conditions, to pass. Thus it prevents their encroachment upon the Earth life, and so long as man leaves this barrier intact, it is only the earth-bound spirits recently from the life of Earth who can enter into affiliation with him. This region is like the threshold of the two conditions of semi-material and semi-astral existence.

Mediums may connect themselves with this semi-material zone, and find protection in their material bodies while they hold clairvoyant, clairsaudient, or inspirational communion with the good spirits in an earth-bound condition. They may even make use of the nature-forces in slightly finer condition on the Earth region on that plane; may receive raps; see etherealised forms of visions reflected onto the Earth plane, but not materialisations of forms, nor any phenomena that involve *manipulation* of the elements—metamorphoses of any kind. No attempts to pass the barrier of the Earth plane can be made by mediums with safety. All metamorphosis of the *elements*, all building up of forms, as with materialisations, means affiliation of medium and circle to the conditions of the *elemental*

stage of evolution and the astral element, that plays so important a part in the process. It involves the use of the elemental-astral body that is man's heritage from the astral era, and brings dangers that will be shown in the next book, where the nature and constitution of the astral body is described in carefully detailed analysis. There are so many persons who cannot arrest the development of their astral bodies once they are stimulated into activity that it is dangerous to begin the process.

It is because of the exceeding danger there is of being unwittingly drawn across the barrier of the Earth plane, and affiliated to the danger zone, that wise and good spirits in all ages have discouraged all mediumistic development by the general public, and that the importance of developing good mediums on safe lines is a recognised necessity in order that the true nature of mediumship may be taught by good spirits possessed of real knowledge. The guides of the first "Spiritualists'" Association, knowing this, carefully selected as their *first mediums* persons who, owing to their strong physical anchorage, could not be developed to cross that barrier. It is for that reason that all phenomena that require the affiliation of that plane are discouraged by the higher and wiser spirits. It is not because there are no mediums to-day who could give repetitions of the phenomena of the early days that it is so seldom given now, but because the true nature of that class of phenomena

and its dangers has been demonstrated by the wiser spirits, and is better understood both on Earth and in the Earth plane regions, and few spirits will join in promoting it.

In the Spirit Spheres it is known that a new era of communication is coming for the Earth's peoples, just as such eras have come in past ages. Those good spirits, who desire to give knowledge that will prepare mankind to use wisely and well the power such communion will bring, have endeavoured to organise mediumship, and to open up their own avenues for controlling the communications in order to prevent the evil line of the Serpent-men, and all those many associations that are affiliated to them, from usurping all control. In past ages that usurpation of power has again and again taken place, and produced the witchcraft eras, instead of periods of advancement in spiritual knowledge and power. The doors that the Churches shut were opened and held by evil Intelligences time after time.

If the same result is not to be repeated in the coming era, the true nature of mediumship must be better understood and the mediums protected. Mediumship has existed in all ages, it will exist eternally. If the Churches refuse to recognise it, and to give their protection to those who are the mediums, there must be a neutral association to give this protection, and the means of studying the whole question involved ; otherwise the power must always be left in the hands of spirits and

mortals who are too often influenced by ambition, selfishness, base, or even by actually evil motives, as in the witchcraft lines of development.

Mediumship is not a necessary part of any religion, although it serves to illuminate or mislead the religious seers and mystics according to the influences that control it.

Mediumship is due to certain peculiarities in individuals, and to certain conditions in the nature realm that correspond to these peculiarities. What affiliation to a religious body can do is to draw around the mediums the protecting mantle that purity and truth, as possessed in a true and uncorrupted faith, can give ; or, on the reverse, such affiliation to religions that are themselves corrupted or false, or are in themselves affiliated to the Elemental-astral Plane, will give, not protection to the mediums, but a fatal and almost hopeless entanglement in the same network of corrupting influences.

Hence it is actually safer to join no religious body of persons than to find union with a false system, a corrupted faith.

Spiritualism began as a neutral association ; the earliest Spiritualists were social martyrs to their opinions and outcasts from their churches ; subject to merciless criticism and ridicule. They were largely recruited from the ranks of the freethinkers and persons on the borderlands of many schools of thought. This attitude opened the door to almost any line of control, and it is not to be wondered

that almost every line of thought in spirit life found some exponent.

In those early days of modern Spiritualism, many spirits and many persons in the flesh were very eager for any knowledge that could be given them. The majority of persons in the flesh were totally ignorant of the laws of spirit communion, and the spirits on the Earth plane were equally ignorant of any conditions but their own; they do not now see that astral plane except as a Shadow Land.

Spirits and mortals were alike anxious to communicate, and eager for instruction. There was any amount of ancient lore, and strange forms of power that could be demonstrated; and spirits who had been past-masters in controlling those powers found ready acceptance of their suggestions and their control. Good and evil contended continually, and the spiritualistic movement reflected the dominance of the one or of the other.

It was at this time that many Oriental spirits on the Earth plane, and in that wonderland of the elemental-astral region, came forward to impress both the spirits of Western races, who were also only on the Earth plane, and many persons in the flesh, with their knowledge of the possibilities of phenomenal demonstrations of power and of the philosophies that have illuminated past eras, and with teachings of universal truths that belong to no age and no people.

Some of these spirits came to warn against the

errors that still imprisoned themselves, but too many, unfortunately, did not realise they were prisoners in the Elemental-astral Plane, but were still inflated with pride in the powers they possessed on it, and were eager to teach their knowledge to others. Still others of the spirits who came were actually evil and very dangerous because of their superior knowledge. For, whereas an earth-bound spirit may obsess and cause much evil and degradation to his medium, he cannot bring upon his victims the super-evils that result from knowledge that links man with the semi-material and semi-astral beings who live beyond the earth-bound region, and are actually shut away by it till men themselves remove the barrier.

It has taken a great deal of time to make mediums realise this danger, and even now few understand in what the danger consists.

To all those persons who have welcomed the advent of the psychic movement as a means of lifting the veil that shrouds the other side of life, it will seem an unsatisfactory conclusion to say that an exhaustive study of the whole question leads to the conviction that free intercourse between the two stages of life cannot be possible yet ; that, in fact, the majority must resign themselves to receiving messages of a limited character, such as might come from friends who had gone to another continent. Every one desires *direct personal* communication, if possible ; and hence people grasp eagerly at all lines of development that promise

this ; but it would be false to the whole purpose of this book, in aiding the spirit friends to give a true picture of their conditions, and of the difficulties they require to surmount, to say that *free* and *full* communion can be safely obtained in the very near future.

Sorrowing humanity may take comfort in the thought that a *measure* of such communion can be given now, and will be given in its fullness later on. Spirit friends who belong to intermediate lines, by descent from those mixed astral-physical races of the long ago, and who are on those intermediate planes that have been likened to the five semi-tones of the musical scale, have established ages ago what may be called sub-stations on the Elemental-astral Planes, and do help spirits from Earth, who have passed on beyond the Earth sphere to hold communion with those on Earth ; but, again, it must be remembered that this means for conveying messages is limited by the conditions of the planes on which these sub-stations are.

Even as Moses was obliged to wait before he demanded the freedom of his race from their enslavement to the Egyptians, till the Earth conditions were ripe for the wonders he required to show, and the power he would have to exercise, against Pharaoh and his wonder workers, so must we await the arrival of the right hour that will give the world free communion between both sides of life.

Moses could see those periodic waves of magnetic force described already as emanating from the

pillar of fire. He knew that one of these waves would be due to reach the Earth, just as an astrologer predicts the advent of a comet. He knew that his hour of power on the physical plane would come with that physical magnetism in abundance. He knew that the Egyptians, with their power derived only from the astral element drawn from the Elemental-astral Plane, would (under a law of God that man may apply for his salvation) fail in face of a mighty wave of physical magnetism, such as he, Moses, the medium of the physical race of Adamite man, could attract and control; and which they, because of their abnormal affiliation to the Elemental-astral Plane that was the secret of the Egyptian power, could not.

Some of the Orientals try to claim Moses as their initiate, but the whole story of the Bible shows him as "learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, but the direct *opponent* of their methods, and the antagonist of their powers.*

Writers who try to explain by the light of present conditions how Moses overcame the hosts of Pharaoh find nothing but the theory of a Divine miracle to account for the story; it does not occur to their minds to think that there were abnormal conditions present in the Earth itself at that exact time which made the miracle possible.

Those tidal waves of magnetic ether have

*In the next volume this question will be fully discussed, and the aspects of their teachings that clairvoyance can show will be given.

recurred periodically, and one is now due to reach our Earth before long. Already there is a fullness of psychic powers in the higher spheres, and our Earth has begun to show responsive vibrations ; and, as the little pools of water begin to fill and then overflow, and the sands to grow moist and quiver and glisten before the coming of the in-flowing waters of the tide really reaches them, so there are evidences that the wave has come close to the shores of our planet already.

Many persons have an idea that the possibilities for the electric light and power of all kinds through electric force, " wireless " and kindred demonstrations of nature forces, have been with man from the beginning of creation, and only awaited the discovery of the instruments by which those forces could be regulated and their nature understood. That is an error, because the Earth now is in an exceedingly fine condition of etherealisation of its physical elements, and generates an aura of those elements that is different from the aura of the Earth in early ages, when the dominant note was first the astral influence, and next a condition of dense materiality, in which only phenomena of the elemental stage was possible. The present conditions of the Earth's aura have not existed from all time, but are the outcome of the Earth's evolution into a semi-spiritual planet ; even as man has evolved into a spiritual individuality on the Earth, and given it thereby a share in the heritage of that higher soul which man represents.

Thus Earth and man progress together, and their united spirituality reacts upon the conditions around them, and gives the etherealisation of the elements from which the more subtle demonstrations of magnetic force become possible. The strong inflow from a magnetic wave finds receivers in both man and his Earth, and demonstrations become possible on whatever planes those receivers are in affinity to ; so that man will receive either great illumination of the truths and the beauties of spiritual existence: or colossal forms of evil and perversions of truth will spring into strong dominance over men's minds and bodies if the receivers of the magnetic power are in affinity to evil lives and to distortions of spiritual verities.

In the early ages the Earth possessed an etherealisation of the astral elements that was bequeathed by the astral era. That was the media for the phenomena of that day ; the physical essences etherealised will be the media for phenomena at last, and we are on the verge of the turn in the tide towards full physical power in our Earth's aura.

This finer physical essence is rapidly becoming the vehicle for transmission of power all over the world, and presently its etherealisation will reach the point at which spiritual power of communion will be normally obtained through it, and will thus eliminate the necessity for mediums in the flesh for all but inspirational, clairaudient, and clairvoyant forms of communion.

Raps belong to the nature force, and require very little—sometimes no—addition from the human medium to make them available as a code of signals. The rappings and tappings in mines, where a variety of personalities have been present to investigate them, who could not all have been the mediums for the demonstrations, belong to the nature forces; so do the healing influences found in certain grottoes and pools of water, where the fluids and the rocks serve to hold the magnetic essences and prevent too rapid evaporation, belong to this class of phenomena, for the magnetic force of the nature soul plays an important part in all miracles, recurring again and again in certain localities.

Wise spirits know that phenomena through mediums cannot be obtained without putting them into affiliation with the Elemental-astral Plane, and that only in *very* exceptional cases can this be done safely. Hence these spirits do not encourage the quest for phenomena.

On the other hand, spirits who are entirely indifferent to future consequences, or ignorant of them, or are of evil intent, can and do produce a variety of remarkable demonstrations. In the past these spirits in the background could manipulate the machinery for these demonstrations, and thereby captured the interest and adherence of perfectly good spirits on the Earth plane, who were very eager to demonstrate the truths of immortality and the survival of the individual ego.

No one can calculate the extent of the evils produced by affiliation to the Elemental-astral Plane, nor the long catalogue of errors and disasters brought into Spiritualism by the attempt to return *spirit* entities into material conditions, in order to satisfy the sceptic, and *demonstrate through matter the power and existence of the totally distinct element of spirit* as the dominant factor in the evolution of a world.

Man in the flesh should rise to the spiritual conditions. He cannot bring them down to his own level; all he does is to put himself and his spirit friends into the elemental conditions of the Earth plane, with all the attendant evils. Only through the truly spiritualised *senses* can he hold communion with the Spirit Spheres directly, and the less of phenomena he entangles himself with, the nearer will he approximate to the true spiritual conditions.

If man is to use mediums to connect him with the chain of intermediate spirits that extend to the Spirit Spheres, then the *ripeness* of the medium's own spirit, so that it is almost in possession of its future spiritualised faculties, becomes important. A ripe soul, that cannot be drawn into the conditions of the elemental plane, is the true type of medium.

Many persons may fancy they answer this description, but experience proves that the truly ripe souls are rare, the majority being in an imperfect condition that makes it dangerous to develop the mediumship that is manifested. Furthermore,

there are persons who, owing to past development on to the Elemental-astral Plane in connection with the old occultisms and "secret cults" of the past, *are ripe as regards their power upon that plane, and not ripe as spirits*, and these persons are a twofold danger to themselves and to others the moment development of mediumship is attempted.

The history of Spiritualism has proved this; the study of the older occultisms has proved that over and over again their formulas for obtaining power simply resulted in opening the door to the worst of evils and many dangers; creating also a host of persons—spurious psychics—whose powers were merely vampirish and of no spiritual value whatever.

In preparation for the coming inflow of magnetic power, the higher intelligences in the Spirit Spheres have been clearing away the entanglements of old errors, old evils, old effete teachings of ancient religions, philosophies, and science, that incorporated methods of psychic development, or enunciated dogmatic theorisms. They have cleared away many misconceptions from all branches of knowledge, and are working still that the minds of men and women might be emancipated from enslavement to any old and fossilised examples of false or perverted knowledge, and the New Age be born into an atmosphere of freedom.

The attempt to put the shackles of old faiths or old occultisms upon the minds of persons who are freeborn ought to be vigorously resisted, not

placidly accepted: for freedom of thought, once lost, is hard to regain, and no tyranny is more oppressive than mental dominance by powerful minds. The opening of the door into another plane of communication should give to the newer type of Science power to introduce new truths, and throw new light on old problems.

Many spiritualists agree that spirit communion and its laws should be a matter for broad-minded scientists to elucidate, and that religion only becomes a part of the study when the communications involve religious teachings. The science that is to give the key to the psychic planes must, indeed, be very broad in its scope, and free and unhampered by the traditions of material science and the limitations of material powers, yet it must make of material knowledge a starting-point for explorations into the wider realm of that which is unseen by the material sight.

Man is expanding his material powers and mundane knowledge in all directions, and the Spirit World is labouring to meet him at the nearest available point of contact; both will unite more surely and swiftly if man is not "side-tracked" into the entanglements of the old occultisms, with all their errors and false systems of development that were derived from no higher source of knowledge than the inspirations of the Serpent-men, and the misguiding spirits of the Elemental-astral Plane.

Western man is free-born. Should he then go

back, in order to enslave his mind, to the old occultisms, the old religious teachings and entanglements of that weird and mystic school of Eastern thought that has had so many representatives in past ages and in old faiths, and still survives in all its dangerous psychic possibilities to-day? Surely no!

* * * *

All that has been described so far in these pages is in the realm of the lower polarity and the nature soul. Man, with his higher soul, has a correspondence to every condition of the nature realm, and the effects of this correspondence, and the results, to mediumship in particular, of this interrelation of man and his world are such that every step of the separate ladders by which man and the nature realm ascend to the condition of spiritual entities becomes of absorbing importance, as tracing back to their origin the causes of the entanglements between the two, and their action and reaction on man's progress. In the next volume of this series, the subject of man's own share in producing the conditions of the elemental plane will be traced out, together with the further consequences that resulted to Adam's descendants from the sin of the Eden days, the problems that arise from mediumship in relation to the elemental-
astral body, and all the avenues to the Elemental-
astral Plane that are opened up by abnormal developments.

True mediumship, that opens the gateway to the Spirit realms, is one thing, and a very beautiful thing; the spurious mediumship that arises only through the vampire possibilities of the elemental body and its over development, with all the attendant evils, is quite another thing. In the sequel to this book the Problems of Mediumship will be considered again from the standpoint of the possibilities of that elemental body, and the consequences that specially arise from the teachings of the Oriental and other occult schools.

THE END.

NOTE ON REINCARNATION.

Man reincarnates only from the elemental plane. He may go to its highest regions, and still reincarnate from any stage of his development on that plane, because he is always in his astral body while in that plane, and never in a true spirit form.

He may reincarnate from the lowest stage very soon, because that stage is nearest matter. The more he etherealises his astral body, the longer will he be before he can reincarnate ; and when he reaches the highest point of etherealisation, which is in the Grey Land, he will find that he cannot reincarnate at all.

He has used up all his spiritual " oil of life " in etherealising his astral form, that is by that time so perfect in its powers *within that plane*, and has nothing left for the development of his spirit on any other.

The astral body of a positive man will continue to exist as long as the world does ; but when the end of this Earth comes, that man and his astral body will perish with it, leaving the soul as a disembodied ego that has no power on any plane, and must begin its whole pilgrimage over again before it can possess power for objective expression in any element.

A man may not reincarnate at all—it is not compulsory on anyone. A soul, born into the physical element and into an earth body, may pass straight into spirit life, and not linger in the environments of Earth at all.

Even an infant that dies at birth, or a child who lives for a few years, may pass into spirit life, strange as this may sound, when it is admitted that mature men can reincarnate repeatedly.

This difference in their line of evolution is because the full-grown man has made ties to the elemental plane, and the infant has made none. The elemental plane is not on the line of *normal* evolution from the moment in which matter is first assumed ; to re-enter it is going back a stage. The infant has not had an opportunity to go back, or to form abnormal ties. The spirit seed of the future body of the infant has not been developed,

NOTE ON REINCARNATION—*Continued.*

but neither have its powers of growth been diverted to the astral plane. The infant passes as an infant into spirit life, and grows up there from the stage at which Adam descended into dense matter.

The full-grown man has wasted or misused his power of spiritual growth, and has to wait in the "anteroom" to spirit life until his spirit body recovers its independent, vital force again, and can grow as a spirit.

In all reincarnation there must be the total destruction and dispersal of the elements of the material body, and of the *astral envelope* before the *seeds* of a new body can spring from the astral root; just as all the blades of grass and all the leaves of a plant of one season die and drop away as the new plant rises from the bulb root. And still it is from the astral root the new form must evolve.

There is always a period of complete negation, in which all activity is arrested, and a state of coma that precedes the return of the ego into a new body of the Earth.

As a rule, reincarnation means that the former incarnation failed to ripen the spirit ego, or to give it the experience earth-life is destined to give, but there are persons who reincarnate, although they possess strong spirit forms, and are ripe in Earth experiences—highly-developed mentalities.

These are men and women of strong passions, deep emotions, great capacity for good or for evil actions, and violent temperaments, to whom immersion in matter is a sedative, giving them again the opportunity to control those strong passions, deep affections, domineering characters, and to regulate their manifestation without destroying the value to the development of the soul which the capacity for deep emotions give.

Nothing is so acute, so intense, as the sufferings produced by vehement passions and overdeveloped emotional natures that are uncontrolled by the will-force; nothing is so absolutely void of all sensation as matter, so utterly unresponsive to the mind. Matter is like a thick blanket deadening all that the mental ego can experience, and the stultifying, imprisoning effect of the unresponsive body of matter act as a check on the passionate soul, giving rest without negative conditions, and limiting its activities

NOTE ON REINCARNATION—*Continued.*

by imposing the restraint of matter upon the gratifying of every impulse. One has only to look upon a body of the flesh from which the soul is absent to realise how utterly expressionless and insensitive a thing mere matter is.

It is as though the passionate soul has been returned to the imprisonment of the material form, and into the school of material life—the lower form again—in order to learn the lessons of self-restraint, not those of experiences of earthly existence.

Reincarnation is not a normal, but an abnormal, process of evolution.