

THE OCCULT WAY

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PART I

CLEARING THE GROUND

In the beginning, earth was without form
And void
And blackness covered the great deep.

THE FIRST STEP towards success in any task is taken by learning all that can be learned of its nature, and of the nature of the effort it will demand, without actually embarking upon it. The step is completed by attentively considering one's own nature, and deciding in the light gained through the study whether one possesses the power, and above all the will, to do what the work will require. To leap into action without some such preliminary movement will mean that the chances of failure, which naturally and inevitably accompany all human endeavours, will be greatly increased ; and if this is true when the task lies in the everyday world, it is doubly true when it lies in the Occult Realm, for there human values do not obtain, and indeed are often reversed.

A task, in the form of Seven Lessons in Practical Occultism, is placed before the reader of this book. He may decide to undertake it, or he may not ; but before making his decision he should, as a person of intelligence, endeavour to learn all that it is possible for him to learn of the work to which he is invited, and thus furnish himself with clear-cut reasons for whatever attitude towards it he chooses to assume.

To aid the prospective student in taking his first step, this prefatory, unnumbered lesson is given. All who look to profit in any way from the book, even though they do not contemplate making it a definite, practical study, are earnestly advised to give the lesson the closest attention. Success in the field of Occultism is at best difficult to achieve, but it is apt to become impossible unless the instructions herein set forth are held firmly in mind as a background for all subsequent effort.

The seven numbered lessons are addressed to the Aspirant who seriously desires to fit himself for Discipleship, but who, in the absence of a competent guide—a person not readily found—finds himself unable to understand, much less to apply the rules laid down in recognized Occult Classics, such as *Light on the Path*, *The Bhagavad Gita*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and others of equal status. For him I write and for none other. For the more advanced student who has himself found the Way, or has attracted to his side an expert teacher, I do not write : such as he do not need the elementary instruction which is all my own knowledge permits me to give. For the student who is still wedded to Authority I have no word either : were he to exchange the authority he now favours for mine it would help him in no way. But to the Learner who has still an *open mind*, even though he has followed after many guides, gathered a store of occult information, and built up conceptions of the Inner Worlds and the Way thereto, I may speak with profit—profit both to him and to myself, for none can give without receiving.

It may be thought by some that of students of the type I have in mind the number must be few, but that is not my own opinion. I believe that many such exist in every walk of life—though perhaps not in circles professedly occult—and that their numbers are steadily increasing. Yet, admitting the possibility that I may be mistaken, and that real Learners are few, nevertheless those few call for help, and it is in answer to that call that these lessons are given. To ensure that the help proffered is made real and effective an effort proportionate to that which the teacher makes is demanded of the Learner, and the first aspect of it which he is called upon to manifest takes the form of carefully studying and endeavouring to comply with the following rules :

(1). Do not come to this book with the idea of finding in it a watertight philosophy of life, ready-made. To provide you with that is not its purpose, but to direct you into the beginning of a *Way of Living*—a way which if diligently followed will lead you on, step by step, to discovery for yourself of all the truth of life you will ever need or ever can use.

(2). Do not attempt serious concentrated study of the lessons,

or practice of the exercises described in them, until you have first read the whole book with attention, and have obtained a fair general comprehension of its scope and method, thereby, *through your own thinking*, establishing in your mind confirmation of what is taught in the present lesson.

(3). Do not, when once launched upon definite study, pass any lesson without *some* certainty that you have grasped an appreciable portion of its meaning, and without having made a determined effort to practise the exercises taught in it.

(4). Do not attempt any serious study of Lessons V, VI, and VII until certain of a thorough understanding of Lessons III and IV, and until you have gained proficiency in the exercises described in them.

(5). Do not attempt the practical work outlined in Lesson VII until consciousness of real power has evolved in you.

(6). Do not embark upon this study with the idea that it will in a year, or in five years, or in any number of years, develop you into an Adept. If you do so you are likely to be disappointed. If studied, understood, and *lived out*, the lessons will put you in harmony with the hidden Laws of Life, and to be thus should be your sole ambition. *Not until you have developed knowledge such as will enable you to know an Adept when you meet him, or read his words, will you yourself approach Adeptship.*

(7). Do not confine yourself immovably to the practices outlined in the lessons, but use them as guides in framing exercises for yourself.

(8). Do not judge the lessons by the standard of accepted authority, but by the standard of Life. If you find that the teachings contradict authority, as doubtless you frequently will, look out earnestly upon Life itself and ask if they contradict it.

(9). Do not struggle to reconcile the teachings with favourite preconceptions of your own ; if you do so you will end by building yourself a beautiful Castle of Illusion. Strive to come to the study with a mind swept clean of preconception.

(10). Do not for a moment forget that you are a Learner, and that the lessons are addressed to Learners, not to men in general who in no way aspire towards the Occult Path. This book contains no panaceas for the ills of the world, therefore

do not search for them, but seek always the Path of Wisdom, for wisdom will show you the cause and cure of all ills.

(11). Do not imagine that the advanced lessons are of greater importance than the others ; each in its own place is of equal importance with every other. Give equal study and thought to each, and none will be easier or harder to master than another.

(12). Think of the giver of these lessons, if you find it necessary to think of him at all, not as a law-giver, or a preacher, but as a slightly older Learner—a Pupil-teacher.

(13). Think of the lessons as *lessons*, not as sermons, rules of conduct, or codes of morals.

(14). Put away all desire to be *learned*, and think only of *learning*. Knowledge is co-existent with LIFE : LIFE is eternal : therefore of learning there is no end.

Do what you can to recover the “*child state you have lost*”. In the form of the child, Life holds up before your eyes for your instruction a living example of the true Learner. The adult dignity of the Western student weighs him down and shuts him away from the Path of Learning, just as the “great possessions” of the rich man in the Gospel story shut him out of the Kingdom of Heaven, because it causes him, materialistically, to include his Inner Being within his consciousness of physical maturity. Information, falsely called knowledge, is by the Enemy, *Authority*, spread in profusion in the path of the adult, who therewith builds an exitless prison, and sits in it, and dreams that he is free ; but, of the same material, the child, the Learner, builds him a bridge to knowledge, and in freedom walks upon it safe from the snares of the Foe.

Origin of the Lessons.

In what particular school of occult thought have these lessons their origin ? This is a question certain to be asked, at least by students experienced in occult studies. Ideas and practices suggestive of Raja Yoga may be distinguished in some of the lessons. Others (particularly in Lesson IV) may be noted that can hardly have origin anywhere but in the Qabalah, and its glyph, the *Tree of Life*. Others, again, point to the Arhat Philosophy or Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky as

their source ; and others, still, to The Ancient Mysteries and Druidism. But while all these systems appear, in some measure, to have been placed under contribution, the curious inquirer may find it difficult to ascribe the lessons as a whole to any known occult school.

To affix labels to himself, his ways and works is one of the commonest and strongest instincts of man, and it is one which the average student of Occultism shares quite equally with other men. It is an attribute, however, which the Learner should seek to eliminate from his nature, for it is but one of the disguises in which the *Sense of Separateness*, the demon that keeps strife alive in the world, constantly manifests. Should I (as I would) refrain from referring these lessons to any particular occult source, leaving them to be accepted or rejected entirely on their own merits, it is certain that students and others would label them for themselves, and equally certainly label them wrongly.

The system outlined—for *outlined* is all it is—in the series of lessons I present, and in the answers to questions which I give in Part II of the book, does not originate in any of the Occult Schools commonly known and already enumerated. The general ground-plan—the seven numbered steps rising from an unnumbered foundation (the present)—is derived from a system followed by an obscure circle of students of Occultism (of which I myself am a lay, or “externe” member) which has its working centre in the Middle East. This Circle has no name that would convey any meaning to the Western reader. It claims no particular “Tradition”, but should the reader insist on ascribing it one he may, without undue inaccuracy, call it HERMETIC, remembering that, in the words of an elder brother, “Hermetic Philosophy . . . is the boundless ocean of Truth, the central point whither flows and wherein meets every river, as every stream—whether its source be in the East, West, North, or South.”

So much it is necessary to say concerning the source of the teachings I give, but in saying it I do not desire it to be thought that I am disclaiming individual responsibility for any ideas contained in the book or for the manner in which they are presented. Quite otherwise : I merely desire to make

clear that I am not the creator of the material I handle, but rather am an *interpreter*, and that I accept an interpreter's responsibility.

Here I think it is but right to say that my knowledge of Occultism, philosophic or practical, such as it is, has not, except to a very minor extent, been derived from study of books. With the sole exception of the little manual *Light on the Path*, of which I knew the substance in another language twenty-five years before I encountered the English version, there is no other occult work in any European language that I have ever read through completely. I accept H. P. Blavatsky as the direct agent of advanced teachers, and have a profound respect for her knowledge, but of her great works I have only read as much as sufficed to convince me that she KNEW.

My remissness as a student may possibly shock certain readers, and were I a documentarian, or anything but what I am, an interpreter, it would be inexcusable ; yet I myself feel it a profound advantage to know little of the written word. To the vast majority of Western students, books, or at least a few genuine Scriptures, are an absolute necessity ; but heterogeneous reading of occult literature, while the student yet lacks real knowledge of his own, is the most fruitful of all sources of spiritual confusion.

Terminology of the Lessons.

Unfamiliarity with standard works on Occultism leaves me without that command of occult terminology which most Western students appear to possess, and has compelled me to evolve my own. Whether or no I thus suffer a disadvantage I do not know, but think not. Easy familiarity with Sanscrit and Hebrew terms appears to have left many young Theosophists and Qabalists labouring under the delusion that the application of those terms to certain conceptions makes the conceptions themselves understood by the student and by those to whom he speaks.

It is, of course, impossible to dispense with special terms when writing on Occultism, and it is not easy to prevent them from degenerating into mere labels ; but it is my belief that foreign terms, the exact meaning of which cannot be rendered

in English, are far more likely so to degenerate than those which one's native language is capable of furnishing. For this reason I employ none but English terms in these lessons ; and in order to leave their exact meaning in as little doubt as possible I herewith append a Glossary, which, if carefully studied, should greatly minimize the terminological difficulties which the lessons would otherwise present.

It should be very clearly understood that the meanings I attribute to the various terms listed are merely those which they bear when used by myself in this book, and that I am in no sense attempting to dictate how they should be understood when used by others. For example, when I define the term "Soul" in a certain, perhaps unfamiliar, way, I am not declaring that that and no other is the true meaning of the word, but simply that that is what I myself imply when I use it.

GLOSSARY

ABSOLUTE, THE (CAPITALS)	IS-NESS or BE-NESS : the First Principle of existence. (See Lesson I.)
Adept (Proper Name)	A man who by a conscious effort of will is able to free his Being from the influences that condition the human Being, and thus obtains possession of superhuman power and knowledge.
Aspirant (Proper Name) ..	A candidate for initiation into Discipleship. (See Learner ; Neophyte.)
BEING (CAPITALS)	The same as LIFE.
Being (Proper Name)	The complete or real nature of man, or of any entity.
being (Common Noun)	Everyday meaning.
CAPITALS	Words and terms printed in CAPITALS refer to the ultimate or noumenal nature of beings, things, and conditions.
CONSCIOUSNESS (CAPITALS)	The noumenal principle of Consciousness : one of the three ultimate elements that interact to produce LIFE. (See ENERGY and SUBSTANCE, also Lesson I.)
Disciple (Proper Name) ..	The accepted pupil of an Adept : one who by his own efforts has found the Spiritual Path.
disciple (Common Noun) ..	Usual meaning : follower.
DIVINE TRINITY (CAPITALS)	LIFE : BEING : the metaphysical synthesis of noumenal CONSCIOUSNESS, ENERGY, and SUBSTANCE. (See Lesson I.)
DIVINE VIBRATION (CAPITALS)	Same as DIVINE TRINITY.
ENERGY (CAPITALS) ..	Noumenal or unconditioned energy : the second of the three abstract elements of LIFE. (See Lesson I.)
Energy (Proper Name) ..	The metaphysical dynamic principle in man, or any other entity. (See Lesson IV.)
energy (Common Noun) ..	Ordinary restricted meaning.
EVERBECOMING (CAPITALS)	LIFE as manifest in its single attribute of "Eternal, ceaseless motion" : its aspects eternally passing into itself. (See Lesson I.)
Everbecoming (Proper Name)	The perpetual passing of the lower into the higher Self in man.
everbecoming (Common Noun)	Usual meaning.
God (Proper Name)	The anthropomorphic deity of the Christians or other religionists, not recognized as existing by Occultists.
god, or gods (Common Noun) ..	Spiritual Beings which in long past world-cycles transcended the human phase of Becoming. Planetary Spirits.

- Guardian Lords (Proper Name) The Spiritual Entities or Energies that manifest in *Sound, Colour, Number, and Idea.*
- INITIATE (CAPITALS) .. One of many names given to the great Being, the *Father-Spirit* of this planet, who by emanation of his Energies into a Centre of dormant life (the *seed* produced by an evolutionary cycle of inferior degree to his own) initiated the evolution of our planet and all its life, and still governs it. THE INITIATE is himself the perfected product of an evolutionary cycle analogous to that through which our world is passing. He is not the *creator* of the world any more than a human father is the creator of the child he begets.
- He is known by very many different names both abstract and personal: THE MASTER, THE GREAT SACRIFICE, THE SILENT WATCHER, THE ANCIENT ONE, THE MASTER MAGICIAN, THE DIVINE PYMANDER.
- The student should carefully avoid thinking of the Father-Spirit as a supreme Being in any sense other than relative to this world. (See also Lesson VII.)
- Initiate (Proper Name) .. The same as Adept.
- initiate (Common Noun) .. Ordinary meaning.
- Italics Where terms are italicized it intimates that a deeper, more spiritual meaning than the ordinary should be looked for.
- Learner (Proper Name) .. The same as Aspirant or Neophyte.
- LIFE (CAPITALS) .. The ultimate NOUMENON of all existence. (See BEING, DIVINE TRINITY, etc., also Lesson I.)
- Life (Proper Name) .. The spiritual or immortal life of the human, or any other entity.
- life (Common Noun) .. Ordinary restricted meaning.
- Magic (Proper Name) .. The synthesized power of Invocation and Evocation wielded by an Adept. (Lessons V, VI, and VII.)
- Magician (Proper Name) .. An adept.
- MASTER (CAPITALS) .. THE INITIATE.
- Master (Proper Name) .. When preceded by the definite article (The) Master in the "Hermetic" Schools means the same as The Buddha—that is, a man who has transcended *human* evolution but pauses on the threshold of a higher world to aid struggling humanity. In a more general way the term is applied to the Arch-Adept who stands at the head of a particular Occult "School", or phase, or sub-phase of human evolution.
- MOTHER, THE (CAPITALS) The noumenal element of SUBSTANCE.
- Mother, The (Proper Name) .. Universal Nature: the synthesis of laws or conditions governing evolution of Conscious Being.

Nature (Proper Name) ..	..	As above.
nature (Common Noun) ..	..	Everyday meaning.
Neophyte (Proper Noun) ..	..	Same as Learner and Aspirant.
PATH (CAPITALS) ..	..	The Spiritual Life. (See Lesson II.)
Path (Proper Name) ..	..	The Way of the Aspirant.
path (Common Noun) ..	..	Ordinary meaning.
Proper Names ..	..	Words and terms which in ordinary usage are Common Nouns indicate when printed as Proper Names conceptions that are higher or more spiritual analogues of their common meanings.
SELF (CAPITALS) ..	..	LIFE, as the Noumenon of Self-consciousness.
Self (Proper Name) ..	..	The Higher or Ruling Consciousness in man.
self (Common Noun) ..	..	Any aspect of self more limited than the foregoing.
SOUL } ..	..	See Lesson IV for full exposition.
Soul }	..	
Sphere of Ignorance (Proper Name) ..	..	See Lesson IV.
SPIRIT (CAPITALS) ..	..	Same as LIFE : BEING.
Spirit (Proper Name) ..	..	Essential or real Being. Being.
Spirit, A (Proper Name) ..	..	The essential Being of any entity when freed from the limitations of any evolutionary cycle becomes a Spirit relative to it. But a man when speaking of his essential or immortal Being, as distinct from the things that condition its manifestation, may rightly declare that he is a Spirit.
		It would be entirely correct to define Soul as the reflection of the Spirit, complete and perfect only inasmuch as the Body of Knowledge that contains it is complete and perfect. It is not that which the Spirit <i>is</i> , but that phase of itself which the Spirit has brought to perfection.
SUBSTANCE (CAPITALS) ..	..	One of the three noumenal elements of LIFE. SUBSTANCE must not be confused with Matter. It is simply the <i>negative</i> of CONSCIOUSNESS. Matter is merely an appearance resulting from interaction of CONSCIOUSNESS, ENERGY, and SUBSTANCE. It may be called VOID, but only in the sense that physical space is void. Science sees space as a field of cosmic energy, or, as some say, an ocean of "Ether". Occult SUBSTANCE may be regarded as a metaphysical "ether" filling metaphysical space.

LESSON I

THE PHILOSOPHIC FOUNDATION

“THE SECRET DOCTRINE *establishes three fundamental propositions :*

(a) *An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible since it transcends the power of human conception, and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought . . . ‘unthinkable and unspeakable’.*”

H. P. BLAVATSKY : *The Secret Doctrine.*

THE first postulate of Occult Philosophy, whether that philosophy is of the East or of the West, is an ABSOLUTE, but of the real meaning of the conception very little appears to be understood by students in general, or even by many who take it upon themselves to teach. Of the latter there are some who it is impossible to believe lack the correct understanding, yet who for reasons very hard to appreciate make confusion trebly confounded by referring the term THE ABSOLUTE to states of Self-conscious Being, which are absolute relative to a particular evolutionary cycle transcended, but are in no sense whatsoever THE ABSOLUTE of universal Occult Philosophy defined by H. P. Blavatsky in the words above quoted.

As to this “First Fundamental Proposition” of The Secret Doctrine, as a definition it would be entirely unexceptionable if only the comments which “H.P.B.” makes upon it were distinctly separated from others on the same page that refer not to the First PRINCIPLE, but to the First CAUSE, or Noumenon, of manifest Life. But her exposition as it stands, on this page 14 of her own edition of *The Secret Doctrine*, has left multitudes of earnest students in the deepest confusion as to what her “ABSOLUTE” really is.

When attempting to convey to others some understanding of occult truths a writer is inevitably faced by difficulties not encountered in other fields of endeavour, and of these, by no means the least is that of inducing the average student to divert his mind away from regions which he has come to imagine as lofty and spiritual, but which are in reality wholly illusory, and to direct it upon the actual Book of Life, which lies open before him to read if only he will. Words such as "soul" and "spirit", and many others, which in default of better we are constantly compelled to use, have, because of old associations, the effect of diverting the thoughts of the Learner from contemplation of innumerable patent truths lying all about him upon the face of this "solid earth", and of sending them wandering in search of reality into the depths of physical space, which Physical Science itself declares to be a mere illusion.

Nothing is more illustrative of the foregoing remarks than the confusion which prevails concerning this idea of an ABSOLUTE. Let any intelligent person but divorce from his mind those misty notions concerning transcendental "Seventh Planes", and the life beyond them, and he cannot fail, when once the fact is indicated, to perceive that the only possible assertion that is ABSOLUTE, that can be made concerning LIFE, and all that is included in that term, is that it IS. *The Principle of IS-NESS is THE ABSOLUTE*. H. P. Blavatsky says that BE-NESS rather than BEING is the ONE ABSOLUTE, but unintentionally (or perhaps intentionally—who knows?) proceeds without any clear intimation of change of subject to discuss not the former but the latter, and thus has bewildered thousands of her readers. (A)

IS-NESS is the sole principle in all life that cannot by any means whatsoever be modified, abolished, exchanged for something else, or known at all apart from the things that ARE, the life that IS. "But," the bewildered Beginner may very likely object, "this IS-NESS does not produce anything, nor explain anything. Whence came it? Something must have caused or created it. The idea compels us to return once more to the conception of a God behind all things."

One can but repeat : "Open your eyes and look upon the

fact for yourself." IS-NESS, the ONE ABSOLUTE, neither explains nor is it to be explained. To argue that any power, or any God, has produced it is to argue an absurdity, for if such a God *is*, IS-NESS is *His* First Principle, and must have preceded him.

One of the great obstacles to understanding of THE ABSOLUTE is that of thinking of it as a *cause*. A *cause*, because it is inevitably conditioned by that which it causes, cannot be absolute. IS-NESS cannot be conditioned, and does not cause anything. To speak of THE ABSOLUTE as the "Causeless Cause", as H. P. Blavatsky is alleged by some of her followers to do (but as I think she does *not*), is to add but another element to the Cauldron of Confusion.

When once it is thoroughly grasped this conception of THE ABSOLUTE, simply as IS-NESS, serves the Learner in a most important practical way : it eliminates from the mind once and for all every lingering shadow of belief in an extra-Cosmic "Creator", and thus deals a fatal blow at the power of *authority*, of which faith in a separate God is the ultimate root. If the root be destroyed, the power, though it may for a period preserve the semblance of life, must inevitably lose strength and wither, and finally die without hope of resurrection.

Further than I have gone it is not profitable to go in discussion of THE ABSOLUTE. IT IS, but IT is unknown and unknowable. With that which is unknown, but potentially knowable, Occultism has supreme concern, but with that which is unknown *and* unknowable it has no concern at all.

LIFE.

Passing now from the ABSOLUTE *IS* to the things that *are* I come first to consideration of that which is the root, or Noumenon, of universal existence. This is BEING in the abstract, but I shall call it simply LIFE, since the term BEING is apt to cause misunderstanding. LIFE is *being* infinite and eternal, but not *a* being, nor yet the collective hierarchies of Beings that constitute the manifested Universe, for all these are but limited expressions of it. LIFE is the *unmanifest* Logos of the Greek philosophers. It is that which in the Gospel

according to St. John is called "The Word (which) was with God", meaning that it is the thing which is nearest to THE ABSOLUTE, the unknowable Principle of IS-NESS, and like it is in itself, *in its actuality, eternally unknowable*. Yet LIFE, though eternal and infinite, is not absolute, for it reveals itself in an infinitude of modifications of itself, whereas IS-NESS is subject to no modification whatsoever.

LIFE possesses a single *attribute*, which is said to be itself, the quality of EVERBECOMING. In her great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky speaks of this EVERBECOMING as "*eternal, ceaseless MOTION*". In Eastern Occultism it is called "*The Great Breath*". To the man who will but open his eyes and use his understanding it is everywhere manifest. Whether we survey the Universe of Universes as a single Being (which it is, since no expression of LIFE can be other than *alive*), or a man, or a tree, or an atom, we see this "eternal, ceaseless Motion" revealed in an endless procession of aspects of LIFE passing into LIFE itself. Look, for example, upon a tree in Springtime when new shoots are being put forth, and buds are unfolding into leaves. You perceive a certain form, and you call that form "tree", and think that you know what a tree is. But tomorrow look again upon the tree, and ask yourself if what you perceive is really the appearance you saw yesterday, and called "tree". Have not the buds unfolded further? Have not the shoots lengthened? Is not the form before you subtly, but none the less actually, different from that which you looked upon yesterday? Is it not the fact that what you now call "tree" is not the appearance to which yesterday you gave the same name? Suppose you were an intelligent visitor from another planet who knew nothing of the life-forms of this world, and were shown a tree in Winter, you would depart to your own world believing that you knew the tree. But if six months later you repeated your visit, and were shown the same tree, do you imagine that you would associate the second appearance with the first? Assuredly not.

What then is this thing you call "tree", which on no two successive occasions presents quite the same appearance? Have you ever seen the actual tree? Obviously not. You have been giving the name of "tree" to an endless procession of appear-

ances which a certain aspect of LIFE presents to you, but that aspect, the real Tree, you have never seen at all : it exists in your consciousness only as an *idea* to which you find it impossible to give form. Where is the "tree" you perceived yesterday, and where, tomorrow, will the "tree" be which you perceive today ? Both will have vanished for ever, absorbed into a formless, never-manifest IDEA.

It has been said that in order to perceive the reality of a tree one would have to be able to perceive in a glance its whole life-course, from the seed from which it sprang, through all its phases of growth, onward to its fall and crumbling to dust. Yet comprehensive though such a vision would be, it would reveal only a limited aspect of the reality, for the existing "tree" is merely a phase of the life of a *seed*, and another seed will continue the life of the tree when it has fallen and crumbled into dust. The life-course of the tree from seed to seed, if perceived in a single vision, would still be no more than a passing appearance, like all other appearances existing only to vanish on the instant into an idea, or consciousness of a REALITY, which, though called by a myriad names, never has, and never can have, a manifest form.

The ultimate REALITY into which all appearances eternally pass and are lost is LIFE. The eternal procession of its aspects eternally vanishing into the Noumenon, LIFE itself, is the **EVERBECOMING**, the "eternal, ceaseless Motion" of the real UNIVERSE. LIFE is ; but it is manifest only in its sole attribute, **EVERBECOMING**, *which is ITSELF*.

Has the Occult Doctrine any mode of explaining LIFE and its manifestation other than that outlined ? it may be asked. Certainly it has, but none, I think, likely to explain it better. Obviously LIFE itself cannot be explained by any man, however wise, for man himself is but a passing phase of its *attribute*, **EVERBECOMING**, and can know the REALITY of which he is an appearance in no way other than by consciously *being* Everbecoming. There is, however, a more metaphysical mode of approach to the subject, and for the benefit of those who prefer that method I will here state it.

THE DIVINE TRINITY.

BEING (or any Being) in ultimate metaphysical analysis is a compound of three elements, neither of which has any independent manifestation, or is knowable otherwise than in interaction with the other two. They are CONSCIOUSNESS, ENERGY, and SUBSTANCE. All three exist in everything—in every aspect of LIFE, whether that aspect is perceived objectively through the senses or subjectively as an image in Consciousness, as a thought or a feeling, or in any other way. By the degree to which any one element is conditioned by the other two the nature or character of every Being and thing is determined. Thus in low forms of manifestations such as minerals CONSCIOUSNESS is so closely associated with SUBSTANCE that the condition permits only the most limited manifestation of ENERGY. On the other hand, in Elemental manifestations CONSCIOUSNESS and ENERGY associate so intimately that SUBSTANCE is hardly exhibited in them at all.

Now LIFE, the ultimate NOUMENON, because it manifests to perceiving Consciousness always in Being, and never otherwise, is itself conceived to be a metaphysical compound of the three primary *elements* each in its noumenal, or unconditioned, state. LIFE is therefore pure CONSCIOUSNESS, pure ENERGY, pure SUBSTANCE, and equally neither, but a thing entirely inconceivable—an *unconditioned compound* of the three.

In an endeavour to express a conception essentially inexpressible, the Masters of the Mystery Schools of the lost Mediterranean World described this unconditioned compound as a metaphysical VIBRATION occurring outside of Time and Space, wherein the unconditioned elements, CONSCIOUSNESS, and SUBSTANCE incessantly displace each other, and ENERGY is the VIBRATION itself. The same Masters, and their successors the Hermatic Adepts, also called this VIBRATION the DIVINE TRINITY, while their brethren of the more distant East called it simply THAT.

Of this DIVINE ACTIVITY the only conception possible to human mind is that of a ceaseless and eternal veiling of bright CONSCIOUSNESS in the body of dark SUBSTANCE,

and a ceaseless and eternal melting of dark SUBSTANCE in the embrace of bright CONSCIOUSNESS.

Narrowed into terms of Time-Consciousness, "Divine Activity" manifests in the manner already indicated, in the phenomenal Everbecoming of which man himself is a part. The DIVINE VIBRATION is everywhere ; everywhere, everlastingly, the man of awakened perceptions may perceive the bright body of Consciousness merging itself in the dark body of Substance, and again emerging from it in the shining form of the *Child*, KNOWLEDGE.

The Six-pointed Star within the Circle of Eternity, the most ancient of the sacred symbols of the world, had its origin in an attempt to suggest the nature of the DIVINE VIBRATION.

Is the DIVINE TRINITY a Self-conscious Being ? It cannot be, for IT is infinite, and Being implies limitation. In IT all Beings have their Noumenon, and in IT as unconditioned CONSCIOUSNESS the Consciousness of every Being has its Noumenon. DIVINE BEING is *all* things but possesses *no* thing ; IT possesses no Self, but IT is the ONE, the only true, SELF.

Man : the symbol of LIFE.

Through its myriad aspects LIFE eternally speaks of its nature to man, but most clearly and unmistakably does it speak through man's own Being. In himself man possesses a living witness and symbol of LIFE universal. The Masters of the ancient world taught that man is the *Microcosm*—the Cosmos in little—and over the door of every temple and shrine of the Mysteries they inscribed the words : "*Man, know thyself!*" In lessons like these all that such a saying may imply cannot be expounded, but certain clues that may help to place the Learner on the way to discovery of its deeper significances may, and should be, given. If studied diligently, the brief hints which here follow may develop into the first, but by no means the least important, of keys to understanding of LIFE.

In the formula "I AM I" every man expresses consciousness of individual being. "I" is the symbol of that which speaks, and "I" is the symbol of that which is spoken of. "I" never changes. From the first Self-conscious word spoken by a man

to the last he utters before quitting this earth-life, he declares an unchanging awareness of *Being* when he speaks the words "I AM". But not so when he says, "I AM I", for here he identifies his simple consciousness of Selfhood with phenomenal aspects of his Being which are incessantly changing ; with his physical nature, with his emotional nature, with his mental nature, with what he and others term his *character*, a synthesis of all other aspects of his Being. All these attributes, separately or collectively, he terms "I". Thus he has ever with him a speaking symbol of LIFE infinite, eternally changeless, but in its manifesting attributes eternally changing. Though he knows it not he proclaims that he is LIFE itself whenever he utters the magic words "I AM I" : "I (LIFE) AM I (this aspect becoming myself)".

Concluding Hints.

Here ends this first lesson. It is not, and is not intended to be, in any sense a full exposition of the Philosophy of Occultism, not even of those few fundamental postulates discussed. Like all others of this series of lessons, its purpose is not to *inform* but to spur into activity in a certain direction the consciousness of the Learner. Through that activity, and in no other way, results will accrue to you in due time—results in the form of true *knowledge* of your own. Information of a certain quality, in limited quantity, is a powerful stimulant to the appetite for knowledge, impelling the recipient to seek ways and means of his own of satisfying it. But more than I have given would, I conceive, at this stage in the lessons, be a hindrance, not a help, because by creating the illusion that it itself was knowledge it would kill in you desire to seek understanding for yourself.

From the brief and fragmentary outlines of the basic principles of Life that I have given much that will be illuminating can be made to emerge, if only they receive from you a due measure of attention. As an exercise strive to discern what their implications are as respects those familiar doctrines : Spiritual Evolution, Reincarnation, and "Karma". Cast from your mind whatever conceptions you already may have concerning these "laws", derived from what you have read elsewhere, and, starting from the principles expounded in this lesson—

the root from which all "laws" spring—proceed to evolve your own understanding. Knowledge of these and other occult doctrines is not to be gained from exposition of, or speculations concerning, their nature, but through study of LIFE changeless in **EVERBECOMING**. (B)

This exercise of reformulating generally accepted doctrines from first principles is valuable in the extreme, but it may also prove extremely difficult, unless you are so fortunate as to have come to this study unburdened by ideas derived from previous study of an occult nature. In your early efforts you will with certainty form many erroneous conclusions, but remind yourself that it is *exercise, not a conclusion to effort*, that you are seeking, and your errors will translate themselves into steps in the Ladder to Knowledge. You cannot avoid falling into bewilderment at times, but do not permit bewilderment to cause you to despair, for if we were never bewildered we should never strive for light and clear-seeing. When in difficulty do not rush for help to other books and teachers, for to do that is like attempting to change horses in mid-stream.* If your difficulty is overpowering, and nothing that this book can give serves to mitigate it, then you are invited to refer it to myself.

In conclusion, study, and if possible commit to memory, the following quotations: they are the word of Masters who **KNEW**.

AN HERMETIC POSTULATE.

As is the Inner so is the Outer; as is the Great so is the Small; as it is Above so it is Below: there is but one Life and Law. Nothing is Inner, nothing is Outer; nothing is Great, nothing is Small; nothing is High, nothing is Low, in the **DIVINE ECONOMY**.

AN ASSEVERATION (HERMETIC RITUAL).

In the beginning, Earth was without form and void, and Darkness covered the **GREAT DEEP**. Then from **DARKNESS** a **VOICE** sounds, sending its echoes throughout non-Being, and these are the words which it speaks:

* This advice does not, of course, apply to books recommended for use elsewhere in the lessons.

I am all that was. I am all that is. I am all that is to be.

I am all forms ; all forms live in me, but ALL-FORM is not I, but only my fleeting shadows.

I am all power ; all power moves in me, but ALL-POWER is not I, but only my changing aspects.

I am all wisdom ; all wisdom shines in me, but ALL-WISDOM is not I, but only my fitful gleams.

All knowledge, all power, all substance live in ME, and I am in them and manifest through them, but I am also above them, and beyond them, eternally unmanifest.

*FROM THE "KENA UPANISHAD".**

BY WHOM impelled flies the forward-impelled Mind ?

BY WHOM compelled does the First Life go forth ?

BY WHOM outbreathed is this Voice wherewith men speak ?

WHO, in truth, is the BRIGHT ONE, who commands voice, sight, and hearing ?

THAT which they call the Hearing of hearing, the Mind of mind, the Voice of voice, THAT is the LIFE of Life, the Sight of sight. Setting That free the Wise Ones passing from this world open the Gates of Eternity.

Sight goes not thither, nor does voice go thither, nor mind. We have not seen, nor do we know how knowledge of That may be given ; for That whereof we desire to speak is the KNOWN and the UNKNOWN also.

Thus have we heard from the Masters of Old, from the Wise Ones who went before us :

THAT by which voice is not spoken, THAT through whose power voice is spoken : THAT, verily, know thou as the Eternal, not this that here they serve.

THAT which thinks not through the power of Mind, THAT through whose power the Mind thinks thoughts : THAT verily know thou as the Eternal, not this that here they serve.

* This Upanishad (and certain others of those great Sanscrit Scriptures) long ante-dates the Aryan invasion of India. From collateral evidences which I have had an opportunity of examining I have little doubt but that it is a fragment of one of the higher invocatory rituals used by the Priest-Kings of the lost Mediterranean world.

The existing Upanishads are obviously but disconnected fragments.

P. G. B.

THAT which sees not through the power of the eye,
THAT through whose power the eye sees sights : THAT verily
know thou as the Eternal, not this that here they serve.

THAT which hears not through the power of hearing,
THAT through whose power sound is heard here : THAT
verily know thou as the Eternal, not this that here they serve.

THAT which lives not through the power of the Life-
breath, THAT through whose power all Life breathes here :
THAT verily know thou as the Eternal, not this that here
they serve.

LESSON II

THE PRACTICAL FOUNDATION

MANY a man has essayed the steep ascent from the plain of the personal human life to the summit of the lofty peak where remote and dim shine the GOLDEN GATES that bar the OCCULT WAY, and has failed and fallen, not because the Ladder by which he climbed was unsound in itself, but because the ground whereupon it rested was unprepared and unstable. It is taught that the PATH lies in SELF. The Ladder by which the Aspirant ascends is therefore in Self, and the ground upon which it stands is in self.*

For the Adventurer there is no certainty or safety but that which he secures for himself by tests carefully planned and patiently applied to the Ladder and to its resting-place, both. Self-testing may with much truth be said to be the beginning and the continuance of progress upon the OCCULT WAY. Of end it has none, for the Self that tests self grows and changes as it labours, and changes that upon which it labours ; and the SELF that tests Self is infinite and its works eternal.

For you, the Learner, preparing to take your first upward step, self-testing takes the form of self-questioning. Commence by putting to yourself the questions I shall presently suggest, and to them, in the light of the comments that accompany them, give answers that are true to the extent that truth is known to you. Do not rest satisfied with such answers as I may supply, but insist on receiving your own from within yourself. Accept no answer, whether your own or that of another, as final, for ultimate truth cannot be known to you, nor to any man however wise. This, if you are a true Seeker and honest with yourself, you will quickly discover, for whatever answer you evoke by your self-questioning will when formulated

* See Glossary.—O.

become another question, and the answer to that another, and so on to no end. In making this discovery you will be facing the first great trial of the many you must meet and overcome before you pass the GATES OF GOLD and become an accepted Disciple, for a sense of utter ignorance will descend upon you, and a conviction that truth is unattainable and effort foolish may seize you and fling you into a spiritual maelstrom that will hold you helpless throughout this life. Against this foe be on guard, constantly strengthening yourself by the reminder that ignorance realized is no enemy, but a friend—a teacher whose counsel is most necessary to enable you to take the first step in true learning.

Self-examination.

At this early stage of the lessons I do not advise definite study of Occult Scriptures, but I suggest that you have by you the following manuals, and when doubts and difficulties assail you, open one of them at random and ponder over the first sentences that meet your eye :

The Bhagavad Gita (Charles Johnston's version).

Light on the Path.

The Voice of the Silence.

The Sayings of the Ancient One.

Help of an unexpected nature comes often through this practice.

Turn now to consideration of the questions and my comments :

QUESTION I. Do I accept as fact that the Being of Man is perfectable?

COMMENT. If you cannot with truth answer YES to this question it will show that you lack the philosophic foundation that Lesson I is meant to provide, and are not yet quite ready to begin the practical work. Study Lesson I again, and then ask yourself to what end you aspire, if you do not aspire to become perfect even as LIFE itself is perfect. To that question only one true answer is possible, namely : "*To the end that I gain power and knowledge not shared by others.*"

Ambition such as this lurking within you will form an

insuperable barrier to true progress, and the importance of the test that compels the hidden demon to disclose himself may therefore be appreciated. Enemies of his nature live and flourish only in darkness ; they shrink and die when dragged forth into the Light.

Should the question bring forth YES as answer, do not rest content. Test its truth by further questions. What do you mean when you assert that you *believe* your Being to be perfectable ? Is your belief similar to that of the average man when he declares that he believes in his own immortality or in the dogmas of his Church, merely a pious hope or an unreasoning faith ? If so it is not the kind which an Aspirant to Discipleship should entertain. Real belief, or FAITH, will make your essential perfectability a truth to you as axiomatic as that the whole is greater than any of its parts. Without this FAITH attempt no forward step, for to do so will be but to enter a fog of doubt. Doubt is an enemy that not merely hinders progress, but often turns his victims into dark and profitless by-paths.

Having found an acceptable answer, ask next :

QUESTION II. With what motive do I seek the PATH ?

COMMENT. Eastern teachers regard this question as absolutely fundamental, and not until it is answered rightly and understandingly do they consent to advance the would-be Disciple a single step. Here it is placed second, for Question I starts a train of thought that leads towards understanding of it, and makes a right answer possible more quickly than would otherwise be the case. It is possible, and indeed probable, that the work already done will take you immediately to an answer that is correct *in essence*, thus :

"I desire to attain perfection" ;

but left in that form it is by no means sufficient, for its true significance may be altogether misunderstood. It serves a purpose in provoking another question that will bring understanding nearer :

QUESTION III. What is perfection ?

COMMENT. Study of Lesson I together with reading of other occult Scriptures will bring forth the ready answer :

"Perfection is union with DIVINE BEING."

QUESTION IV. How is DIVINE UNION achieved ?

Answer : *By following the OCCULT PATH.*

QUESTION V. What is the PATH?

COMMENT. It is not likely at your present stage of progress that you can with clear understanding say what the PATH is. I will give the answer therefore in the following form, as a key that may open the mind to a right comprehension of this much misused and misconceived Occult term :

The PATH is LIFE, EVERBECOMING.

COMMENT. At this point it may be well to turn back once more to Lesson I and study again all said there concerning LIFE and its one attribute, EVERBECOMING. From that and from study of Man, the symbol of LIFE, you may come to understand that in the human Being there is also an Ever-becoming that corresponds, or rather that should correspond, with that of the DIVINE TRINITY. Actually, as man is, his Becoming is not in true correspondence with the DIVINE ATTRIBUTE, for all the aspects of his conscious Being pass into identification with the tiny spark he calls Self, not into the infinite flame of the one true SELF, as do all other aspects of life.

The PATH is the EDEN of the symbolic Mystery drama of which fragments survive in the Book of Genesis. Man before the FALL was an unselfconscious Being, and lived and moved, as do all such Beings, with the EVERBECOMING of LIFE. Then in the GARDEN the Serpent—the symbol of the Power of Evolution, the analogue of ENERGY that draws CONSCIOUSNESS into and withdraws it again from its negative aspect, SUBSTANCE—lifted up his head, and to Adam, unconscious man, through Eve, his negative aspect, brought the Apple of Knowledge. With eating of that fruit came the FALL, for Adam became aware that he lived, but perceiving of his Being, as yet only the Shadow that clung to earth, made the tiny ray of Consciousness that cast it before him the Sun and Centre of his whole system. Thus alone of all beings man is an outcast self-exiled from EDEN, a wanderer from the PATH, and so must he remain until, again through the Woman, the SAVIOUR comes to earth, and takes him by the hand and leads him homeward. That SAVIOUR is Consciousness of a Self that is spiritual and knows no separation from the

infinite SELF that is LIFE. When the Saviour is born and recognized by man, man ceases to be a wanderer and becomes, now in full consciousness, once more a part of the eternal **EVERBECOMING**.

Through study and thought, to which my comments are merely suggestive stimulants, there should come to you in due time an answer to the all-important question : "*With what motive do I seek the PATH?*" And this may be :

"I desire to be the PATH,"

OR, with greater clarity :

*"I desire to be **EVERBECOMING**."*

In such being is the true **UNION** that Masters of the Sacred Science know, and all true Adepts and Disciples constantly seek : a ceaseless, eternal activity in conscious identification with the **EVERBECOMING**, the eternal ceaseless **MOTION**, the one attribute of **LIFE** which is itself, not in any endless rest in Nirvana, nor passive bliss in the bosom of God.

An intellectual understanding of the foregoing exposition and its implications is all that you who are not yet a Disciple can look to gain. As an achievement it is important, but it should not be overestimated nor regarded as anything more than a step. Intellect is a most necessary instrument, and should be utilized to the full, but it cannot give you the Consciousness of the Disciple. It can lead you to see and to know the Path of the Neophyte, but can give no vision of the true **PATH**, for the **GATES OF GOLD** stand high above the World of Mind on planes towards which you may aspire but to which as yet you cannot rise.

The Power that Moves.

Having learned the nature of the task you have chosen and seen in what direction your field of action lies, you have possessed yourself of the analogues of two of the Elements of **LIFE**—**CONSCIOUSNESS**, and **SUBSTANCE**, its negative. To enable you to move to your task you have now to possess yourself of a true analogue of the third Element, **ENERGY**, and that is the *Power of Interest*. None will deny that without interest it is impossible to become absorbed in a work, as one must if one would do it well, and with profit to oneself and

others, and if that is true of an ordinary task it is incomparably more true of one such as this, which is the greatest that a man can undertake. Therefore examine yourself most closely before you attempt to move, and make certain that you have that Interest in the work which the work merits.

At this suggestion you may, possibly, or even probably, cavil. The answers given to the questions already put prove, you may think, that you have real interest in the work. You may argue that you would not be studying these lessons at all unless profoundly interested ; yet do not be too confident. It is by no means easy to know by what power one is moved. Self-testing should never cease, and should be carried out through every available avenue of approach to knowledge of your Being. It is easy to be drawn to this study by interest that is by no means interest in the actual work itself, but is rather desire for reward of one kind or another, that may, you conceive, result from the effort. Should this be so in your case your efforts will not advance you towards the true PATH, but will take you still farther astray into some profitless parody of it, for you will be led by a false self, as almost all men are, and not by your Higher Self, the true analogue of the one supreme SELF. Of lesser selves active in your Being the number is legion, and each struggles incessantly to preserve its own existence and strengthen itself by drawing into its service the vitalizing Power of Interest. From these enslaving usurpers no escape is possible except through unremitting self-observation and self-questioning. (A)

Initially it is not likely that your motive power will be interest in or love of the actual work. This is natural and inevitable, for of its nature you have as yet no real conscious knowledge. The best you may hope to learn of yourself is that you are moved by a thirst for knowledge ; but if you love knowledge for its own sake you are not far astray. If you seek knowledge because of the distinction and power its possession confers you are the slave of a lower self and cannot move until you have gained freedom.

Of the host of illusions that befog the average man there is none greater than that which bids him believe that he is a single individuality living and moving under the rule of a

single Self. The opposite is the truth. Far from being a true self-directing entity he is really a disorderly army. He has no stable selfhood, but is moved by whatever one of an almost infinite number of selves succeeds for the moment in dominating its fellows by virtue of conditions that favour it. He thinks fondly that he has Free Will, but in truth he has nothing of the kind, not that any extra-cosmic Power compels him, but that the army which is his Being knows no commander. Should you doubt the truth of my words and think that you have Free will try to initiate a course of action and hold it un-deviatingly to an end preordained. You will find if you carefully watch your reactions that you have attempted the impossible. You will hardly have selected your course when the self that has chosen becomes the object of attack by a host of other selves, each seeking dominance for itself. True you may, with many stumbles and by devious ways, ultimately struggle through to your goal, but to succeed in this does not mean that you have exhibited True-willed action, for you have held no direct course. *To hold a direct course, not to reach an end, is the hallmark of Free Will.* Great conquerors and world leaders who seem to march over all obstacles straight to their ends are often cited in support of the contention that man has Free Will. The argument is unsound and shows lack of understanding of the subject. Those men in gaining their ends exhibit *Strong Will*, not *Free Will*, just as you may do in gaining yours, but between Strong Will and Free Will there is a profound difference. Strong Will is not will at all, but the manifestation of an abnormally developed separate self—in other words a *desire*. *“Strong Will achieves conquest through conflict, but Free Will remains at peace in a stronghold that cannot be assailed.”* Strong Will is the manifestation of a purely separate self. Free Will is the manifestation of a Self united in harmony with the Laws of LIFE. Consider the effortless inevitability of unconscious elemental activity: in it Free Will manifests, though the manifestation is not that of a conscious Being; but imagine a man self-consciously identified with LIFE, and in elemental activity you will see true analogues of his actions. Upon this much misunderstood subject some further light will be thrown in later lessons.

The GREAT WORK, attainment of conscious union with LIFE, EVERBECOMING, entails transformation of the turbulent hosts of the lower selfhood into a disciplined army wholly subservient to the Higher Self of man, the witness and symbol of the one true SELF. It begins with the first question which the Higher Being of the Aspirant addresses to the lower, and it ends in what was called by the Masters of old the state of SIMPLICITY—a state which is symbolized in the formula : “I AM I”. In that SIMPLE state Self has identified itself with SELF, and knows itself in its single attribute, EVERBECOMING, the Noumenon of a disciplined Being, once a disorderly lower selfhood.

Early Difficulties.

How to be sure that the Watching Self of the moment is the true Higher Self and not a masquerader is a problem that troubles many Learners. To it there can be but one answer : *there is no certainty in all the universe outside the HIGHEST SELF.* Do not look for certainty, for to do so is to work for reward and to live in Time, not in Eternity. Not while you are yet a Neophyte, not until you are the Master of Wisdom standing for a moment upon the Last Threshold, your human cycle all behind you, will you have certainty, and then certainty only of all things human, not of all things DIVINE. Of the nature of that certainty no man can tell, yet you have with you always a witness and symbol of it, for there is no moment when you do not stand at the close of one cycle of experience and upon the threshold of another. Of what you have wholly experienced you have certainty, for all that was real in it has been assimilated into your Being and become a part of it. Of that which you are, of your Being, you are certain. There are some who will argue against this assertion and say that they are not certain of anything, but that is merely because they are thinking in intellectual and personal terms and not understanding what certainty means. It is Self that gives certainty, not the instrument through which Self expresses itself. You cannot say “I AM” without expressing certainty. It is when the intellectual consciousness which is infinitely less comprehending than the Self tries to understand the Being that

uncertainty appears. How can the part have knowledge of the whole? Does the mind question its own existence? No, it questions only that which is not itself. Of that which I AM, I am certain and ask no question. Of that which I am not I have no certainty, and it I may question. But question not for the sake of certainty, for to desire it is to desire possessions; the Disciple seeks not to possess but to BE.

The Watching Self of the moment is never the true SELF, for SELF is LIFE, which is but is not manifest. The Watching Self is but a gleam, for the moment of its dawning, the witness and symbol of LIFE which is infinite LIGHT, but passing instantly, as it becomes active, into a shadow, a phase of the one attribute, the EVERBECOMING. As such it becomes immediately subject to observation and question by another and deeper Self; and from this understanding has arisen the ancient Hermetic KEY to occult progress, which may be rendered thus:

"EXAMINE THE EXAMINER, WATCH THE WATCHER, JUDGE THE JUDGE."

Let profit and interest be but found in this process of continuous self-examination and self-watchfulness, and the foolishness of seeking certainty or any fixed results will become evident. The Hermetic KEY truly and diligently applied will unlock every door that bars the way of the Learner, but much work must be done and many difficulties overcome before true skill in its use is acquired.

To deal in detail with all obstacles likely to confront you while taking your earlier steps is wholly impossible, for their number is legion; but one or two prevalent types may be considered to illustrate how all may be conquered. Few believe that danger of any kind may accompany expansion of consciousness, for few understand that thoughts and feelings are active beings, living selves, each and all intent upon ruling the Being and holding captive the Higher Self that would withdraw from their toils into union with LIFE. No enemies, no prisons, no snares appear to the uninstructed man to exist within him, because he is a blind slave, living in a prison, and moving, when he moves at all, but from one cage to another. But all this changes with his first effort to move in conscious freedom. At

the first question which a Higher Self addresses to a lower the enemy discloses himself and makes the Questioner the object of attack. The assault may come in any one of a multitude of forms, but the examples I shall now give will show how all may be met.

(1). Let it be supposed that a certain order of thoughts and feelings—really a hierarchy of lesser selves—constantly moves the Being into ways and actions that are narrow and unprofitable. At last your Higher Self wakes from its lethargy and sees these lower beings as they are, and marks the ends towards which they move. For a moment it stands free of its prison and beyond the reach of its gaolers, but only for a moment. Upon it with swiftness its enemies launch an attack, an assault that in consciousness assumes the unlooked-for shape of a swarm of *excuses* for the deeds of the foe. Often, as doubtless experience has already taught you, semi-consciously at least, the escapee is overwhelmed by these excuses and taken captive once more, unless, as you now are, he has been forewarned by a more experienced guide. Yet even though on guard and braced against the wiles of the enemy you will have no certainty of continued freedom, for to stand firm and shatter the first attack is but to invite another of more subtle nature. Strange and unexpected are the shapes which the legions of the lower selfhood may assume, and one that may insidiously ensnare you is that of *fear and hatred*; not fear and hatred of external things but of what you are wont to call *yourself*. Often a man overcomes, as he thinks, a low desire, only to become obsessed by fear and hatred of the self that manifested in it. His state is not improved, but rather worse than before, for fear and hatred hold him even more closely identified with his lower being than does the manifestation of that Being which he imagines he hates. . . . To fear and hate a lower self may perhaps be right for one who knows no consciousness but the personal, but it is wholly wrong for the Learner who has begun to move on the OCCULT WAY. Think of no being, whether a fellow man or an aspect of your own selfhood, as either friend or foe. Think of each and all as teachers—as servants that bring you experience, the food upon which your real Being nourishes its growth.

(2). When all enemies appear to have been defeated and

scattered, and the Self stands contemplating its victory, be prepared, for the foe in his most subtle and dangerous disguise is creeping upon you unseen. Without warning, without knowledge on your part that you are attacked, you are seized and bound, and the name of your captor is *Spiritual Pride*. Some would call it Self-righteousness. It is a conviction that because you have shaken off the toils of certain lower desires, feelings, and thoughts, you have *attained*. To think you *have attained* is, as you may realize, to throw yourself out of the calm embrace of the **EVERBECOMING** into the fiery arms of a self that dwells in separateness. This manifestation of the separate selfhood that I call Pride is protean in his aspects. He is the true King of the lower worlds. Not until his power is broken is any true union with **LIFE** possible. It is not too much to say that if you can maintain yourself watchful of and detached from Pride you are doing all a Learner can do to hold the way of Becoming. The Mystery drama of which we have parts in the Mosaic books of the Old Testament teaches excellently the lesson I would convey. In it Moses stands as the symbol of the Higher Self of man, and the Children of Israel stand for his Becoming Being. From Egypt, the purely material life, Moses led Israel out into the Wilderness, which is the subjective, mental-emotional realm. Through the Wilderness he guided them, preserved them from dangers, defeated their enemies, and conveyed to them the commands of "God". Across Jordan, the Threshold of the Spiritual Life, into the Promised Land, the **OCCULT PATH**, he might have led them also, but Pride seized him. Not in the name of the Lord, the symbol of **LIFE**, did he strike the *Rock* and draw forth the *Water*, the Spiritual Energy that preserves life in the desert but in prideful dependence upon his own power. Therefore not he but another led the host across Jordan.

To defeat Pride in all his subtle guises live out unceasingly the rule :

"Examine the Examiner, watch the Watcher, judge the Judge."

Habits.

Self-observation and self-examination, though at first laborious, and in their results uncertain, quickly develop into

an established habit, and as such become the best, indeed the only sure means of controlling other habits, many of which are wasteful of energy and obstructive of progress. Proper understanding of habit is necessary, and I will now, therefore, give the subject some brief consideration.

Of habits there are three main types : (a) Unconscious habits that express themselves in automatic action. (b) Semi-conscious habits that express themselves sometimes in automatic or semi-automatic action, and sometimes with the conscious knowledge of their possessor. (c) Conscious habits, more often known as desires and passions, of which the possessor is fully aware, but which he cannot control or inhibit.

(a) *Unconscious habits.*

The whole life of the body apart from voluntary muscular action is a standing example of unconscious habitual activity. The body of man, and of every other living being, originated in a simple protoplasmic cell, and the governing principle in that cell is now the Self in man. By division and continuous subdivision the cell evolved the fully developed body, and as the process proceeded its governing principle transferred itself from a body of one cell to another of two, thence to one of four, and so on, leaving behind as it moved replicas of itself, as it was, to govern the cells and cell-groups it once controlled. Thus to each it gave a habit which continues to manifest automatically. Study this illustration with care, for it is an important key to understanding. I will revert to it again in a later lesson, and from another angle.

With the purely unconscious life of his Being the Neophyte in Occultism should have no concern whatsoever. Of the Beings (all aspects of SELF) active in the life of cell and organ you should in no case attempt to become cognizant, nor attempt in any way to interfere with their functions, for to do so may easily lead to most disastrous disturbances—to disease, insanity, even death, and worse. Works on Hatha Yoga written by persons of no true knowledge, and read by students more ignorant still, are fruitful causes of injury to foolish dabblers in Occultism, injury often of an irreparable nature. That healing can be effected and health maintained by centring the “will”

upon the body or upon any of its organs is the grossest delusion. The exact contrary is the truth ; for though results, which to the limited mind of the ordinary man may seem beneficial, are frequently produced by such means they are completely outweighed by injuries occasioned to other departments of Being of a deeper and more subtle character ; and the more disastrous of these may manifest only in another life. True Spiritual Healing is done in a wholly opposite way, namely by withdrawing conscious attention completely from the body and uniting the Self with LIFE. That highly occult book the Bible, when understood, makes this very clear. Whence came the healing power of Jesus ? Through, it is said, the FAITH of those healed. That FAITH meant axiomatic acceptance of Him as he was, as the human embodiment of a Being wholly identified with LIFE itself, and made the acceptor a sharer in the same union. That which is united with the DIVINE TRINITY cannot be otherwise than perfect.

(b) *Semi-conscious habits.*

Under the heading of semi-conscious habits are included activities of body and subjective nature of great variety. Of these, though the great majority manifest automatically, all may be brought into consciousness if attention is directed upon them. Unlike habits of class (a), which, as explained, are creations of the unconscious governing principle of primitive Being, a true analogue of LIFE, semi-conscious habits are all creations of the human, separate Self—aspects in which it was once active, but from which it has partially withdrawn, leaving them to act semi-independently. Accordingly they may all be cognized and controlled, modified or inhibited. They furnish fields of experience for the Learner from which much that is important may be gleaned.

Let us now, for better understanding of the subject, consider a specific example of a semi-conscious habit. The power of walking is such, though not usually so classed. While developing in infancy the act of standing and moving absorbs the entire conscious attention, but as growth proceeds the Self gradually detaches itself from concern with it and leaves its control to a less and less intimate aspect, until in adult life it is possible to

walk with speed and certainty with thoughts wholly abstracted from the act. Practically everyone has had experience of this, and knows that the action was executed with perfect efficiency, thereby receiving demonstration that a self capable of acting without reference to the Ruling Self was in control.

The self that manifests in the power of walking is but one of a large number that serve man in somewhat similar ways. Consider the many habitual activities of civilized man which are carried out semi-consciously, and often wholly unconsciously, such as dressing and undressing, sitting in a chair, writing, using knife and fork, and many others—all are acts, which, like walking, once occupied the full attention of the Self, but have been delegated to the control of an unobtrusive aspect that now acts as servant of Self, and frees it for its own higher work.

As a rule these servant selves work most efficiently when least disturbed by attention from the Higher Self. One may, for example, walk easily and safely along a rough and narrow path with the mind full of abstract ideas, yet should attention be directed upon placing the feet and holding the balance progress becomes laboured and difficult. From facts such as these the idea may arise that the Self rises or evolves into wider and wider freedom upon stepping-stones, not exactly of “dead selves” but upon living aspects that progressively relieve it of the necessity of attending to duties that once engaged its whole attention. Or, to put the idea in another way, that the Self, by constantly educating aspects of itself to take its place, frees itself to move upward into constantly widening spheres of Being. The more perfectly does it educate them the more perfectly do they function, and the more detached from and unconscious of them does it become when it leaves them.

These various suggestions are thrown out not as items of *information* but as stimuli to thought, as indeed is almost all which I say in these lessons.

It often happens that lesser selves responsible for the control of semi-conscious habitual activities perform their duties inefficiently, for the reason that they have been imperfectly trained by an imperfect Ruling Self. In such cases, instead of helping the Ruler towards greater freedom, as they should,

they continually obstruct it. A bad habit of walking, for example, may be developed in youth, and now in adult life the feet shuffle and stumble, the body stoops, and laboured progression distracts the Self from its own higher functions. What is the remedy? The Higher Self in such case should turn, actively cognize the offending servant, evict it from its office, and assume control itself. It may then, with will and attention, re-educate the body in the art of walking efficiently. Having done so it may gradually withdraw its attention and delegate control to an obedient lower aspect, which in due time may become relatively independent.

Give careful study to the foregoing paragraph and try to discern its implications, for in it is contained the secret of ordering not merely obstructive habits but hampering lower selves of every kind. Whether the lower self dealt with manifests in objective or in subjective activity the same technique operates: first the Ruling Self clearly cognizes the offender, which of course implies detachment from it; next it deliberately descends and dispossesses the delinquent of its office, thereby, in effect, annihilating it by absorbing it into itself; finally, having trained another aspect to do the work efficiently, it gradually withdraws and leaves the new deputy to work without further interference. The more efficient a servant self is the less does it obtrude its existence upon the attention of the Master Self, until when perfect in its task it ceases to be known at all, and though still acting individually becomes virtually identical with its creator.

This and other expositions, as already pointed out, are not, and are not intended to be, clearly informative, but partake rather of the character of *symbols*. The implications of the teachings just given are very far-reaching, and if grasped will give understanding, not merely of the technique of self-control but even of those abstruse Eastern doctrines *Nirvana* and *Avitchi*. The real value to you of these lessons will not come through any items of definite information they may supply, but from the new growths that spring up in your mind through your own attempts to interpret them. Teaching that is occult in any real sense of the term can never be conveyed in clear-cut phrases after the manner of a Guide Book. There is a natural

law that compels that they be given only in the form of parable or allegory. (B)

As for habits that are purely idle, and that do nothing but waste energy, they may be dealt with exactly as described, except that when deposed there is substituted for them an aspect of Self that manifests in STILLNESS.

It sometimes happens that the Self having dispossessed a lower aspect of its office, and partially educated a successor, fails to withdraw, and to a large extent persists in identifying itself with the aspect that should be deputizing for it. Thus it not only neglects its own higher experiences but it usurps a field from which a more primitive self may profit. A good carriage of body, for example, is an excellent and helpful attribute, but if it should absorb the attention of the Ruler of the Being it becomes evil. Engrossed thus, in a form of activity which should be delegated to a minor aspect of itself, the Self becomes captive to *Physical Pride*. From this captivity the only sure means of release comes through application of the Hermetic KEY.

Subjective habits—that is habitual modes of thinking and feeling of a semi-automatic character—are sometimes useful servants of the Self, but when disorderly and disobedient, as is usually the case, they are far more subtly obstructive than bodily habits. To cognize them is far less easy than to cognize those that manifest in objective activity, for their sphere is more nearly adjacent to that of the Self, and it is, accordingly, more likely to identify itself with them. Few men know real freedom from the thrall of thought and feeling habits, and this applies also to the Learner, though naturally he is less bound than is the average man. Self-watchfulness alone does not always suffice to free him, but fortunately there is always help at hand for those ready to receive it.

When I assert that there is help at hand, let me not be misunderstood. I do not imply that an Adept Teacher, or even one such as I with a little elementary occult knowledge, stands ever waiting to help all who need, or who may call for aid. The help to which I refer is that which any intelligent man may receive from a kindly critical or candidly critical friend, if only he will accept and use it. Unfortunately, it is seldom that any,

not real learners, exhibit intelligence, and consequently they must, as the world in general does, continue to suffer from themselves.

What a friend, and sometimes a book, can do, if you give heed to him or to it, is to call attention to such items in your character as a tendency to argue hotly over trivialities, to cling unreasonably to your private opinions, to seek distinction by being "different" from others, to flee criticism by appearing to agree with everyone, and characteristics of a similar nature, too numerous to mention, all of which show that you are enslaved by rebellious lower selves. Your helper cannot fight your battles for you, but he can, if you co-operate with him, help you to see your enslavers as they are, and to that extent to detach yourself from their toils. For the rest you must struggle and conquer or fail by virtue of your own strength or lack of it ; but victory must ultimately be yours if only you remember and act upon the infallible "rule of battle" : *"Examine the Examiner, watch the Watcher, judge the Judge."*

Irrational tendencies such as those mentioned, and others of a still more disturbing and obstructive nature, are very often manifestations of primitive selves which, denied normal expression in childhood or youth, owing to repressive home, school, or social conditions, now seek outlet in these ways. It is not too much to say that few civilized persons have any rational basis for their ruling mental and emotional habits. The little selves that so manifest are crushed and buried under the weight of our unbalanced civilized conditions, and lacking all normal means of expressing their energies find a substitute in these devious fashions. Civilized humanity is really the slave of legions of hidden demons, which, if only men could be led to see and understand, would be known to be the main, if not the only, cause of the senseless strife and fear of strife that fill the world with unhappiness. These things should be understood by the Aspirant, for the Prince of Peace, his Higher Self, must sooner or later, and in the manner already described, descend into the lower prisons, minister unto the imps of darkness by uniting them with his own Being, and rise again, leaving bright winged seraphs to fill the places they once held.

Psycho-analysis.

Here it may occur to the Learner that a readier means of dealing with obstructive subjective habits than that which I advise should be the process called Psycho-analysis. A word on this subject may therefore not be out of place. The philosophy I outline and the theory of Psycho-analysis have obviously a good deal in common, though the latter is expressed in very different terms and lacks the universal basis which Occultism has. Between the practices I recommend and those of Psycho-analysis there are analogies also, but there the kinship between the two systems ends. Occultism has no quarrel whatsoever with Psycho-analysis, not because they may operate side by side in the one field but because their fields of action are wholly different. Occultism, in fact, really begins where Psycho-analysis leaves off. The latter is a specific, and often very effective, method of treating definite psychological diseases, whereas Occultism is for those only whose psychic health is already above the average. The opening lesson insists upon this, but to re-emphasize it does no harm. The Psycho-analyst has his analogue in the physician, and the Teacher of Occultism his in the trainer of athletes. The diseased person goes to the healer to have something *done for* him. The sound person goes to an instructor to learn how best *to do something for himself*.

In Occultism there is nothing but disturbance and disappointment for those who bring no gifts to the work. "*To him who hath shall be given, and from him who hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath*" seems a harsh saying, yet it expresses a profound truth. Not the highest teacher, not the highest Being in the universe, can bestow knowledge and power upon one who lacks capacity to learn. The unfit who clamour to be taught gain nothing when a teacher responds to their importunities ; on the contrary, they lose, for they forthwith anchor themselves to his authority and lose whatever small power of self-direction they had before. In what I teach there is nothing new. Every teacher, high or low, down the ages has taught the same. "*Ask and ye shall receive*", it has been said, and it is a true saying. The ignorant and unready ask, but the measure of their request is their own narrow ignorance ; and it draws to them not a saviour but an enslaver, not a guide but a misleader.

Beware of the teacher who assures you that the work and the way are easy and pleasant : he is, if not a wilful deluder, a blind leader of the blind. A true teacher, if importuned prematurely, will try to help you, but he will do so by waking you to knowledge of the dismaying obstacles that lurk concealed within you and which must be overcome before you take a single step towards knowledge.

Conscious habits.

All aspects of the character with which Self is consciously and habitually identified are Conscious habits. Some are known as virtues and some as vices, but to the Occultist all are good, for, whether they give freedom to the Self or temporarily enslave it, all furnish it with forms of experience without which it could not progress. No such thing as positive vice or evil exists in the lower selfhood, for it is made up of Beings that are primitive and undeveloped, and whose activities are altogether right and good relative to the sphere to which they belong. But for the Higher Self to descend from its own loftier realm and usurp the functions of a lesser self (as already described), and remain as conscious lord of the lower legions, that indeed is evil when done by a Self that has touched true knowledge, the only real evil in the universe. But it is highest good if a Self descends but to rise again, leaving a raised and obedient host to labour as he has taught them ; it is indeed the labour of the Christ that He did in Hell.

It is not my purpose to deal over-minutely with conscious habits at this stage in the lessons, for the subject in one form or another belongs to the whole series, and cannot be fully understood until the lessons have all been studied. A broad outline of the practical work is all this lesson is designed to give ; an outline which will, it is hoped, be gradually filled in and made into a detailed picture by the study and work done upon later lessons.

Of the habits that make up the prevailing character those most apt to trouble the Learner are ruling passions and desires that urge towards actions which to the Judging Self seem unprofitable, if not actually evil. Often, to the beginner on this Path, the hosts of common worldly desires that adhere to

all assume the appearance of a crushing burden, and how to lighten and bear it is his greatest problem. The KEY, "*Examine the Examiner, watch the Watcher, judge the Judge*", if intelligently applied, will serve here, as elsewhere, and the following example illustrates its use :

Should you become aware of the insistent call of a lower self, in the form of a common worldly desire, proceed thus : Call up from deeper realms of Being a Self more detached than that which hears the call of desire and finds it irksome. Let it be Judge of the judge, and let it ask the latter, Why are you thus troubled and disapproving ? Does disapproval free you from bondage to that more primitive Being which so insistently struggles to express itself ? It does not. On the contrary, your attitude identifies you with the Being of which you disapprove, as you must know if you but pause to think, for you call it "*I*". You thus involve yourself in a struggle that will end you know not how. You hold your gaoler in check, and he holds you, and you swing in a barren circle, one about the other, without either gaining the freedom he desires. That is a state that cannot endure, for it is contrary to the Law of Becoming. It must end, and in one of two ways : your *shadow* may prove the stronger, and drag you in identification with himself into the expression he craves. Gratified, he will relax his grip for a period, and allow you once more sufficient freedom to recognize your miserable slavery. Alternatively he may leave what appears to be victory in your hands, and, exhausted, sink into what seems sleep, or death ; but beware, for he is neither dead nor sleeping ; when you are most confident and least watchful he will arise, invade your own inner realm, and in subtle and unsuspected form assail you far more terribly than before, leaving your last state far worse than the first.

Thus may the Judge of the judge speak in you, and if you give him heed your afflicted Self will turn to him and merge with him. With his wider and clearer vision you will achieve truer comprehension of your clamorous lower aspect and of the nature of its demands. It may prove itself to be no more than an old established habit—a self which, though it has long since worn out the sphere it moves in, nevertheless persists in

wandering idly in it in order to preserve its separate life. If so, it is not difficult to deal with it, for now that you cognize it clearly you may descend and dispossess it, and withdraw again leaving STILLNESS in its place. But—and this is the more likely—it may prove to be an aspect that has never yet had its rightful expression, and that cannot while it lacks it be dispossessed and absorbed. The expression it demands is a right and necessary form of experience without which your Becoming cannot continue, and therefore you must grant it. This, living as you now are, aloof and detached with the Judge of the judge, you can do with *free will*, and without any sense of being dragged down and enslaved. A self that receives freedom only at the will of the Higher Self is a servant, not a master. To understand this is to hold the secret of Peace and Power. (C)

Conscious habits are sometimes called *appetites*, and the term is not inapt, since they express desire for experience, which is the food upon which real Being lives and grows. Like the so-called physical appetites, these desires are sometimes true indicators of the needs of the Being, and at other times are false guides that urge, for the gratification of the self they express, consumption of material that is not needed and cannot be utilized. Patient self-watchfulness will always reveal the true character of an appetite. Those that are false can be dealt with as already described, always remembering in your attempts at controlling and disciplining them that your efforts must be preceded by the establishment of a thoroughly detached attitude. Without this no good results can be expected. But under the remote watchful eye of the Judge of the judge all aspects of the separate selfhood such as those that manifest in love of power, love of wealth, love of pleasure of every kind, grow progressively less demanding and finally vanish, or are transmuted into higher analogues of themselves. In transmutation there is a certain danger that should be noted, for the higher analogue of a primitive desire may well prove a greater enslaver than its prototype, should self-satisfaction in it be permitted to develop. To lose love of a mundane pleasure only to replace it by a more enthralling love for a more aesthetic form of pleasure is not a gain but a loss. Hereby the complete fallacy of the common advice, "Destroy

a bad habit by replacing it by a good", is revealed. Cultivate no habit but the habit of using the KEY.

Certain appetites, just as is the case with unconscious habits, can never, while we wear human forms, be totally absorbed, for they express aspects of the Being whose services are indispensable to existence and progress. Appetite for food, drink, and sex experience are the more obvious examples of these, but it should be considered that each has its analogues in deeper Being also. None of these can be eliminated, but all grow less demanding under the eye of the Judge of the judge. Attempts to control, discipline, or starve them into obedience by refusing to gratify them are worse than useless, for all that can be effected in this way is to divert their energies into deeper Being, and give their hidden analogues an abnormal and sinister power. To regard them as evil, as so many good persons—especially nominal occultists—do, is to demonstrate one's bondage to them.

Sex and the sex appetite, which is so universally regarded as a problem, is no problem, but a deeply significant *symbol* to the Occultist, and so, indeed, though perhaps in slightly lesser degree, are all other appetites. Sex is treated somewhat more definitely in a later lesson, but its full significance cannot be revealed in elementary instructions to a Learner.

Virtue and Vice.

Take care when first you begin to survey Life, and your own Being, that you do not fall into the error of labelling their multitudinous manifestations as virtues and vices. These things are in themselves neither good nor evil, but all can be made agents of good or of evil according to the way in which they are used by the Higher Self. Each is a step, and like a step in any ladder may be used as a means of either ascent or of descent. The whole Being of man is a phase of the EVER-BECOMING of LIFE, a step in the ladder of universal ascent. That great occult Scripture, *Light on the Path*, says :

"The vices of men become steps in the ladder, one by one as they are surmounted. The virtues of men are steps . . . but though they create a fair atmosphere and a happy future they are useless if they stand alone."

The true significance of those words has eluded multitudes who have read them. Many indeed, even some who would claim the name of Occultist, have condemned them, and other sayings in the same book ; but you, the Learner, who have begun to look upon life and who have studied this lesson, should begin to recognize their truth. Virtue and vice as men understand the terms are merely conditions that surround Self, that it permits to hold it, to drag it down, or uses to enable it to rise. Consider the following story of real life :

It concerns two brothers, sons of an old and honoured English family, brought up in the traditional English way, educated together in boyhood, together sent to the University, the elder to study for the medical profession, the younger for the Church. But there their paths separated. Within a few months the younger had left the college and the country, and had emigrated to Africa, where eventually he took up as his permanent occupation the profession of Transport Rider in the desert territories, a calling which is, perhaps, as rough, wild, and adventurous as any on earth. . . . Those who follow it have no home, no country, no laws—social, moral, or ethical—but their own. Their standards would, in many ways, be regarded with horror in peaceful England, but none the less they are of a character with which only a man of outstanding courage, honesty, and will could comply. In his line this young man became a noted figure, admired by his fellows and respected by those he served.

The elder brother followed the lines laid down for him. He became a highly respected medical practitioner in his native county, married well, brought up a family, became a pillar of the Church, and in all ways what the world would call a thoroughly successful and virtuous citizen.

For twenty years the elder remained ignorant of the whereabouts and occupation of the younger, then chance brought him knowledge of the truth. Horrified at what he imagined to be the wastrel and reprobate life of one who bore his own respected name, he conceived it his duty to go to Africa and effect the rescue and reclamation of his brother. The sequel was somewhat sad, but illuminating. Far from rescuing or reclaiming the “black sheep”, he himself, after a brief residence,

fell under the influence of that strange and, in some respects, sinister land, and took to ways of living which self-respecting men, either in England or in Africa, despise, and was ultimately saved from his own weakness by the efforts of the man he had come to rescue.

The moral of the story is not difficult to discern in the light of the teachings given in this lesson. The younger brother showed, from the first, a much more developed and powerful individuality, or Self, than the elder, in that he chose deliberately a course of his own in preference to drifting placidly with the favouring stream of conditions ; and he continued to exhibit this power of individuality in Africa, by there mastering, and not yielding to, adverse or seductive influences. His brother, on the other hand, never was called upon to assert an independent Selfhood. Throughout his life he manifested exactly those qualities his home conditions were expressly designed to evoke. With all his appearance of virtue and respectability he was never more than a distinguished landmark in his surroundings, and never had any more real virtue and individuality than has a stately oak in a peaceful park ; all this he fully demonstrated by his reactions to African conditions.

Here it may be well to point out to those not true learners who may read these lessons that I do not imply that a man should deliberately defy custom and convention in order to assert his individuality. That is neither the teaching nor the moral of the story. . . .

I tell the story simply to show that Life, if one will but open one's eyes and look upon it, or rather within it, can teach more than can many books. It is always and everywhere before us asking us to learn, yet men, it would appear, prefer ignorance, and pass it by with eyes close-shut. Not so the Learner ; he has chosen to see and to read ; but his task is one that daunts many, for to learn to see in a world wherein all are blind is to quit companionship for loneliness.

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Before the eyes can see they must be incapable of tears.
Before the ear can hear it must have lost its sensitiveness.

Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost its power to wound.

Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart.

(“The First Four Rules” : *Light on the Path.*)

(1). Labour always like one who seeks a Royal Reward for a task well done ; but find your reward in work continued and never in work completed.

(2). Rejoice if your lot is happy ; but if it is miserable rejoice also : Joy and Sadness are your twin slaves joined from birth, and they must serve you together or serve you not at all.

(3). Love Life, for he is the Great teacher ; but love Death also, for he is the other Self of Life, who alone can teach you nothing.

(“The First Three Steps” : *The Sayings of the Ancient One.*)

LESSON III

THE TEN VIRTUES

ALTHOUGH in lessons given as these are much of the instruction necessarily takes the form of information, the giving of information is but one of the less important duties of a teacher. Information is not Knowledge, but a means whereby Knowledge may be acquired. Knowledge is not WISDOM, but has been called the Ladder to WISDOM, and WISDOM is the goal of the Disciple.

The Ladder of Knowledge does not stand ready prepared and erected for the use of the Neophyte : he has to fashion it himself with pain and labour, and *experience* is the material with which he builds. Facts and ideas that come to him from his teacher, though knowledge to the teacher, are not so to him : they are specialized fields of experience which if diligently explored yield results which when assimilated become Knowledge, the Body of Real Being.

A true teacher of Occultism possesses Knowledge, and must always speak with the authority that Knowledge confers, for if he does not do so his words will not be winged with power, and will fail to impress the minds of those that hear them, no matter what hidden WISDOM they conceal. But the Learner must not accept authoritative statements passively, as facts not to be questioned, but with active appetite, as a hungry person accepts food, knowing that it will satisfy him only when eaten and digested. Information passively accepted is not merely useless to the acceptor but a hampering burden, for it adds to the load of illusions that weigh down the Aspirant the further illusion that in it he has received knowledge. But information rejected because contrary to existing ideas, because difficult to assimilate, or because foreign to habitual trends of thought, or for any other reason, is so much useful material

wantonly or neglectfully wasted. Study this ancient Key to Wisdom :

"Nothing is false ; nothing is true ; all things that exist are but masks of Truth ; accept no thing ; reject no thing ; learn from study of all ; but above all learn from the Learner."

A true teacher is a director, a guide, an admonisher, and an adjuster. He directs his pupil into profitable Fields of Experience and shows how best they may be explored. He warns of dark places and snares in the way. From his own store of Knowledge he supplies specialized forms of experience, as *correctives* of errors and weaknesses, due to mal-assimilation of other forms ; and this last is his most important duty. Information is thus a remedial agent rather than a balanced food for the growing Being, but to be effective it must be used, not admired, stored away, and forgotten.

Other than the foregoing the teacher owes no duty towards his pupil. The latter has to stand and walk, and recover if he falls, according to the measure of his strength, and must not look to another to save him effort. He has undertaken a task that does not consist in getting easily and swiftly to the end of a journey, but in learning to stand firmly, to walk steadily, and ultimately to run at speed over a rugged and narrow path.

Occultism : the Science of Life.

That great teacher H. P. Blavatsky once defined True Occultism as :

"THE SCIENCE OF LIFE : THE ART OF LIVING."

No more than can the art of playing a musical instrument be mastered by hearing the theory of music expounded and by watching a musician play can the Art of Living be learned at second hand. The Laws of Life may be expounded by a teacher as the theory of music may be, but not until they are practically applied by the Learner can they have a living meaning for him.

Having established a firm basis from whence to make his effort through diligently applying the advice given in Lesson II, the Aspirant should now begin more definite and concrete attempts to live according to the Laws of Life. To live according to those laws is to live *virtuously*, and for that reason it was laid

down of old by the Wise Men of the East that the practice of certain cardinal Virtues must precede any rousing of those hidden powers of Being controlled by the Adept, use of which makes the man more than man. The Virtues said to distinguish the true Disciple are enumerated at great length in that inspired Eastern Scripture the *Bhagavad Gita*, but for a Neophyte to attempt to live out each of these would complicate his task unnecessarily ; therefore, for practical purposes, they are usually synthesized into a series of ten, of which number the second five are regarded rather as complements of the first than as Virtues complete in themselves, thus :

(a). (1) Harmlessness ; (2) Truthfulness ; (3) Justice ; (4) Purity ; (5) Self-reliance.

(b). (6) Charity ; (7) Contentment ; (8) Discrimination ; (9) Simplicity ; (10) Self-surrender.

In practising the first five Virtues (a) the Neophyte is considered symbolically to have raised his left foot from the ground and placed it upon the first step of the Ladder of ascent to the Golden Gates of the Disciple's PATH. In practising the second five (b) he is considered to have raised his right foot and brought it up to join the other, and thus to have taken one full step upward above his common humanity. How to exercise consciousness in living out those Virtues is what the present lesson is designed to teach.

To live is to BE. To live virtuously is to BE virtuous. "Am I virtuous ? Can I be virtuous ?" These among many other questions you, the Learner, have now to ask yourself. To them you are required to give true answers, founded not on belief but on knowledge gained through direct experience. It is easy to say, "I am harmless ; I would not hurt a living thing ; I respect truth above all things ; I love justice and hate injustice", and so on. Such are answers which all well-meaning persons would give, but they must not satisfy the Aspirant to Discipleship. Never should he rely upon untested belief, least of all upon belief concerning his own qualities. Excellent intentions he may have, as have multitudes who are far from the WAY, but in no way can they help him in his quest, and may easily do the reverse. There is, as in many such, profound truth in the old homely saying : "*The road to Hell is paved with good*

intentions." Hell is but a name for darkness and ignorance ; and it is through neglect of, or refusal to profit from, the experience that life exists to provide that darkness and ignorance come. Knowledge through experience has therefore to be sought, for without it you cannot say with truth whether you are virtuous or vicious. (A)

Imagination and its use.

It may be thought that if dependence has to be placed solely upon what experience may bring, the life-span of the average man is far too short to permit of much being added to the stock of knowledge possessed by him as a birthright. That would be true were he limited to experience of a purely concrete, objective nature. The highly artificial conditions that surround civilized man give him little or no opportunity of becoming aware of the hidden forces or *selves* that live within him, and to exchange those conditions for others calculated to evoke such knowledge is seldom within his power. Fortunately for the Learner, he is by no means dependent upon purely objective experience. He has an instrument within his own Being that can if rightly used give him all he needs for his instruction. That instrument is *Imagination*. What Imagination actually is I shall not discuss in this lesson, but if necessary it may be considered in later lessons. All that now concerns the Learner is to know that it exists, and is a faculty that enables the mind to form pictures of events and conditions that may have in the present or the future, or may have had in the past, an actual or potential existence. Furthermore, Imagination allows the Self to enter into association with those mental images, and thus to have experiences as real as, and even more profitable than, any obtainable in objective life.

Imagination is feeble and ill-controlled in average man, which is only to say that he has little vision of and command of the legions of the lower selfhood, but in the advanced Occultist it becomes a powerful instrument that makes him practically independent of objective experience. By its aid he may in a few years, often in a few days or even hours, acquire knowledge that the objective experiences of many lives could not give.

A warning to the inexperienced Learner is here necessary.

No attempt to develop Imagination for its own sake should ever be made, for to do so will be but to build a prison for the Self. There are teachers who, doubtless believing in their own knowledge, teach practices designed to develop the power of Imagination, but in truth they are either quite ignorant of the nature and aims of true Occultism or their own aims are different. The control which the practices they teach produces over the power of Imagination is merely an appearance and not real control at all. What actually results from the practices is that the Self acquires some little power of *moving about* within the vast engine-room of the lower selfhood, and like a child amuses itself by watching the working of the machinery from different points of vantage ; it does not become free of its prison. In other, though perhaps not more revealing, words, Self becomes more and more *identified* with Imagination by the practices against which I warn, whereas to *detach* Self from Imagination and from all other instruments of experience is in all cases the aim of the true Occultist. All the powers that are ever needed or that ever can be used by the growing Self are already at its disposal, and to command and use them is its task, not to strengthen them nor yet to evoke others. The right to invoke and evoke power will come in later stages of progress, but it is a right that has to be earned by first setting the Self free from the thrall of the Powers of the Separate Life.

The exercises now to be recommended, which form the more concrete work of the present lesson, call for the *use* of Imagination, but of such Imagination only as you have normally at your disposal, and which in fact you already use whenever you attempt to picture your actions in, and your reactions to, a future or a problematic set of circumstances. Call up a mental picture of any situation such as you conceive may confront you in actual life, imagine yourself involved in it, and strive while living through it to manifest in action and attitude one or more or all of the Ten Virtues. Three examples of hypothetical situations are given below. The first calls for exhibition of the Virtue of Harmlessness, the second for that of Truthfulness, and the third for that of Justice. Before reading my comments, which come later, conceive yourself the actor in each case, and decide as best you can how you may manifest most fully the

Virtue or Virtues called for by the conditions. Make a special note of such reactions to the conditions you conjure up, as you may happen to experience in thought and feeling.

(1) *The Problem of Harmlessness.*

You are a man in the prime of life, in a well-paid position, married, and with a younger sister dependent upon you. Suddenly your country is plunged into war and threatened with invasion by a powerful neighbour. Universal military service is proclaimed and you are called to serve as a soldier. You are pacifist by nature and conviction, loathe the idea of fighting and shedding blood, and determine to avoid serving as a soldier if by any means it can be avoided. Consideration reveals three possible methods of escape : (1) By claiming exemption from fighting service on conscientious grounds, and serving in some non-combatant capacity ; (2) by boldly defying the law and refusing to serve at all ; and (3) by fleeing the country and taking refuge with your wife and sister in some country not involved in the war.

As a Beginner upon the Occult Way, which, if any, of these three courses should you take in order to exhibit Harmlessness most fully ?

(2) *The Problem of Truthfulness.*

You are the agent of a firm that employs, in skilled and unskilled occupations, several hundred men. A man whom you know slightly, and whom I shall call Smith, calls at your office and begs for help or work. You are sympathetic, being aware that he is in need and has an ailing wife and a large family, and you tell him to call upon you next day, when you will furnish him with a recommendation that will procure him employment with your firm. That evening, while walking homeward through an empty street, you see a man dart from the door of a grocer's shop with several packages clutched beneath his coat. Obviously a thief ! He rushes past you and you see his face : it is your acquaintance Smith ! To denounce him to the shopkeeper is your first thought, then you remember his sick wife and hungry children, hesitate, and pass on. Coming to the end of the street you perceive that the fugitive

has been stopped by a policeman, who is questioning him suspiciously. The thought occurs to you that it is your duty to tell the officer what you witnessed, but after a moment's hesitation you again pass on your way. Near your home you meet a detective-sergeant whom you know, and in the course of conversation ask him what he knows of Smith. You are told that he is a thoroughly unreliable character who has frequently been convicted of petty theft. You go home perplexed by the situation, dissatisfied with your own behaviour, and puzzled how to act towards Smith should he demand that you fulfil your promise and recommend your principals to employ him.

How have you manifested the Virtue of Truthfulness in your interview with Smith, in your attitude and actions towards the crime you witnessed, and how in the light of what you have learned from the detective ought you now to act? Bear in mind that you are a devotee of the Virtues and have to exhibit Harmlessness as well as Truthfulness.

(3) *The Problem of Justice.*

You are asked by a philanthropic friend to undertake a certain mission on his behalf, as he himself has reasons for desiring not to be known as a principal in the matter. You promise to do as he asks. He then gives you a sum of money and asks you to distribute it equitably, and in strict proportion to their respective needs and merits, between three men whom I shall designate X, Y, and Z. He gives you their addresses and you proceed to execute your task. Inquiry proves that X is a prosperous tradesman and in all ways a most worthy man; Y is a poor, dissolute, sycophantic person, and a notorious gossip; and Z is a dubious if not a criminal character without visible means of subsistence.

How, in the circumstances, should you act in order to manifest most fully the Virtue of Justice, bearing Harmlessness and Truthfulness in mind also?

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Neither of these three problems is what is usually called imaginary. The first presents a situation that might well confront hundreds at any time and no doubt has confronted

many in the past. The second was related to me by a business man as an actual experience he had had. The third was brought to my notice by a young friend recently, and was alleged by him to be an actual problem of his own. From this it may be understood that the actual effort of imagination called for in such exercises is not, except in a minor degree, one of visualizing special conditions, but is rather an attempt to *live through*, mentally, an easily realizable situation, and mark what thoughts and feelings result from the process. Beginners in the practice are liable to err in two ways: first by inventing, or trying to invent, original and complex situations, after the fashion of a short-story plot, and second, by approaching the problem as one does a riddle and striving (largely by guesswork) to discover the right answer. That is not the way to profit from the practice. There is no question of any "right" answer. It is not a rule of conduct that you are, or should be, seeking, but knowledge of the forces or *selves* that move you, and that are excited into action by particular conditions. Later in the lesson, when the real meaning of the Virtues is better understood, the object to be gained by attempting to manifest them will be explained. Select therefore for your practice situations that are easy to realize, and for them it is not necessary to go far afield. They abound, little noticed, in daily life, in the lives of friends, in newspaper reports, and, in a somewhat lesser degree, in books. Examples such as those I have given are not for daily use, and are given only for illustrative purposes, for consideration of them helps, in early stages of progress, to give the necessary understanding of the law of virtuous living. When, with use, the imagination has been developed into a powerful instrument, new and complex experiences may be evolved, but the time for this is not yet. Be in no haste to reach it. There is truth in the old saying, "*The more haste, the less speed*", for haste implies desire to attain, and the Disciple should not desire to attain but only to BE. Deal with the experiences that lie close about you with the instruments nearest to hand, and in due time you will find wider fields and more powerful instruments waiting to be utilized.

Why seek experience through imagination if all needed lies close at hand? it may well be asked. The answer is that, though

experience does surround us, we perceive but little of it and utilize still less. Furthermore, even when perceived, it recurs with insufficient frequency to permit of its being fully utilized and assimilated into knowledge. When used as suggested, imagination enables the Learner to recall any situation again and again, and to explore it and re-explore it, each time with added knowledge, until all it has to offer has been absorbed. But, it may be objected, numbers of persons make a habit of living over and over again through every experience, and gain nothing from the process, but rather lose. All this is admittedly true, but such persons are not *using* imagination. Rather are they slaves to it, or to its lower analogue, fancy.

Comments.

I now turn to consideration of the problems propounded and will assume that each is my own.

(1) *The Problem of Harmlessness.*

I begin by consideration of the three courses open to me, alternative to serving as a fighting soldier and becoming guilty of the crime of taking life. The first seems the most direct and simple way of escape from my difficulty. I call on my imagination and picture my appeal to the authorities, and their decision that I be given the option of serving either as a non-combatant soldier or as a worker in a munition factory. Shall I in either service succeed in manifesting Harmlessness? As a non-combatant, though I shall not hurt others with my own hand, I shall give the fighting troops important help by relieving them from duties which without such as I would absorb much of their time and energy. As a munition worker, also, I shall help to hurt and kill, by supplying the army with instruments of slaughter. I ask myself if one who makes it easy for a murderer to reach his victim, or who supplies him with a deadly weapon, is in any way less guilty than the assassin himself. I am unable to think that he is so. My first alternative will therefore not enable me to escape harming my fellow men. Will the second serve me better? If I adopt it I make myself a criminal in the eyes of the law and of my fellow countrymen, and shall certainly suffer imprisonment. Unquestionably a

criminal, no matter what the motive for his crime, is an open enemy of the State and of all law-abiding citizens. If imprisoned for his offences he consumes food that loyal persons may need. He keeps men who might be actively defending their country occupied in the unprofitable task of guarding him. He has made himself essentially an aider and abettor of the enemy. Even less than the first alternative will the second serve me in my desire to be Harmless. There remains the third, and this at least promises a certain means of continuing harmless, though one I am loth to adopt. I spur my imagination and strive to visualize the conditions it offers. If I adopt it I shall become an exile from home and country, and shall leave the latter weakened by the loss of one potential defender, and by that much the more liable to injury at the hands of the enemy. More pressingly important is the fact that I shall lose my present means of livelihood, and consequently expose my wife and sister to hardships and privations which they are less fit to endure than I. Yet for these I compensate them by saving them from the risks of war. At this latter thought I pause : am I certain that my project will give them security ? Have I any certainty that the country of my exile will remain neutral, or, even if it should remain so, that it may not be invaded by the enemy as a stepping-stone towards attack upon my own country ? Might I not in the fancied security of my new home wake to find invaders in my neighbourhood and my wife and sister exposed to outrage ? Would my devotion to Harmlessness prevent me from fighting and killing in defence of those dear to me ? I cannot deceive myself into thinking that it would. From this thought another emerges : is one who stands by and permits injury to be done less guilty than one who does it ?

Through this thinking it becomes plain, past all doubt, that there is no possible way in which Harmlessness can be exhibited in the circumstances hypothesized. In every direction its manifestation is strictly limited by conditions, and in none that it is possible to conceive can it be, even remotely, perfect. If I am to live out the true Virtue it is certain that I shall have to find other means of doing so than by rushing about from one set of conditions to another. To a Learner no understanding more important than this is possible, although its full impli-

cations may not be perceived without much more thought and study.

Harmlessness as a phenomenon, like all other things and qualities in this manifested world, exhibits itself in two aspects, a positive aspect and a negative aspect ; and it is only in the interaction of, or in the contrast between, these opposing poles that it is known at all. In its reality as VIRTUE it is not manifest, for it is, as all things are, LIFE itself. LIFE alone is perfect. In LIFE positives and negatives are equal and identical in a *noumenon* that is equally both and neither. In manifest Life positives and negatives (and all things) exhibit themselves separately ; but as that manifestation is most perfect which is nearest in condition to LIFE itself it follows that perfection in the *phenomenal* world emerges when a *balance* is established between the units of any of the "Pairs of Opposites". Man therefore exhibits a Virtue most completely when he balances its positive manifestation exactly with its negative. In his world—his conditions—he becomes most Harmless when he refrains equally from inflicting harm and from permitting harm to be inflicted. To increase or decrease the relative intensity of either the positive or the negative aspect of anything is not to bring more of its reality into the world, but the contrary. All that results from it is greater and greater unbalance, and in the words of an ancient ritual : "*Unbalance on earth is the smoke of the Fires of Chaos*".

The age-old error of imperfect man, from which the Learner must free himself before he can compass a single upward step, is the illusion that he can change the world while he himself remains unchanged. He creates an appearance of progress by pushing the centre of gravity of his conditions farther and farther towards a particular pole of Being, and calls the result of his efforts "good", yet with all his works he has not in any way increased the sum total of good in the world even as he understands that term.

In producing civilization man has brought about an extreme and precarious unbalance of human and natural forces. I do not contend that civilization is without value to the race ; far from it ; for the Occultist knows that nothing that exists is devoid of value. Civilization has an important use, though

unhappily few avail themselves of it : it permits manifestation of many gleams of the hidden Divinity of man, in the shape of charity, justice, philanthropy, and their numerous derivatives, and permits man to demonstrate to himself and to the world his actual kinship with the Teachers and Saviours of all ages. But it is not understood, even by the few who perceive those gleams, that manifestations of actual good come only from high aspects of man's Being and not from his Centre, the Self. The Self, the Focus of the Life of man, has not risen, but remains half sleeping as it was before civilization was known. Consequently the Being of man—of the whole of civilized humanity—remains at the mercy of conditions that exist in an extreme state of unstable equilibrium. Why does man fear war? Not merely the individual but the mass of civilized men live in fear and horror of war. Would this fear exist if the Self, the Focus of Life in man in general, were awake and active at the level of those special conditions called civilization? It would not, for there would be nothing to fear : war would be impossible. The fear that exists is felt not by the true Central Self but by its (admittedly) loftier, though unfree and unstable, aspect, which lives with the conditions it has made and called civilization. It arises from Self's recognition of the fact that opposing it is a negative duplicate of itself, which for the time being it is able to outbalance, but which may at any time rise into dominance and swing it—the positive, "good" self—and its conditions into ruin, if not into utter annihilation.

Is the imagery I use too "Occult"? To you in your present stage it may be, but before these lessons end its meaning will become evident. Let it be, however, considered that though civilization gives man great powers for positive good, the negative aspect of those powers makes for evil and destruction. Another war on the scale of the last would surely destroy civilization, and those that survived it would find peace and stability in conditions of a semi-barbaric nature, exactly suited in fact to the true stable consciousness centre in average man. In intensifying his control of conditions man has forgotten his true Self, and, like the Prodigal, has left its house to revel at distant phantom boards—banquets, which one breath of the wind of destiny would change into tasteless husks.

True Virtue must not be sought in conditions, for to do so is to admit your bondage to them. It is to be sought and found only by living with the true Self, and in it ever withdrawing towards the FREEDOM which is LIFE. From consideration of this Problem of Harmlessness you may learn that in the outer life of action there is no escape possible from the bondage of the "pairs of opposites". By them are all your ways and works conditioned. In striving to be positively Harmless you are in every instance forced to be negatively harmful, in that your action permits injury to others. The real Virtue cannot exhibit itself in action, for it is LIFE itself. Your conditions, whatever they may be, should be regarded by you as fields of experience existing for your instruction, and nothing more. Therefore you should not flee from them, but should accept them, and by experiencing them to the uttermost wear them out and become free of them for ever. In *The Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna, the personification of the highest SELF of this planet, points out to his pupil, the Kshatriya Prince, that the natural duty of a soldier is to fight, but tells him also to be indifferent alike to victory and defeat. In this life the great *Key to Virtue* is natural duty, for in concentration upon duty there is least inclination towards any pole of manifestation. Admittedly, for the Beginner to distinguish accurately where duty lies is frequently difficult and needs experience. But that experience may be gathered quickly through the work and study these lessons provide, if only you approach them with an open mind and concentrate upon the act of LEARNING.

Comments : The Problem of Truthfulness.

Having lived in imagination through the successive experiences that go to constitute this Problem of Truthfulness, I am forced to concede that in promising employment to a man of whose character I knew nothing I acted neither rightly nor wisely. My motives—compassion for the sufferings of the wife and family and in a lesser degree for the man himself—were, taken by themselves, very worthy, but in no way could they absolve me of my promise to protect the interests of my principals, which tacitly or actually I gave them when I became their agent. A dishonest employee might well cause them serious

loss and damage, and in committing them to employ Smith I was unquestionably *neglectful of my duty, and consequently negatively untruthful*.

Passing to the next phase of the problem I perceive that it also involves the question of natural duty. Every citizen is bound, morally at least, to aid in protecting the persons and property of fellow citizens, and to assist the officers of the law : whosoever claims the rights and privileges of citizenship has given a tacit if not an actual promise of allegiance to the State. Again, therefore, I was negatively untruthful in that I failed to denounce Smith to the shopkeeper and policeman both. I am likewise guilty of negative harmfulness towards the shopkeeper in that I permitted the thief to escape with the proceeds of his theft. Having now learned the character of Smith and seen my past behaviour in a true light it remains for me to determine what course to take when Smith calls upon me to fulfil my promise to procure him employment.

Here it may be interesting and instructive to consider a solution supplied by a Beginner to whom I propounded this problem :

“I should tell Smith when he calls upon me that I had witnessed his crime, and had learned from the police what character he bears. I should exact from him a promise of future rectitude and a guarantee that he should, when circumstances permit, anonymously compensate the grocer for the goods stolen. In return for these pledges I should fulfil my own promise and obtain him the employment he desires. Privately I should resolve, should Smith break his promises and act dishonestly, to compensate my principals for any loss sustained at his hands. Thus I should rectify my own previous neglect, and not merely that, but should become the means of relieving the sufferings of Smith’s family, and perhaps of enabling him to live an honest life henceforward.”

Probably human ingenuity could devise no better solution of the problem than this, yet the fact remains that from the Occult point of view it is no solution at all. I aim to live out as perfectly as possible the Virtues of Truthfulness and Harmlessness, the *reality* of which exists in LIFE, above and beyond

all conditions, but this solution does not place me above conditions, it leaves me as fully subject to them as I was before. What gain is there in struggling from the meshes of one net into those of another? My friend's ingenious solution depends for success or failure upon a single and decidedly weak link, Smith's future honesty. If that gives way, and general experience suggests that it most probably will, what then is the position? I may compensate my principals for any loss sustained, but in doing so must necessarily reveal to them the whole story, a thing that humanly speaking cannot but shake their confidence in my business capacity, if not in my probity. Whether they accept compensation from me or not, it does not follow that they will refrain from prosecuting Smith. Should they prosecute it will be impossible for me to avoid being called as a witness, and the whole story will be revealed in court, leaving the problem more complicated than before. Should they not prosecute, at my request, then they and I become conspirators guilty of the crime of compounding a felony.

The further the imagination takes me in pursuit of a solution, through creation of fresh conditions, the more obvious does it become that Virtue is not to be found by such means. As shown in my comments upon Harmlessness, true VIRTUE is unmanifest, and is approached in manifestation only through equipoise of its positive and negative phenomenal aspects. That equipoise is always most certainly found through the strictest concentration upon the duty at hand. DUTY IS THE KEY TO VIRTUE.

The question of positive untruthfulness does not arise in this problem. There are multitudes of truth-lovers who think it admissible and indeed absolutely right to be negatively untruthful. "*Speak truth when compelled to speak ; if not keep silence*" is an aphorism often quoted with approval, one which at first sight seems to express wisdom, and indeed does so if it is wholly understood, as it is not by those who quote it. Most true it is right to be silent if not *compelled* to speak, but what constitutes compulsion is the real question. In our problem, if questioned by the policeman I must tell what I witnessed or be guilty of positive untruth. Why, then, should I think silence justified when I am not questioned? The policeman is merely the objec-

tive symbol of the law—of the *conditions* that involve me, which I have to experience fully in order to become free of them. To accept them when they manifest objectively (as in the policeman) and to evade them when they are only subjective merely serves to perpetuate them, for it is acknowledgment of their power over me. It places me and keeps me upon the plane of the lower selfhood, of which conditions are merely the Macrocosmic manifestation, and holds me back from the freedom of true Selfhood also called true Virtue. The lower selfhood must live in itself, and by so living work out its life-cycle and die ; I do but give it continued life by identifying myself with it. The PATH is approached by living always in the Higher Self that Ever withdraws, and thus leaving the lower legions free to pursue their own paths to their own ends ; and the key to success in this effort is always NATURAL DUTY. The rule is summed up in the Scriptural aphorism : “*Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.*”

Comments : The Problem of Justice.

The importance, already demonstrated, of DUTY as a natural guide to Virtue is in this Problem emphasized yet more strongly. In daily life situations not voluntarily sought constantly confront us, and together with those to which natural duty calls are all-sufficient for our instruction. Notwithstanding this we often go voluntarily, as we think, but in reality impelled by disorderly selves in the shape of wandering desires and uncontrolled thoughts, into spheres of activity not our own, to our loss and bewilderment. Of this the problem now under consideration is a direct example. The web of circumstance outlined should never have enmeshed me. No voice of natural duty compels me to undertake the task proposed by my philanthropic friend. No pledge to obey his instructions ought ever to have been given by me while ignorant of their nature.

But having given the promise, does not devotion to the Virtue of Truthfulness compel me to execute it? To that question I must give answer according to my wisdom, for I, only, am a law unto myself. If I understand that the manifestation of any one Virtue is always conditioned by the others, I shall know how to find an answer. Imagination should enable

me to visualize in some measure the situation that will result from meticulous adherence to my promise, and to estimate whether the conditions will permit of a true balance—of Harmlessness, Truthfulness, and Justice—being held. On the other hand, if I withdraw my promise, do I in any way offend against Harmlessness and Justice? Perhaps my friend has some very urgent reason for his request, and may suffer injury if I refuse it. But is it my duty to speculate concerning his possible motives, and allow myself to be swayed by an idea that may have no substance outside my own mind? Certainly it is not. If my friend has good reasons for what he asks of me, let him confide in me, and I shall respect his confidence and may then agree, or not, as I see wise, to help him in his project. It may well be that his motives are not good ones, and that in obeying him blindly I may be assisting him to harm others; but I must no more allow myself to be swayed by that consideration alone than by the first, nor by anything but VIRTUE. Let it be thought that Truth and Wisdom are one. Wisdom cannot be manifested by ignorance. A pledge given blindly is itself an offence against truth, for ignorance cannot know whether conditions will permit of its being observed. (B)

But assuming for the purposes of the lesson that I feel bound by my promise, how can I decide on a just division of the money? I have two standards to guide me, but their application leads to results mutually contradictory. First I may decide to give each of the prospective beneficiaries a sum proportionate to his moral worth, in which case X's share would be very large, Y's inconsiderable, and Z's merely nominal. Second, I may make their material needs my criterion, in which case Z, who has no apparent means of livelihood, would get the larger share, and X, who is well-to-do, only a nominal sum. It therefore seems to be impossible to execute true justice in the matter, for what justice is I do not know.

From this quandary I gather a lesson of extreme importance to the Aspirant, namely that I cannot manifest a quality that has no Being in my consciousness. Out of my difficulty I may now see two ways opening, the first through consideration of the truth that every man, whatever his condition in life, has already had perfect justice meted out to him by the great

LAW of BEING ; hence if I give an exactly equal sum to each I come nearest to the action of the LAW, for "*the sun shines equally upon the just and the unjust*", and how each profits depends upon the nature of each. The same result will also be achieved by returning the money to the donor, and telling him that I have no power to act equitably in the circumstances.

Failing will and wisdom to act as above, or feeling that some division of the money must be made, then let me recall that wise but little-understood saying, "*Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's*", and in material things make material standards my guide, thus giving to Z the larger and to X the smaller sum.

Some further comments upon the use of Imagination as illustrated by the foregoing problems will be made before the lesson closes, but before coming to them the remaining seven Virtues must have a brief consideration.

(4) *Purity.*

It is said that to know the real meaning of any Virtue is to know also how to live it, and this is particularly true of more abstract Virtues such as Purity. It is a truism to say that Purity manifests in a pure life, but what pure living really means is understood by few. The majority of men, whether nominal occultists or not, if they were to attempt a definition at all, would probably define Purity as abstention from gluttony, drunkenness, sensuality, and other of the grosser forms of vice ; but the Occultist gives the term a much wider, and in many respects quite different, interpretation. Of his view understanding is best gained through application of the Hermetic Postulate :

"As is the Inner so is the Outer ; as is the Great so is the Small ; as it is Above so it is Below : there is but one LIFE and LAW."

Rightly applied, the Law of Analogy thus formulated opens all Gates to Knowledge, but as is the case with all Keys which unlock the Doors of the Mysteries its use is fraught with certain dangers, the nature of which no teacher can predict. They spring from the nature of the Learner himself, for he may through ignorance, prejudice, or misconception allow false analogies to delude him, or delude himself by false application

of those that are true. See therefore in analogy, as in all things, a mode of experience from the use of which Knowledge will come.

The physical body is an analogue of the real Being of man. Through study of it and of its needs understanding of Real Being may be gained. The body needs food to sustain its life and promote its growth, and *experience* is the food of Real Being.

Food containing inassimilable elements which neither nourish the body nor stimulate it into healthy activity is impure and causes the body to become impure. Food that is impure compels the body to waste energy in elimination of the burdensome substances it contains, and impairs the strength and checks the growth. Food containing impurities of certain kinds kills the body, for the effort it is forced to make in order to expel the inassimilable substances exhausts its energies completely. Food that in moderate quantities is pure becomes impure in excess, and causes corresponding impurity of body. Food that in certain circumstances is wholesome may in others cause illness. Food that is good for one person may harm or kill another.

These and other well-known, but not always remembered, facts have their correspondences in *Experience*, the food of Real Being, and in that Being itself. Any form of Experience whatsoever that the Being is capable of assimilating into Knowledge, or that stimulates Being into healthy activity, is *pure*; all other forms are impure in one degree or another.

Idle habits, restless pursuit of fresh interests and sensations, are impure forms of Experience; the first because they are but empty husks, the second because they are usually both inassimilable, and in bulk far in excess of requirements. More dangerous than they are attempts to develop occult powers, or questing after psychic phenomena, for their effects on Real Being are analogous to those created in the body by drugs and stimulants. Like the latter, they delude by producing an illusionary appearance, or sensation of power—power, indeed, is actually roused, but is expended not in growth and healthy activity of Being but in neutralization and elimination of matter that the Being is unable to assimilate into Knowledge.

Pursue diligently the foregoing line of thought and it will in due time lead you to knowledge of what the Virtue of Purity

means, and how to live it. As a further help bear the following definition in mind : *A pure Being utilizes all Experience and converts it into Knowledge. Experience that cannot be made to yield Knowledge is impure.*

Perfect Purity of Being would mean capacity to assimilate into Knowledge every form of experience this human Sphere can afford. Such a condition would obviously imply finality—the close of the human cycle when all is comprehended by, or absorbed in, a Self that itself is identified with LIFE. Average man, the Neophyte, Disciple, even the Adept, is far from finality, and for him the Way of Purity is always the way of the Buddha, the Middle Path, called also the Path of Natural Duty.

What in the way of experience to select and what to reject is a problem that always troubles Beginners who will not think, but like lazy infants demand to be borne in the arms of an elder, or by him led by the hand. Do not select, and do not reject ! The mode of experience that lies nearest is always the most profitable. To pure-living physical man natural appetite is always a certain guide to the type of food his body most needs, and this true appetite is in the outer Spheres a true analogue of the ENERGY manifest in the EVERBECOMING which phase by phase sweeps Being ever nearer to BEING, Self ever nearer to SELF. In man *Karma* (that grossly misunderstood Eastern term) stands mid-way between the ENERGY of EVERBECOMING and natural appetite as an analogue of both. It is the Energy of Self-becoming in man, and it bears him into the exact Fields of Experience his Being is most fit to profit from because they spring from that which the Being is.

Why then does the teacher invite his pupil to partake of special experiences instead of leaving him to the guidance of the Law ? The answer is that, if not blind or a pretender, he does exactly that. The teacher is part of the Law. If a true teacher he works consciously with the Law. That form of experience to which he invites is that which the pupil is ready to receive : he does not invite the man who is not yet a Learner to partake of it, but on the contrary warns him insistently that he will find it indigestible, if not actual poison. Let it be remembered also that the Being of the Learner is very impure, for man's appetite since he fell from EDEN has become

corrupt, and guides him not to food for true Being but to the husks that the Prodigal shares with the swine. Man as he now is is *sick*, his Being is corrupt, and when consciousness of his unhappy state dawns upon him he seeks a physician to guide him back to health, for he has no power to help himself. That physician is the teacher. The man who has entered the PATH has found health of Being, and though he has a *Master* needs no teacher. A teacher is for the man who, knowing that he is sick, earnestly desires to be well ; he is for no others, neither for the well nor for those who though sick are unaware of their disease. In his capacity of physician the teacher prescribes for his pupil what, to pursue the analogy, I may call a special *diet*, in the shape of modes of experience, not such as a truly healthy Being may need but as means of correcting former errors.

Realization of the fact that to him, in his present stage of progress, true Purity is impossible, is of the highest importance to the Learner. "*If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*" In no way can all contained, even in a simple form of experience, be assimilated. From it a residue always remains as it remains from the most easily digested food. For the Being as at present constituted this is not a bad thing, but good, for it stimulates progress in two ways : first, by acting as a reminder, received unconsciously in early stages of development, that growth proceeds as much through casting off as through building up ; and second, as another reminder, that while anything remains that cannot be assimilated, growth of Being is not complete ; for ultimately All must be absorbed into ALL.

The Middle Way, a state of *balance* achieved in a Thought of Self that does not act but surveys the activities of its lower aspects, is the one sure means of securing all the Purity, all the Virtue, that can manifest in our imperfect human phase. No more than in self-indulgence is Purity found in asceticism. Asceticism is not the antithesis of self-indulgence but merely another name for it. The ignorant Aspirant who flees the world and takes refuge in desert hermitage, or in monastic seclusion, usually binds himself all the more securely to his lower nature. In starving his body and depriving his human mental-emotional nature of its normal expression he does not

realize that he is indulging other aspects of his Being, no more lofty, in that he struggles for personal salvation or for super-human power. The average man or woman living a normal good life, and troubling not at all about "salvation" and "power", is often far more pure, in the true sense, than the hermit, monk, or nun.

This is not to assert that all who follow the monastic life are merely exchanging worldly indulgences for others which they think will profit them more. On the contrary, that life may in itself be the very experience the Being needs most, and if so it is the way of purity for those who take it. The Catholic Church shows some appreciation of the Law in its rule that a postulant must have a *vocation*.

Monk and nun may live a life of Purity, but they cannot rightly claim greater Purity of Being than can the Learner who, in his normal life, lives always in harmony with the Eternal Becoming. In the Cloister, as in the World, true balance of Being enables true Virtue to manifest. If balance is absent, whatever Virtue appears does so by grace of special Conditions and is therefore not VIRTUE at all.

(5) *Self-reliance.*

Upon what Self may reliance be placed, when the Self of the moment that surveys and guides the Being is not stable, but ever withdraws and loses itself in another more deeply placed and of wider vision, and when the wisdom of today proves that of yesterday false, and will itself be proved false by the wisdom of tomorrow?

The intelligent but inexperienced Learner when approaching the practice of Self-reliance will inevitably find the foregoing, or a similar question, arising in his mind. To it an answer of a philosophic nature may be given, such as may satisfy the questioner, but one that comes through experience is always best when it can be obtained.

Let it be conceived that you and I, as Learner and Teacher, are in direct contact. You have come to me seeking instruction in the Art of Living, and I have shown you the way, in the manner exemplified in these lessons. Your mind is of the active, not passive, type, and you ponder deeply over all I have

said and taught, with results which I will assume to be as follows :

Part of my teachings you have accepted without question ; part you have rejected ; and still another part you have neither accepted nor rejected, but have put aside for future consideration. Can you say why you have passed these judgments ? You will reply, because instinct, reason, or intuition dictated them. Who and what are those authoritative powers to which you give those names ? You are compelled to admit that they are yourself, or aspects of Self. Ask them what authority they have to judge, and no reply will come, *for to question Authority is to slay it*. Ask now of the *Asker* whether he also does not think to enthrone himself as Judge, and he may murmur admission, and then die.

Thus in a few brief questions and answers you demonstrate the fact that Self is no fixed resting-place, but is rather an endless ladder which you mount step by step. As you tread each step you name it Self and *rely* upon it to support you, but you prove, as you leave it, that your reliance is not upon it, but upon a higher which it has helped you to reach.

And upon what, ultimately, does your reliance rest ? Not upon the step on which you stand, nor upon the next which you will reach, for both are *selves*, but upon the *Ladder* which is Self.

Reinforce this understanding by consideration of another aspect of our relationship. What in the first instance prompted you to come to me ? You had, as an intelligent man, some ideas of your own concerning life and how to live it, no matter whence derived. Those ideas were manifestations of a Self that directed your Being, and you obeyed their authority for a period. Then the light of another Self, that bade you come to me, dawned in your Being. You obeyed and came, but in coming the thought of profiting from my leading half veiled the light of your own inner leader.

Live out in imagination the steps you travelled to the point where now you stand and you will perceive Self-reliance constantly exhibited, not indeed by resting in any Self but by constantly quitting self for higher Self.

Honestly and persistently practised, Self-examination,

reinforced by the exercise of imagination, brings through Self-experience constant additions to knowledge. Before long you may learn a fact always distasteful to Beginners, and doubly distasteful to the ordinary student, that most of what is called reasoned or intuitional knowledge derives in reality from authority. Reason, you may assert, convinces you that what I place before you is Truth, yet in so asserting you unconsciously lay claim to knowledge which *I* do not possess. I do not know that my words are Truth. I know them only as *symbols* that point towards Truth—Truth that, even if I knew it, I could not express. Your acceptance of my words is not therefore acceptance of Truth, but only of an aspect of it, limited and conditioned by the instrument through which it comes, MYSELF. My words are but an expression of my limited Selfhood and in accepting them you accept *me*.

Give deep consideration to the hints I give—they are *hints* merely, and in no sense complete expositions. Study also the “*KEY*”.

“NOTHING IS FALSE ; NOTHING IS TRUE ; ALL THINGS THAT EXIST ARE BUT MASKS OF TRUTH ; ACCEPT NO THING ; REJECT NO THING ; LEARN THROUGH STUDY OF ALL, BUT ABOVE ALL LEARN FROM THE LEARNER.”

No interpretation of this aphorism is needed that you cannot readily and more profitably evolve for yourself. By acting always in accordance with it you will place yourself in union with the Everbecoming of Life, and will wake to the truth that in manifest Being there is no final arbiter, no enduring Self. And yet the more securely do you establish yourself in this attitude the more certainly do you identify yourself with a Self that is enduring, and that though ever changing remains for ever SELF. In ever relying upon that Self you exhibit Virtue and in no other way. It is not the SUPREME SELF, the ONE, for that ever retreats, but it is its Light in the worlds in which you live, its witness and its symbol. Rest in devotion in it and it will bear you on, until at last knowledge of THAT which you are becomes yours, of that infinite LIFE that EVER EXISTS in its EVERBECOMING.

Harmlessness, Truthfulness, Justice, and Purity when

practised bring you to Self-reliance, yet only when the latter is achieved do the other four become fully realized. Self-reliance is the universal solvent that separates false teaching from true, for the first leads away from it and the last leads towards it, and by that sign is their quality revealed. And yet, paradoxically as ever, to the Self-reliant there is not in the universe anything that is truly false and evil, for whatever the limitations of a thing may be it is a mode of experience which when assimilated leads towards knowledge.

"To the pure all things are pure" : evil exists not in any teaching however corrupt it may seem to be, nor does evil befall those who ignorantly or innocently accept it as truth, for to them it gives the experience they most need ; but evil does lie in wait for those who consciously, and for their own narrow purposes, follow any path ; and above all it awaits those who teach, and know their teachings to be false.

With practice of the Fifth Virtue will come realization of the fact that in all instances the Virtues condition one another. It is a highly important item of knowledge, and its many implications should be diligently followed out. Study and practice of the next Five Virtues (b), which enables the Aspirant to complete his first upward step, will reveal still more clearly the conditioning influences one upon another of all the Virtues. It is through your own living and thinking, ultimately, that all knowledge must come to you, and because this is so my comments upon the remaining Virtues will be limited to the simplest outlines I can compass, enough to make of each an unadorned signpost, and no more.

Charity-Harmlessness (1-6).

No true understanding of life is possible without a thorough grasp of the fact that all things in the phenomenal worlds are *bi-polar*. Everything is positive-negative, or, as some prefer to say, male-female. Although certain beings, things, and qualities are said to be male, and certain others female, it does not mean that the first are wholly positive and the second wholly negative, but merely that the polar aspect under which each is classified is predominant in its constitution. Thus every man has a feminine aspect and every woman a masculine aspect, and so

it is with all things, including the Virtues, both singly and in the mass. Every separate Virtue has its own positive and its own negative manifestation ; but in some Virtues the first is dominant and in others the last. Woman is the complement of man, and both are equally necessary for the continuation of the human race. Analogously, complementary Virtues are necessary for the continued manifestation of VIRTUE.

Harmlessness is a feminine or negative Virtue which in its most positive aspect manifests in *refusal* to do injury to anything, and in its most negative in *refusal* to permit injury to be done. It cannot create conditions for its own manifestation, but must remain dormant until evocative conditions are created for it or thrust upon it. Charity is the male complement of Harmlessness, and may be defined as an active will to increase the sum total of good in the world and diminish the sum total of evil. It creates the conditions which its complement requires, and without it Harmlessness would quickly vanish from the world.

In its own *male* aspect Charity exhibits itself in objective relief of suffering, and in all those philanthropic activities so prominent a feature of civilized life. Yet the Virtue thus manifest is obviously not true Charity, for its range is strictly limited and multitudes are in no position to exhibit it at all. It is in and through its own negative, or feminine aspect, that the real Charity receives universal manifestation. It subsists not in an executive Self, that apportions objective benefits to selected recipients, but in a Higher, inner Self that eternally gives of itself to Life, through whatsoever instruments or channels conditions place at its disposal : through sympathy, through understanding, through teaching that may lead others to Virtue. Of such a Self true Charity is but another name. Of it it may be truly said : it covers over not merely a multitude of sins, but all sin.

In average man, and perhaps more frequently still in those who profess to be virtuous without understanding Virtue, what passes as Charity is but a sorry parody of the true quality. Do we not constantly see what claims to be deep sympathy with pain and suffering existing side by side with desire to hurt and punish the cause of the evil ? "*Demon est Deus inversus*" ! This

mask of the Archangel Charity, shocked though its entertainers may be at the suggestion, is not the bridegroom of the White Virgin Harmlessness, but is the consort of her dark, earth-stained sister, the Permitter of Evil, negative Harmfulness. Do we not constantly see the true SELF, that everlastingly gives of itself to the whole Cosmos, cast out and crucified, and a mocking demon enthroned in its place and worshipped by ignorant man? There is no true Charity in the man who cannot give to the inflictor of suffering an understanding as perfect as the sympathy which he gives to the sufferer, nor can that man ever manifest the Virtue of true Harmlessness.

Contentment-Truthfulness (7-2).

"To express reality is to be TRUTHFUL, to accept it is to be CONTENT."

Such was the teaching of the ancient Hermetic Masters. Contentment is the feminine complement of the male Virtue Truthfulness. Neither can manifest except in conjunction with the other, nor can REALITY manifest without their united aid. Contentment, the true Virtue, differs subtly but profoundly from the attribute usually known by that name. Contentment as average man knows it may mean absence of ambition, passive acceptance of conditions, or prideful self-satisfaction, but true Contentment produces ambitious effort, active acceptance of conditions as steps, and no thought of Self otherwise than as a fleeting phase of Becoming. Ordinary man may regard the Disciple as discontented, for he strives ever for wider and wider consciousness, yet his discontent is not the human attribute but that DIVINE DISCONTENT of which the ancient sages spoke. He shares that attribute with LIFE, for the DIVINE DISCONTENT and the eternal BECOMING are but different names for one thing. Discontented man hates his conditions and battles against them, but by so doing he vitalizes them by attributing to them power to bind him. The Disciple in his DIVINE DISCONTENT rejoices in his conditions, uses them as steps in his ascent, and by turning their power to his own ends exhausts it and so annihilates them. Ordinary man finds contentment in rest, the Disciple in the ceaseless eternal motion of Becoming. Ordinary

man finds contentment in a single step, the Disciple in the Ladder of many steps. Human discontent means sorrowful consciousness of captivity. DIVINE DISCONTENT means Joy—joy in the knowledge that whatever is is good and that though it for ever changes it remains for ever good.

As already demonstrated in the Comments upon the Problem of Truthfulness, wholehearted acceptance of conditions is necessary to the manifestation of Truth. While Truth is veiled conditions hold the Self bound and captive. When Truth manifests conditions have become accepted friends and helpers, and from this comes the saying : "*The Truth shall make you free.*"

Discrimination—Justice (8-3).

Everywhere as we ascend the scale of manifested Life the complementary elements that unite and produce each *natural note* tend to lose their distinctive positive or negative characteristics, and to approximate more and more, one to the other, until at last they cease to be separate and merge into one *sound*. Thus though the Virtue of Justice is negative to Discrimination, its positive complement, it is much less definitely negative than are Harmlessness and Contentment. In its more everyday meaning Discrimination is a quality that enables a man to measure, weigh, select, or apportion out the ingredients or elements that are called for by the work he has in hand, yet unless he also possesses the attribute of Justice his Discrimination can have only a very limited manifestation. It has been said that Justice fashions the law which Discrimination executes, and that consequently they are but names given to the different poles of a single quality.

In the true or universal sense the Virtue of Justice is achieved by living in and with the Everbecoming of Life and Being. The fact of so living is made manifest outwardly when the man begins to act as a conscious co-worker with universal Nature, or as an agent of the LAW of LIFE ; and such activity is called Discrimination.

Justice and Discrimination, in their true character, are not susceptible of manifestation by you who are only in the act of taking the first step towards the Disciple's PATH ; but

you may approach them step by step, by applying as you learn it the Law of Virtuous living. A sustained will to see LIFE as a perfect whole will lead you steadily towards identification with true Justice, and a manifestation of the same will in your more outward life will carry you towards union with Discrimination.

Simplicity-Purity (9-4).

In the deepest, highest sense of the term, Simplicity implies a state of Being wherein the Self rests ever in the supreme SELF, and the Consciousness is therefore *single*, untainted by the shadow of ignorance, unclouded even for a moment by association with any more limited aspect of Being. Thus regarded, Simplicity is a purely negative Virtue, and can have no possible manifestation except through its executive complement, which is Purity. On the less exalted plane of the Learner it still remains purely negative, subsisting only in a Selfhood that ever withdraws into deeper Being. A Self thus centred is SIMPLE and manifests to the world in a Life and Being that is PURE.

Self-reliance-Self-surrender (5-10).

As they appear to the everyday human, or separate consciousness, the attributes of Self-reliance and Self-surrender are absolutely antithetical, and could not prove other than mutually destructive if manifested in one individual. Yet when contemplated by the Adept or Disciple whose consciousness is non-separate they present a very different appearance. Self-reliance is a wholly positive, or male, Virtue, and cannot therefore have any true manifestation of its own. Self-surrender is wholly negative, or female, and therefore, also, is incapable of manifesting. Together only, as eternally united complements, *wedded in heaven*, they manifest not as two but as one. Surrender of existing Self to Self-Everbecoming produces the living Virtue of Self-reliance. Reliance placed always upon Self-Everbecoming, and withdrawn from existing Self, produces the living Virtue of Self-surrender. Nothing more can or need be said.

Concluding Comments.

It is possible that the Beginner in these studies may complain that my comments upon the Virtues, and advice con-

cerning their practice, are not sufficiently full and detailed, and that I have slurred over many points with a remark that is vague or cryptic. Such is admittedly true, but what I have done I have done purposely. To relieve a pupil of the duty of thinking for himself is no part of the work of a teacher ; on the contrary, his main concern is, or should be, to compel the pupil to think and act for himself. If I have erred in the present lesson it is on the side of relieving the Learner to too great an extent of the necessity of using his own mind, not otherwise. The lesson, no matter how elaborated and extended, could never do more than stimulate the motion of thought in a particular direction, and that, I think, has been done, as fully as need be, by the outline I have given. Nothing remains therefore but to give a few additional items of advice and warning before bringing this lesson to a close.

(1). Do not imagine when you have gained an intellectual understanding of the explanations and instructions which this lesson contains that you have mastered it, for only then will real learning begin. The intellect can do no more than comprehend the *boundaries* of the field of experience that has been spread before you ; the Self has to enter that field and live in it in order to translate its substance into knowledge.

(2). Exercise the imagination daily in living out the Virtues in easily realized situations.

(3). In early stages of the exercise concentrate upon manifesting a single pair of the complementary Virtues. Later take others into consideration, paying special attention to the conditioning influences each exercises over each. In time you will realize that to manifest any one Virtue perfectly means to manifest all ten.

(4). A warning given needs, I think, to be reiterated, and more fully emphasized. It is improbable that you or any other Western student have reached the stage of studying seriously lessons such as these without some previous experience of other systems of occult or psychological training. You will consequently be aware that exercises in visualization, as they are often called, for the development of the imagination, are frequently advocated. Be warned ! If you intend to progress surely and safely upon the true Occult Way, avoid all such

practices. Imagination is one of the more powerful weapons or instruments which the Higher Self uses, or which it ought to use, to aid it towards freedom, but it is a weapon or instrument only, and nothing more. If the power of INTEREST (discussed in Lesson II) be focused in the instrument, and the intention be concentrated upon cultivating and perfecting it, the Self that should be moving into freedom will become bound by and identified with it. The true Occultist, knowing this, never centres Interest in the powers and faculties he uses, but always focuses it in *Becoming*. His higher Self, free and ever withdrawing, is the supreme power of his Being, and of it all other powers are but feeble parodies. The Aspirant who concentrates attention upon development of imagination, or of any other faculty, may fitly be compared to the pioneer who with an area of jungle to clear wastes his days in polishing his axe and in ornamenting its haft with curious carvings. Use therefore such imagination as you have at your disposal, but have no thought of strengthening it. As the Self becomes free and withdraws to higher and deeper spheres of Being, the instruments with which it works, *the legions of the lower selfhood*, will grow more effective and powerful, for they, being aspects of Itself, cannot but share its growing strength and freedom.

(5). Through steady practice of living out the Virtues in imagination a balanced outlook upon life will gradually, perhaps quickly, become established, and balance is the gate to freedom and wider vision.

(6). If the general conditions likely to prevail in a prospective experience are known, it will be found helpful to live it out in imagination beforehand, concentrating upon manifesting the Virtue or Virtues most appropriate. The majority of civilized persons do something of this nature, yet achieve little but expenditure of energy, the reason being that they lack the *Thought of Self* which the Learner has in the Virtue.

(7). A better use still can be made of this exercise in the re-creation of past experiences had unprofitably. Reshape them and live out in them such Virtue or Virtues as they call for, and to the extent that you succeed you will wear them out. Those haunting phantoms, remorse for unwise actions, sorrow for vanished pleasures, vain regrets for lost opportunities, and

their numerous kin, which plague and beset so many, are soon exorcized and destroyed for ever by these simple means.

(8). Finally, hold firmly in mind that the Virtues themselves are but instruments, and other than as such have no real meaning or value. They are simply focusing-points for the consciousness that enable the Energies of Being to be concentrated in the Self, and nothing more. The Occultist is in no way concerned with being "good" and "virtuous" as these terms are commonly understood : he is concerned only with finding freedom in his true Self. Good and Evil, Virtue and Vice, are equally valuable and equally without value for him. They are the Pairs of Opposites, and he lives neither in the one nor in the other, but in a union of the two, which is higher than either.

The Ancient One said :

If you voyage with the stream of True Waters you will reach six different ports, and these are their names : (1) Light, (2) Strength, (3) Peace, (4) Wealth, (5) Self, (6) Wisdom.

The Learner asked :

How shall I know the True Ports, O Father, since so many in the world bear the self-same names ?

The Ancient One said :

True Light lies hidden behind Giant Rocks, and its only approach is through the Caverns of Mind.

True Strength is encompassed by demons called Powers, and cannot be gained until they are slain.

True Peace is encircled by seething whirlpools, and can be entered only while Tempests rage.

True Wealth is enshrouded by Shadows called Possessions, and cannot be gained until they are scattered.

True Self is masked by countless reflections, and cannot be sighted until they are washed away.

True Wisdom has no shadows, and is found in Sunlit Waters when all other ports are passed.

(The Sayings of the Ancient One.)

LESSON IV

BALANCE

ASKED by his pupils to explain how, if at all, the actions of Nature differ from those of the Elements, a Master of the Mystery Schools of the lost Mediterranean world is recorded as having replied :

"The Mother lives by eternally restoring a balance that her Children eternally destroy."

As it is in the Macrocosm so it is in the Microcosm.

The Disciple lives in the Everbecoming by perpetually establishing in the *Self* an equipoise of Being that the *selves* perpetually disturb.

No matter how variously they may define them, the objects of all true Disciples are one, and that identity may most fitly be expressed by the single word BALANCE. One Disciple may declare that he seeks knowledge of and possession of the Soul, and another that he desires to lose himself in service of LIFE, yet their aims are not opposed. To find and possess the Soul is to assert a supreme individuality, and to surrender identity to universal LIFE is to sacrifice the Soul, yet the acts are not two, but one only. Both are practical assertions of *freedom*. The Self must be free before it can take possession of the treasure of the Soul. The Self must be free before it can choose its service. LIFE is the manifestor of the Soul, and LIFE alone may possess that treasure. He who possesses the Soul is one with LIFE. He who sacrifices the Soul yields up his possession to himself.

The formula "I AM" is the symbol of the Free Self, for in it is expressed Consciousness of Being unfettered by any of the limitations of individuality. But Self is not *created* free : it is *born* into freedom ; and only through the agency of a Body

that has reached full development and become *still* is birth possible at all. In the perfected Body, as in a mirror, "I", the Self, sees itself reflected and calls the image "I". This is the *Soul : the Image of Self reflected in a Body become perfect.*

No true Image of the Self, no clear Vision of the Soul, nothing more than a distorted form or a throng of flitting shadows, is ever seen in the mirror of an imperfect Body. Therefore it is only at the moment of completion of any cycle of growth of a bodily instrument that the Vision of the Soul is seen. And then it is seen only to vanish again in the moment of sight, for a Body completely developed is *motionless*, and without motion there can be no manifestation.

"The Body becomes perfect ; the Vision shines forth and vanishes with the Mirror that contained it ; the Image is lost, but the Reality lives on in the Perceiver now born into knowledge of Itself."

To those capable of appreciating the significance of the foregoing symbolic exposition it will now become readily apparent that the finding of the Soul, and the surrender of individuality to LIFE, are but different terms used to describe a single event, an event not susceptible of description by either alone, and in its reality essentially indescribable. Apparent also may become something of the meaning of sayings such as : *"He that loseth his life shall find it."* *"You will enter the light but you will never touch the flame."*

To Beginners of less experience the significance of what I say will naturally be less apparent, and they should therefore take the exposition simply as the outline of a *symbol*, to which, as wider knowledge comes, they themselves may add colour and detail. As a symbol also it serves as a very appropriate text for the philosophic expositions and practical instructions that form the body of the present lesson.

The Soul and its analogues. (a) The Step.

"As is the Inner so is the Outer ; as is the Great so is the Small ; as it is Above so it is Below : there is but ONE LIFE and LAW."

In those words Hermes, Thrice-great Master, places in the hands of his Disciples the first and greatest of the Keys to Knowledge. The LIFE is not absent from any point in space,

and the LAW is manifest in the least significant motion of the least significant being if we who observe it possess eyes that can see and minds that can comprehend. Regard that most readily observable of all phenomena, physical action, and note what lessons it can teach. Assume that the word MOTION is the name of the SPIRIT (LIFE), and conceive that you are seeking to know it, in the only way it may be known, in an individual form called SOUL. Now regard the body at rest : MOTION does not manifest through it, but should it move from where it stands to an adjacent spot MOTION will manifest through it in the form of a *Step*. Let it be assumed that desire to move arises. Bodily energies then become active in two opposing ways. First there is a stir of energy of a *positive* or outgoing character that causes a foot to be raised and advanced, thus throwing the body out of balance, and giving it a forward and downward motion that would end in a fall if not checked. But opposing energy of a *negative* or indrawing character does check it by swinging the centre of gravity of the body into a new position, causing the raised foot to be placed in a fresh resting-place, the other to be brought forward to join it, and thus restoring balance.

The life-course, or full cycle of life from birth to death, of an entity called *Step* is exhibited in the various movements described. Throughout the existence of the *Step* MOTION was manifest through it in a succession of phases or aspects of itself, but not until the *Step* was fully taken—not until the exact moment of its completion—was the *Idea* of *Step*, as a specific or individual reflection of MOTION, wholly and clearly known. This *Idea* of a *Step*, this *Motion-of-a-Step*, as I may call it, for lack of a better term, is the SOUL of which you are in search. With completion of the *body*—the physical manifestation of the *Step*—the Soul became fully known, then with the mirror that revealed it it vanished again as a concrete vision, but it lives on as an abstract *Idea* with which, henceforth, MOTION is identified.

(b) *The Cell.*

The most perfect analogy of the evolution of Soul which this material world affords is furnished by the development

from out of the single protoplasmic cell of the physical body of man. Appreciation of it may be less readily gained than is appreciation of the illustration of the *Step*, but expanded knowledge will amply repay the Learner for any effort he expends in achieving it. New fields of thought will open up before him, yielding, when explored, knowledge of a hitherto unsuspected kind concerning the nature of man and the world.

The life-cycle of the physical body of man (and of every being) begins when male and female elements unite and produce the fertilized cell. Life in the form of positive or outgoing, and negative or indrawing, Energy now wakes in what was hitherto a dark inert sphere. Associated, as of necessity it is, with the life Energies, the centre of gravity, which I shall designate the *Life-Centre*, of the cell now moves from its static state towards the positive pole of the awakened Being, and the latter then proceeds to manifest its life positively as a seeker of and intaker of nutriment. In due course this positive manifestation reaches its limit, whereupon negative Energy becomes dominant; associated with it the *Life-Centre* swings back, pendulum-like, towards the negative pole of the Being, and the cell manifests its life negatively in assimilation of the food taken in. Thus the *Swing of Being*, as the manifestation described has aptly been called, begins, and continues throughout the development of the cell-body, of which development it is at once the cause and the manifestation, until the sphere, once dark and inert, becomes alive throughout. Then the *Swing of Being* ceases; the Life-Centre becomes balanced and still; positive and negative Energies both find a focus in it, and become simple *Power*.

Instantly with its attainment of full development the unicellular entity ceases to exist, and one that is bi-cellular appears in its place—in other words the simple cell divides, and the growing body becomes one of two cells. The balanced Life-Centre of the more primitive entity vanishes with it, to reappear instantly in the *Swing of Being* of its more complex successor. And yet though the primary Life-Centre and the body it animated have in a sense disappeared, actually they have not done so, for not merely do they live on in the more

evolved form but they also continue existence in two aspects, in the shape of the two new cells, on the same primitive plane as before.

In the bi-cellular entity the *Swing of Being* begins and continues exactly as in the primary cell. Again, with full development of the body, it ceases ; the Life-Centre finds an equilibrium, the bi-cellular body vanishes as a separate entity and is replaced by a quadri-cellular body, each cell of which is identical in constitution with the original cell, and occupies exactly the same primitive place in the scale of being. Thus by continuous cell-division, and continuous transfer of the Life-Centre from more simple to more complex bodies, the whole body of man is built up.

Now, the Life-Centre in the cell, and in every body successively evolved from it, is a true analogue of the Soul of Man. It would not be wrong to call it the Soul in embryo, though as Soul it may not be known in those primitive manifestations, for no awakened Self exists on the planes to which they belong.

When applying, or attempting to apply, this analogy, let it be borne in mind that though the original unicellular body, and succeeding multicellular bodies, are all lost and absorbed in the developed body of the man, yet none is truly lost at all, for they continue to exist as living aspects of the Being to which, by loss of their own separate identities, they have given birth.

Birth and rebirth of the Soul.

To make clear the significance of the analogy of the cell and its evolution it now becomes necessary to give a more detailed picture than has yet been given in these lessons of that phase of **EVERBECOMING** called Man. To this end I shall outline a conception of man which will differ, or appear to differ, in many ways from those favoured by other exponents of the Occult Philosophy. Learners, however, must not take this as implying that I think the views of other authorities wrong, and my own view the only one that is right. Arguments, which are not infrequent among students, and even among teachers of Occultism, as to whether man is a compound of ten, seven, four, three, or any other number of different elements or

Principles, are not merely useless but highly obstructive. They imply either forgetfulness of, or ignorance of, the truth—that in life there is but one changeless and permanent Principle, and that is LIFE itself. The so-called Principles of man, whether regarded separately or in combination, are not realities, but simply aspects of LIFE—*expedients* that have a value in that they aid in carrying the mind *towards* reality. Each of the Principles of man, whether it is one of seven, or of four, or of three, has a meaning and value *relative* to the conception which it and its companions combine to produce, nothing more. That conception is itself but a mere relativity, one of a host of *symbols*, valuable in as much as it *suggests* reality, but in no sense the reality itself.

When therefore I declare that three Elements combine to produce that particular aspect of **EVERBECOMING LIFE** known as **Man**, let it not be thought that I am contradicting those who teach that the human Principles are seven or four in number. I am simply approaching the conception I design to create by means of what I conceive to be the most appropriate steps. The Learner will find little difficulty in appreciating the picture I present if he takes care to clear his mind of preconceptions, but should he neglect to do that he will gain nothing from the study but confusion of thought.

The Elements of Human Manifestation.

Three Elements, each an analogue of one of the unconditioned **ELEMENTS** of the **DIVINE TRINITY**, combine to produce the manifestation of **LIFE** called **Man**, and may be tabulated thus :

- | | | | |
|------|--|---|--|
| (1). | A Consciousness Element represented by | . | The Self. |
| (2). | An Energy Element represented by | . | <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: top; margin-left: 10px;"> <div>(a) Bodily life-forces.</div> <div>(b) Lower Emotions, Desires, Passions, Impulses.</div> <div>(c) Thoughts, Imaginations.</div> <div>(d) Higher Emotions. Spiritual Instincts, Inspirations, Intuitions.</div> </div> |
| (3). | A Substance Element represented by | . | "The Sphere of Ignorance." |

Comments.

(1). *The Self.* The Self is simple Consciousness of *Being* and needs no further definition.

(2). *Energy.* Like all things in the phenomenal Universe Energy in its manifestations is both positive and negative. In the first aspect it carries the Being into outgoing action in search of *experience*, the food upon which it lives and nourishes its growth. In the second its action is ingoing, exhibited by the Being in assimilation of the fruits of its positive activity.

As a Principle Energy has no form, nor has it form in unselfconscious Beings. In man when not associated with the Self it is formless ; when associated with Self it assumes forms of various kinds, some nebulous, some definite.

(a) Though their existence is recognized, Physical Energies, generally called life-forces, do not impinge upon Consciousness as forms. They belong to Spheres of Being that lie below the Sphere of Self.

(b) Lower Emotions, passions, instincts, impulses are sometimes cognized as indeterminate forms and sometimes not. They belong to the lower sub-planes of the Sphere of Self, and represent primitive aspects of selfhood associated with Energy.

(c) Thoughts and Imaginations are always cognized as forms, definite if the individuality is well developed, indefinite if not. They belong to the plane of the Self, and represent aspects of Self associated with Energy.

(d) Higher Emotions, intuitions, inspirations, and so on are sometimes cognized as forms and sometimes not. Whether cognized or not cognized, and whether the forms they assume are definite or nebulous, depends wholly upon the development of the individual. They belong to the higher sub-planes of the Sphere of Self, and are energies associated with aspects of Consciousness, which, though lofty, are undeveloped and unstable.

Form, therefore, manifests when Self associates with Energy and uses it as a means of linking itself with Substance. Consequently, *relative to humanity*, there are no forms in the Cosmos outside the Sphere of the Self.

To the foregoing assertion many will doubtless take exception. Is not (it may be asked) the whole Cosmos alive, since it is

the expression of an infinite LIFE? Is not every point in space a Life—a living Being? Is not (as indeed I who give these lessons have taught elsewhere) the whole of space thronged with Beings, some infinitely higher and some infinitely lower than human beings? Is not what I now assert a contradiction of universal Occult teaching?

The answer is that the teachings of all true Occultists are the same, and that whatever contradictions they may furnish are due not to the teachings themselves but to *the interpretations put upon them by students*. Beings do exist both above and below the Sphere of Self, but not until that Sphere expands to include them can man perceive them as *forms*. All Beings are triune in character (Consciousness-Energy-Substance), and Consciousness determines their Sphere. In their triune character they cannot quit their own plane and descend or rise, as the case may be, into the human Sphere. They can (as they do) impinge upon it in a single aspect—the dynamic, or Energy, aspect—that is all.

Consider what happens in Consciousness when we read the words of some ancient and lofty Scripture. An impulse which we call spiritual moves us, and lofty thoughts may take form in the mind. But what is it that moves us? Is it the *Being* of the Teacher? No, not in his triune character, but as an Energy which takes form as it associates with the Self. An image of the Teacher may form in the mind and affect the responsive student powerfully, as that of the Christ or the Buddha affects the devotee. But is that image the Teacher himself? No: apart from the Self it has no existence—it is a *thought*, like all others.

Elemental Beings, demons, angels, gods exist in countless hierarchies throughout the Cosmos, and the Energies they emanate affect us unceasingly, but their true forms our human consciousness can never know. To know them the Self would have to transfer itself to their Spheres, or expand its own to include them. *Relative* to humanity, therefore, it is true to say that the Cosmos is populated only by blind forces; but let the Learner remember (lest he stumble upon another contradiction) that an *aspect* of a Being may be blind, though the Being itself be supremely conscious.

My aim in giving this teaching (which is, as is the greater part of these lessons, suggestive rather than clearly expository) is to provide a wholesome corrective of the many disorders that invade the minds of Beginners through study of "popular" works on Occultism. Such works, while professing to free the minds of students from the authority of the personal, extra-Cosmic God, and from that of those who act in his name, bind them all the more surely by imposing upon them hosts of angels and elementals of forms and attributes equally anthropomorphic.

No *human* eye has ever perceived angel or elemental. It may perceive a form not native to this world, but the man's own Self associated with some powerful or subtle Energy will have created it: in other words it will be merely an objectified thought. Similarly, the memory of an experience had on another plane will not be an image of the experience itself, but an Energy drawn from it, and given form by the Waking Self. Seek for the implications of these teachings, and cease to concern yourself with other worlds and their denizens. (A)

(3). *The Sphere of Ignorance*. The term *Field of Experience*, used frequently in these lessons, should be understood to mean all material circumstances, thoughts, and emotions that *condition* Self in its search for knowledge, whether the sphere of search is a life-span or the happening of a moment. All that is wholly *unknown* within any Field of Experience is *The Sphere of Ignorance*. The conditions, the Field of Experience, delimit the *Sphere of Ignorance* and are forms, embodied Energies, but the Sphere itself is *Substance*. It has been called *The Dark Sphere*, the *Body of Night*, and similar names, because it is dark, inert, unlit by Consciousness, unmoved by Energy. It may be a difficult concept to grasp because unfamiliar, but if a true understanding of the process of Soul-evolution is desired an effort must be made to appreciate it. We are so accustomed to thinking of the physical body and other objective phenomena as substantial that we are apt to forget that *Substance* (that which stands under, or *underlies*, manifestation) is not Matter, but one of the three metaphysical Elements of Being, the negative of *Consciousness*, and therefore in itself unknown and unknowable. Matter is embodied Energy, not *Substance*, but

Self linked by Energy with *Substance*. When Self conjoined with Energy enters the Dark Sphere, which is Substance, living forms arise out of the association, and continue to arise until the sphere becomes populated, its denizens forming new conditions added to those that already delimit it. Within these new conditions exploration continues, until at last all are united and harmonized into a living *Body of Knowledge*.

Between the *Sphere of Ignorance* at the moment when Self linked with Energy enters it and the cell at the moment of its fertilization there is a perfect analogy, and throughout all that thereafter eventuates this analogy holds good. As the Life-Centre wakes in the dark body of the cell, so does an embryonic Soul (Self linked by Energy with *Substance*) wake in the Sphere of Ignorance. As the *Swing of Being* operates in the cell, so does it operate in the Dark Sphere ; Self associated with positive Energy moves in pursuit of experience, and associated with negative Energy is active in assimilation of the fruits of experience. As the cell ultimately reaches full development, and the Energies active in its growing become focused in the balanced Life-Centre, so does the Dark Sphere develop into the *Body of Knowledge*, and so do the Energies become focused in the Soul. As the Life-Centre, freed from the *Swing of Being*, vanishes, to reappear in the *Swing of Being* of a more evolved body, so does the Soul freed by knowledge vanish into its Reality, the Self, with it, again, to involve itself in exploration of a new and wider *Sphere of Ignorance*.

Thus may the analogy be pursued ; and in pursuing it much that is dark may be transmuted into light. Bear in mind that my design here as elsewhere is not to inform, but rather to *delimit* for you *Spheres of Ignorance* that can be made to yield much knowledge.

Balancing the Forces.

I turn now to consideration of a more objective and practical means of freeing the Self by balancing the Powers of Being. Begin by preparing a table in the form illustrated in Fig. 1. Now select any recent experience that may have impressed you and recall how you bore yourself while undergoing it, noting as accurately as possible the nature of the Energies by

which you were moved, and the resulting effects in Consciousness, in the manner illustrated in the following example :

This morning, which was wet and cold, as I was passing through the city to my office I noticed a bedraggled woman, holding a deformed child in her arms, standing by the kerb, begging furtively for alms from the passing pedestrians, who hurried on their way indifferently. Moved by a sudden wave of

FIGURE 1.

EXPERIENCE		RULING FORCES		
No. Description	Higher Emotions	Thoughts	Lower Emotions	Objective Conditions
1. Beggar, child	(c) Compassion	(b) Realization of Misery (d) Natural Duty (e) Self- sacrifice (f) Natural Duty (g) Reasoned Under- standing	(g) Fellow- feeling (h) Dissatisfac- tion with Self (i) Rebellion against Cir- cumstances	(a) Beggar, child. Wet, Cold, In- different Crowd

Compassion to relieve such pitiable distress by any means in my power, I plunged my hand in my pocket and brought forth all the money I had with me—a ten-shilling note, three or four shillings, and some copper coins—and pressed forward, intent upon giving the woman the entire sum. Before I could reach her, however, the crowd thrust me aside, and obscured my view of her. As I waited for passage a feeling as of waking from a day-dream took possession of me, and at once my mind became strangely active. A vision of my own circumstances rose in imagination. I am a poor man with an uncertain income derived from journalistic work. I have a young wife and infant

child, both in indifferent health. Our home is not favourably situated, and did circumstances permit I should for the benefit of my family move to a better locality. Ten shillings is a sum of considerable importance to me, enough to enable me to procure my dear ones certain small comforts which to them are necessities. They will suffer if I give this money away, and to have them suffer is a thing I cannot permit. I, also, am accustomed to small indulgences, not strictly necessary to my well-being, but in the absence of which my work is done less efficiently. Had I but myself to consider I should cheerfully sacrifice my own comfort for the sake of others whose needs are so much greater, but wife and child must come before all others, and their welfare would certainly be affected did my capacity as a wage-earner decline.

Thus I thought, and replacing the note in my note-case, and the coins in my pocket, was about to proceed upon my way, when a break in the stream of pedestrians gave me another view of the beggar. Can I not, came the thought, make some sacrifice for the relief of such misery? I could, I decided, spare a shilling, a considerable sum relative to my means. I moved to the kerb, meaning to give the woman the coin, but was jostled off the pavement by the crowd and narrowly escaped being struck by a passing car. I might have been killed! I thought as I recovered myself. The picture of my wife and child, and of the condition to which they might, if I were dead, be reduced (perhaps as wretched as that of the creatures before me), rose in my imagination. I thrust my hand in my pocket again and drew forth all the coins it contained. Hurriedly I pressed them into the outstretched palm of the woman and turned and rushed quickly away. Confused emotions shook me as I went: satisfaction at having done a charitable deed was quickly displaced by dissatisfaction with myself for my impulsiveness, and that by a surge of rebellious anger against the social state that allowed such distress as I had witnessed to exist. Then as I reached my office the emotional storm abated, my thinking mind assumed control, and reason showed me how childish my feelings were. Regret for an action done was foolish waste of energy, which should be better employed in steadying me to

endure its consequences. Greater foolishness was rebellion against conditions, which are as they are as a result of centuries of slow evolution, and can only be rectified gradually, no matter what the will of those involved in them.

Having thus reassembled the details of my experience, I next begin to identify its chief items and classify the forces by which I was moved. The spectacle of the beggar was unquestionably the first of the powers that stirred me. In the table I have prepared (Fig. 1), under the heading Objective Conditions I enter: (a) "*Beggar—Child—Wet—Cold—Indifferent Crowd*". With the sight came mental appreciation of its meaning, and I enter in the Thought column (b) "*Realization of Misery*". Under Higher Emotions I enter (c) "*Compassion*". The series of thoughts concerning my dependants and my own circumstances I place also in the Thought column, grouped together under the generic name of (d) "*Natural Duty*". The thought of some sacrifice of my own needs came in response to another glimpse of the woman and child, and accordingly I place (e) "*Self-sacrifice*" under the head of Thought. Escape from the car is answered by another thought of the same order as (d), so I make a second entry of (f) "*Natural Duty*". Then followed the emotional identification of those who form the chief features of my own life-conditions with the beggar and her child, and my wholly unthinking gift of a much larger sum than I could afford. I give this impulse the generic name of *Fellow-feeling*, and enter (g) "*Fellow-feeling*" under the head of Lower Emotions. In the same column I note the negative emotions that stirred me as I hurried away, (h) "*Dissatisfaction with Self*", and (i) "*Rebellion against Circumstances*", and conclude my entries with (j) "*Reasoned Understanding*".

Fig. 1 shows the result of the analysis. Many more details could be added, but those given are sufficient.

I now prepare another table (Fig. 2) to which, according to the particular order to which they belong, and according to whether they represent positive or negative Forces, I transfer the entries made in Fig. 1. I have now before me a ready and most instructive means of studying the Powers that moved me throughout this experience, and of learning how they may be controlled and turned into useful servants. As a Beginner in the

practice you will not immediately perceive the implications of all that the analysis reveals. I shall therefore continue to regard the experience as my own and will indicate a few of the more

FIGURE 2.

EXPERIENCE : Beggar and Child

NEGATIVE POWERS	BALANCED POWER	POSITIVE POWERS
Higher Emotions	Spiritual (Free) Self	Higher Emotions
	<i>None awake</i> Thought (b) is unbalanced by Emotion (c)	(c) <i>Compassion</i>
Thoughts	Thinking (Free) Self	Thoughts
(b) Realization of Misery (d) Natural Duty (1) (f) Natural Duty (2) (j) Reason : understanding	Self <i>balanced</i> and freed by Thought (d) and Emotion (c) Self unbalanced by (f) associated with (a) (Escape from (a) and Thought (j) restores BALANCE)	(c) and (d) produce Free-willed Thought (e) Self-sacrifice
Lower Emotions	Desire (Unfree) Self. (Personal, Separate)	Lower Emotions
(i) Rebellion against Circumstances (h) Dissatisfaction with Self	Always identified with Positive or Negative Lower Emotion	Thought (f) and Conditions (a) lead to (g) "Fellow-feeling"
CONDITIONS	OBJECTIVE SELF	CONDITIONS
(a) (Acting Negatively)	Associates with Conditions	(a) Beggar and Child : Wet ; cold ; indifferent crowd (Acting Positively)

important lessons to be learned from it when treated as illustrated.

Looking over my entries in Fig. 2 I note at once that the first of the various Forces that stirred my Being is a particular set of Conditions, of which the beggar and her child are the

chief items : Entry (a). By this entry an important law, upon which later in the lesson I shall comment at greater length, is revealed.

Into the *Sphere of Ignorance* delimited by *Conditions (a)* the Self, the Perceiver, enters, and with the first fruits of its outgoing swings upon a current of negative Energy inward and upward, and assumes in Consciousness the form of the thought : *Realization of Misery (b)*. Now, Energy, though its movement is perceived in the form of the *Swing of Being*, does not in actuality move thus, pendulum-like, but in a cyclic course. From its negative association with Self it continues inward and upward in its formless character into *Deep Being*, and in the same formless character re-enters the *Sphere of Self* on the positive side, and in association with the Self moves in various positive forms into outward expression. This is clearly indicated in Fig. 2, for immediately succeeding *Thought (b)* comes the Higher Emotion, *Compassion (c)*, demonstrating that some results not perceived in forms arising out of the contact of Self with *Conditions (a)* have been swept up beyond the realm of the Thinking Self into the plane of the Spiritual Self, and there coming into association with the return current of Energy have taken form as the positive Higher Emotion (c). Arising from this understanding are many important implications : *search for them ! (B)*

Now, in Beings in which no Self is yet awake Energy moves constantly upon a smooth, uninterrupted cyclic course, exhibiting itself outwardly in whatever form of positive action conditions call for, and inwardly in unconscious assimilation of the results accruing from the action ; but in man the Self intervenes and causes, or appears to cause, many forms of irregularity in the flow. Fig. 2 demonstrates this fact. *Compassion (c)* (an association of positive Energy with a lofty but undeveloped aspect of Self), if it had had a free course, uninterrupted by any intrusion of the Thinking Self, would have swept me out, perhaps through some nebulous Mental-Emotional form, into parting with all the money in my possession to the beggar. The reactions of the normal man whom impulse such as this has swept into irrational action may easily be imagined. But assuming that no negative, reflective

Self interrupted the ingoing stream of effects arising from the action, these would in due time be brought home to me painfully in the shape of new personal Objective Conditions—in the intensified sufferings of my wife and child and in my own impaired efficiency.

From this lesson, the truth of which needs not to be emphasized, it would appear that *Compassion*, notwithstanding its reputed, and indeed actual, lofty character, is in reality nothing more than the half-blind response of an infant Self to special Conditions. Without the conditioning influence of a stable and developed Thinking Self Compassion would reduce the man to the condition of a loving, sensitive child.

With me, in this experience, *Compassion* (c) is permitted no free passage into positive manifestation. The Objective Conditions (a) that excited it are shut out for a moment by the crowd, and the subjective impression of them that lingers in the form of *Realization of Misery* (b) is associated by the Thinking Self with my own main Conditions of life, of which wife and child are the central landmarks. Into the Conditions thus visualized, which are the Delimitators of the *Sphere of Ignorance* which is my whole life, the outgoing *Force of Compassion* (c) is naturally and inevitably drawn, and from the ensuing association emerges the powerful negative realization—the Thought Force which I call generically *Natural Duty* (d)—with the result that my Central, or Thinking, Self becomes *balanced* and, for the moment, freed from the power of the initial Conditions (a).

When Conditions (a) become objectively apparent again, it is a balanced Thought-Self that responds to them, and it does so, in a definite, willed way, by deciding by means of a certain *sacrifice* to dissipate them, as far as it is possible to do so. (*Self-sacrifice* (e).) This thought (e) is an expression of positive Free Will, possible only to a Self awake and *balanced* on its own plane, but which at the same time elects to give forth such measure of itself as the Conditions confronting it demand. Here you may perceive an analogue of the highest law of Self-conscious Being.

Were my Ruling Self better developed, and stabilized in my rightful *Sphere of Ignorance*, my life—which is equivalent to

saying, were my awareness of Natural Duty (*d*) more powerful—the experience would have ended then and there with an unemotional gift of the shilling. But the analysis reveals that my balance of Self is not certain. The secondary experience of being pushed off the pavement, and the thought of the consequences that might result from my death, produce the second Thought of Natural Duty (*f*). This, which is a sub-plane thought, part thought and part emotion—an apprehension that the power of Conditions (*a*) may compel me to abandon Duty—throws Self out of balance and into a whirl. I have a confused Consciousness that those compelling, threatening Conditions (*a*) must be dissipated at any cost. Between them and negative realization of my own Life-Conditions Self swings rapidly, with the result that wife and child become identified with beggar and child. The Lower Emotion I call Fellow-feeling (*g*) possesses me, and impelled by it I break the power of Conditions (*a*) by a gift much larger than I can afford. *Fellow-feeling*, it now appears, is never really feeling for another, but for Self, which strives to demolish *Conditions* of which the other person is merely a Delimitator.

The gift made, the chain of Conditions broken, I manifest my dim unselfconscious awareness of freedom gained in my hurried departure from the scene of my experience. Then the current of negative Energy laden with the results extracted from the experience begins to rise within my Sphere of Self. Dissatisfaction with Self (*h*) and Rebellion against Circumstances (*i*) may perhaps seem to be untypical emotions in the circumstances, but in actual fact they are wholly typical. They are merely aspects of the instinctive hatred which primitive Being universally entertains towards that which has limited its freedom.

Reasoned Understanding (*j*) completes this cycle of experience, so far as we have it to observe, and restores balance to the Self. Whether it is a true balance giving the Self final freedom relative to the Conditions transcended is not revealed by the analysis, and cannot be ascertained until the obvious residue that remains unassimilated, and that passes over into the main *Sphere of Ignorance* in the shape of diminished means of satisfying my own, and perhaps my dependents', needs, has

been fully experienced. If I can meet this residual experience, stably balanced in the Self, and deal with it with conscious will, then I shall have freedom, henceforth, from the power of Conditions such as have been depicted. I shall have found the Soul, relative to them, in a balanced Self, and that balance will give me freedom.

Actual exercises such as this I have sketched will be found of immense help in balancing and freeing the Self relative to any set of circumstances not fully experienced.

Let it be borne in mind, as the analysis itself reveals, that Forces of a lofty impersonal character, to which the generic name of Compassion may be given, are constantly pouring from the Spiritual Planes, and from beyond, into the Plane of Thought, in response to the call of Conditions, and urging the Self into positive expression. If it fails to bring them to a focus, or balance upon its own plane, it will always be liable to be swept outward by them into unbalanced action in the manner already fully illustrated. While it is so ruled it remains a prisoner, and can neither rise to higher reaches in its own Sphere or pass to Spheres higher still, nor yet express itself positively in *True-willed* action. Its task must always be that of establishing and maintaining a balance, and the one sure means of doing this is found in the Thought-Power of NATURAL DUTY. In the Exercise I have been considering I have shown the balancing power of Natural Duty, though there the Thought was not fully developed and controlled. To develop and use it is the immediate work before you, and not until it is done can you take a higher step.

From this it may be realized how important is the study and practice of the VIRTUES, since in it the keynote is Natural Duty. The present lesson and exercise is no substitute for that study and practice, but only a means of reinforcing it and of testing its results.

Notes on Conditions.

As already said elsewhere in this lesson, Conditions are not the *Sphere of Ignorance*. It is *Substance* ; they are *Powers*, like all other Powers positive and negative in character. They have been called Delimitators, for they determine the place and

scope of the Sphere of Ignorance ; Teachers and Monitors, for they point to the unknown and whisper to Self that there it may find and know itself. They speak as itself, and Self goes to them as to itself in every aspect that may link itself with Energy. They are Compellers of action, and Distributors of rewards of action. They are the Lords of the Powers, yet they are the subjects, or manifestations, of other Lords of whom more will be said in another lesson. In no way can the Self destroy or escape their influence except *by balancing it against itself*. This it can do, because as they attract they also repulse ; and the way to do it is that taught in the precept : "*Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.*" Use their own power to destroy them. When attracted by and involved in any set of Conditions, throw yourself wholeheartedly into the task of experiencing them to the utmost. The results that accrue from this positive activity will take form as negative Powers and will bear you away from the thrall of the Monitors, leaving them but empty shells.

The foregoing advice applies first and foremost to those major Conditions that delimit the *Sphere of Ignorance* which is the whole of an earth-life, but it holds good also as regards any minor set of Conditions that may have definitely gripped the Self, not merely attracted some wandering aspect of it. To be able to carry it out obviously implies that Self has gained a certain development, and knows what balance is, for the action is a *willed* action. The law of work is taught in precepts such as, "*Love Life, for he is the Great Teacher ; but love Death also, for he is the other Self of Life who alone can teach you nothing.*"

That *Sphere of Ignorance* which is the whole life is delimited by certain Conditions, but it is not simple in character ; it is itself compounded of a host of lesser *Spheres of Ignorance*, each with its own Delimiters. Unbalance of Self results when any lesser set of Conditions, acting in isolation from the others, distracts the attention of the Self from the lifework as a whole. To counterbalance and destroy such rebellious Monitors give heed always to the call of the Ruling Guides, and that call always takes form in the Thought of *Natural Duty*.

To this advice it may be objected that the whole of life cannot be seen, and that what Natural Duty may be, at any

given time, cannot be certainly known. This is true, but it is by no means necessary that the whole of life should be seen and known comprehensively in order to discern where Natural Duty lies. In the life of every man there are certain Monitors that tower high above all others, and are always indicators of, or symbols of, the true *Sphere of Ignorance*. In the illustration we have been considering wife and child are such Chief Monitors. Others take the form of the laws of one's country, the established code of orderly social life, universal moral standards (not mere civilized conventions, which are but minor monitors), and so forth. But in practice it is wholly unnecessary to go far afield in search of Guides. You will find it a most profitable exercise to devote ten minutes of each day for some weeks, or even months, to the task of tracing out the influences that ramify from those symbols of Natural Duty, wife and child. First amazement, and then illumination, will become yours when you discover through your own experience their enormous, almost limitless, balancing power. The thoughtless may think that to centre attention in mere duty to one's family would be to manifest a narrow selfishness, and so it may be for *them*; but this work is not for those who are unable or unwilling to think: it is for those who have eyes capable of seeing, ears capable of hearing, and minds capable of comprehending. Search out the inner meaning of those words of a great Teacher: "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these . . . ye have done it unto ME.*" (C)

Figure 3. Comments.

Before bringing this lesson to a conclusion let me direct attention to Fig. 3. In it are shown three planes of consciousness—the Initiate, the Neophyte, and the Personal, Separate, or Desire Consciousness; and upon each of these, the Self freed, relatively speaking, through a balance established between the polar Energies with which it associates.

The freedom which the *Desire Self* appears to have is illusionary. Personal Man is wholly the slave of the Monitors. He imagines that he can exercise Free Will because he is able to declare: "I may if I wish go into this form of activity, and I may if I wish leave that." But in fact he goes not out, neither

does he withdraw through the action of any *will* of his own, but merely in association with the purblind Powers of the Emotional Plane which the Monitors invoke or evoke. They call, and their power manifests in the primitive Sphere of Self, in the form of positive *Attraction towards Conditions*, and takes the Self out into objective activity. Again the Monitors com-

FIGURE 3.
COUNTERBALANCING FORCES.

NEGATIVE	FREE : BALANCED	POSITIVE
INTUITION	INITIATE CONSCIOUSNESS	INSPIRATION
Comprehension	<i>Spiritual Self</i> Manifests in True-willed Action	Compassion
True Reasoned Thought	Neophyte Consciousness	Reasoned Motive
Understanding of Natural Duty	<i>True Thinking Self</i> Manifests in Responsible Action	Will to Serve
Emotional Satiety	Personal Consciousness	Emotional Appetite
Disgust with Conditions	<i>Desire Self</i> Manifests in Irresponsible or Selfish Intentions	Attraction towards Conditions
Sense Repulsion	Objective Consciousness	Sense Attraction
"The Monitors Dismiss"	"THE MONITORS"	"The Monitors Call"
Physical activity decreasing	Sleep	Physical activity increasing

mand, and the response is Emotional Satiety, or *Disgust with Conditions*. The Desire Self, held in its own narrow Sphere, is quickly dissociated from the stream of negative Energy, and remains centred in its own plane while Energy passes upward and inward into Deep Being. The result may be called freedom of a kind for the Self, but it is an indeterminate, somnolent state, exhibited in irresponsible selfish *intentions* that never, except by accident, manifest in action.

No real freeing of Self, no manifestation of Free Will, is

possible until Soul has been found, and that cannot be on the Personal Plane, for there Soul is merely in the process of *growing*. It is not until the man has transmuted the *Sphere of Ignorance* known as the Personal, or Separate, Life into a Body of Knowledge, and thus transcended it, that the Vision of the Soul can be known. Through that Vision comes entrance into Neophyteship, which may with equal justice be called True Manhood.

With True Manhood comes a sense of responsibility to LIFE, manifested, as illustrated (Fig. 3), in a freedom achieved through establishment of a perfect balance between the positive Powers, generically called *Will to Serve*, and the negative *Understanding of Natural Duty*. Poised thus, the Self is free and recognizes the meaning and purpose of the Personal Sphere it has transcended—in other words it has transmuted that Sphere into a Body of Knowledge wherein and wherewith it perceives its own image, *the Soul*.

Let it be borne in mind that the Soul, the image revealed in the Body of Knowledge derived from a cycle of experience of Separate Selfhood, though it depends for its *existence* upon a Reality, depends for its *quality* upon the Mirror that contains it. In other words, though the Self, the Perceiver in the Neophyte, is free and one with LIFE, that which it sees and knows as itself, the image, is merely the essential Being of a *man* who has found freedom from the ties of the purely separate life, and no more.

In this new-found Soul of the Neophyte are focused the male Power, *Will to Serve*, and the female Power, *Awareness of Natural Duty*, and their union produces as offspring the Power of true, *Responsible Will*. What in fact was the free, though sleeping, *Self* of the Personal Man has now become the *Soul*, the executive Power, or Will, of the True Man, or accepted Neophyte.

The Vision, the Soul, the executive Power of Responsible Will, once secured, must be retained by the Neophyte, otherwise it is easy for him to fall ; and retaining it means consciously and steadily holding the opposing Powers at a focus. From the deeper Spiritual Plane, of which in the higher, less stable aspects of his Selfhood he is now clearly conscious, mighty

positive Powers, called generically *Compassion*, pour in upon him, and he must not permit them to sweep him out into irresponsible action, but must hold and balance them upon his own Thought Plane by means of the Power of *Awareness of Duty*. Similarly, owing to his expanded perceptions and wider Sphere, an intensified flow of *results* from experience rushes back into the Being, and takes form on Spiritual levels as *Comprehension*. This female Spiritual Power, *Comprehension*, must be balanced by the positive *Will to Serve*, otherwise it will swing the Being into a too-negative state—a lofty one, certainly, but none the less passive, content with knowledge, but neglectful in applying knowledge to the service of Life.

Perfect and sustained balance has the effect of freeing the man wholly from the influence of the Lower Emotions, thus making him master of objective Conditions in this world. All his manifestations take place through the instrument of the Soul, which to ordinary men appears to be the Personal Self. They are direct, free-willed, responsible manifestations, the offspring of the balanced forces, but to uninstructed observers they still present the appearance of being inspired by positive and negative Emotional Forces. In a certain sense these Forces do act, but not as before, as masters : they act as *limbs* stretched forth or withdrawn by the Soul according to the work it has to do.

It is not necessary here to discuss the work and the Consciousness of the Initiate. Sufficient understanding may be gained through close study of Fig. 3. As already said, the expositions I give are deliberately left incomplete in order to stimulate thought and question. For a Beginner the present lesson is admittedly a difficult one if approached wholly from the philosophic side, but diligent practical work on the lines suggested will quickly lead to understanding of the general principles outlined. Until this has been gained, and until some certain balance of the Power of Being has been established, no attempt should be made to practise the exercises taught in the next two lessons, for though to the uninstructed they may not seem difficult it is impossible to profit from them unless the Self is free, and is possessed of the Weapon of the Soul.

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The Ancient One said :

By Four Marks you may know the MAN and the WARRIOR, O Son, and these are they :

(1). He sees that which even the vulture cannot see, for the woes of the Children have dimmed his eyes with tears.

(2). He hears that which even the sandhawk cannot hear, for the shouts of the warring tribes of the world have deafened his ears.

(3). He speaks in the Council of the Ancients in tones like the notes of a Golden Trumpet, for he cannot whisper an answer to the War-cry of his foes.

(4). He braves the flood of the River of Blood, and stands on the further shore, naked, and clean, and fearless among the assembled Ancients.

(The Sayings of the Ancient One).

LESSON V

INVOCATION

BALANCE between the positive and the negative Powers of Being gives to the Aspirant Vision of the Soul, but that Vision, if only a casual or isolated experience, will not suffice to make the perceiver a Conscious agent of the Universal Law. The Soul may be found, only to be lost again. The Neophyte may stand upon the Threshold of the Temple Hall ready to enter and become one of the hierarchy of skilled servitors that dwell within, only to lose balance and fall back into Outer Darkness the moment he essays a forward step. Within the life-span of every man who has risen above the purely separate life of Desire into the life of Thought there dawns a moment wherein he sees and knows his Soul, but always it passes, and always the Vision is forgotten except perhaps as the shadow of a dream, for the Self, the Seer, moves on into a new Sphere of Ignorance, there in a new Swing of Being to begin the building of a new Body of Knowledge, a *mirror* wherein in another day, perhaps in another earth-life, the Vision may be seen again.

It is not the fact that he has found the Soul that makes the finder a Conscious servant of the Law : *it is the act of finding it*. It is not a single tremendous effort that is demanded of the Aspirant, but a sustained will to live in harmony with the LAW of LIFE. The Soul is not a step to be taken and forgotten : it is a Path to be travelled by ever taking a step. He who moves ever with the onward flowing River of the Law, thinking only of the motion of the stream, never of his own, is the *Companion of Eternity*, but he who moves thus thinking of being borne swiftly into a smooth haven is the *Servant of Time*. In Time man swings unceasingly from gain to loss and from loss to gain, but in Eternity there is stillness and everlasting *gaining*.

To express the idea more simply, if not more clearly : the

Neophyte who is really such, having created a balance between the outgoing and ingoing Energies in which he manifests his life, retains that balance by repeating without intermission the effort that produced it, whereas the ordinary man who has found an equilibrium through the processes of unconscious growth loses it at once, and regains it only at the end of another cycle of growth.

The foregoing statement may seem to a Beginner to contradict the teaching given in Lesson IV. There it was taught that the Self, when it has transmuted a Sphere of Ignorance into a Body of Knowledge, passes onward, and that the Body with the Image, the Soul, which it reflects, vanishes ; but it was also taught that the Knowledge-Body, the Mirror of Self, though lost in one sense was in another sense not lost at all ; therefore there is no contradiction. The Body, indeed, is lost inasmuch as it is absorbed in and included in the new Sphere of Ignorance, but it is also preserved inasmuch as it survives in that Sphere in two aspects which delimit it or condition it to the use of the Self, and in each of which the Self may continue to behold its Image provided it applies them as they should be applied in its new work.

Any power developed through any experience becomes a factor determining the use Self makes of a succeeding Field of Experience. Ordinary man loses sight of the power he develops, and instead of taking possession of, and using it, as does the conscious Aspirant, he allows it to possess and use him. Before him and surrounding him he sees that "Mirror that is called the World of Men", but instead of seeing in the multitudinous images it reflects aspects of Soul developed in forgotten Spheres of Ignorance, each a Monitor that points to the unknown and shows what landmarks to follow in exploring it, he sees them only as obstructions, thus admitting their power to bind him.

To those who live in the Time-Consciousness the transmutation of a Sphere of Ignorance into a Body of Knowledge must of necessity appear to be a slow process. Yet it occurs, in reality, literally with the speed of thought. A new Body of Knowledge, a new Mirror of Self, comes into existence at every transition of Being from a positive to a negative aspect. Observation of the swing of a pendulum, a common material analogue

of the process, may help to bring comprehension. The weight as it swings from pole to pole passes each time through its balance centre, the point from whence its motion began and in which it must end when the power that produced it is exhausted or withdrawn. A single swing from positive to negative pole, and return to the balance centre and rest, is sufficient to produce the *manifestation of a pendulum*. Exactly, analogously, a single *Swing of Being*, or transition from positive to negative manifestation of Being, suffices to complete the growth of a Body of Knowledge, the Mirror of a Soul.

A further study of Fig. 3 may serve to reinforce understanding of the conception outlined in the foregoing paragraphs. In the centre column the Self is shown freed on three planes. The lowest is that of the purely personal, or separate, man, the middle is that of the true man, or Neophyte, who has become capable of abstract or impersonal thinking, and the highest is that of the Adept or Initiate who has relative to his human Sphere a Spiritual or Universal outlook. In the centre column is shown also the Soul Power wielded on each plane, mirrored in the Body of Knowledge furnished by the plane, from the conditions of which the Self has become free. In the right- and left-hand columns respectively, under generic names, are listed the positive and negative Powers—the Energies with which Self has become associated on each plane, but which, when it is freed on that plane, it commands and uses. On the highest plane the Initiate Self brings to a focus the negative Spiritual Power of *Comprehension* or intuitive understanding, and the positive Spiritual Power of *Compassion* or urge to give of Self to LIFE. The result of the equipoise thus established is vision of and possession of the Weapon of the Spiritual Soul, manifested in the Power of True-willed Action. That Soul is the executive arm of the Adept. It is a single power, but may be used directly in two opposing ways. *Compassionate-Comprehension* enables him who possesses it to go forth as a Spirit of pure impersonal love in service of Life. *Comprehending-Compassion* enables him equally to go upward and inward into wider wisdom and larger freedom. To express the conception in another way, it may be said that the Adept is one who has fully experienced the Sphere of Ignorance constituted of the two lower

planes, and transmuted their substance into a Body of Knowledge : in the Power of Compassion he has gone out into, and identified himself with, the Life of those planes, and as embodied Comprehension he has risen out of them into freedom. Now perfectly equilibrated, the two Powers give him detachment from the influence of all lower Powers, and enable him to exercise relative to the human Sphere the Soul-Power of True-Will—the Image of his Free Self reflected in the Knowledge that Sphere has yielded up.

Analogously, upon the Plane of Thought, the plane upon which the work of the Neophyte is done, Self is freed when the Thought Powers called generically *Will-to-Serve* and *Understanding-of-Duty* are brought to a focus, and thus bring to birth the Soul-Power of *Responsible Action*. Possession of this Power gives the Aspirant Free Will relative to the Sphere of Ignorance delimited by the lower Emotions and separate, personal Thoughts, and now transmuted into a Body of Knowledge. Within the limits of that Body he can, using the positive aspect of the Soul-Power that is his, go out freely in service of mankind, and can, using its negative aspect, withdraw in equal freedom into deeper Being and wider wisdom.

Now, as has already been pointed out elsewhere in these lessons, Energies more powerful and more subtle than any embodied on the human planes ceaselessly enter and ceaselessly leave the Sphere of the Self. They belong to Deep Being, and are always formless until Self in one or other of its protean aspects associates with them and, linked by them with Substance, makes them embodied Powers. When therefore Self withdraws, freed from the thrall of an outer Sphere, to another that is deeper, it at once enters into association with those hitherto formless Energies, and raises around it new hierarchies of embodied Powers, which, if it does not hold them in equipoise and command them, will possess it and sweep it into unbalanced action, and cause the Vision of the Soul to be lost. For example, when the Aspirant using the negative aspect of the Soul Power of Responsible Action lifts his Selfhood into loftier sub-planes of Thought bordering upon the World of Spirit, the Power upon which he rises, released from the conditioning influence of the Body of Knowledge from whence it

issues, expands, and, because its function is to bear the Self into a new Sphere of Ignorance, sweeps it into a fresh Swing of Being upward towards the negative Spiritual Power of *Comprehension*. A Spiritual illumination of Thought, of one degree or another, follows, and this, when it has reached its culmination, swings over towards positive expression; thus the Self is brought into association with powerful outgoing Energies to which it gives the form of an intensified *Will to Serve*, and which if not at once held and balanced by a complementary *Understanding of Duty* may easily sweep the Being outward into one form of unbalanced action or another, even into acts as misconceived as those illustrated in Fig. 2.

It can therefore be seen that though, by balancing the Powers of Being, the Self is given freedom to rise into wider wisdom, yet any such rise is certain to lead to loss of the freedom gained unless the effort that creates balance is repeated and sustained.

In practice, therefore, true progress or sustained freedom of Self may be said to be secured by incessantly creating a balance between the dominating positive and negative Powers of Being. Knowledge of the Law thus revealed gives immediate understanding of the paradoxical aphorism of the ancient Hermetists :

Strive to move and thou wilt fall.
Strive to be still and thou wilt move.

Ignorance of or forgetfulness of this Law is the most fruitful of the innumerable causes of the disturbances, failures, and disasters that afflict almost all who attempt to tread the Occult Way. In a sense it is the only cause. The great Christian Mystics have written feelingly of a state called by one of the greatest amongst them the "Dark night of the Soul". Spiritual Night descends upon the Aspirant who by an intense inpouring of negative Energy has been carried upward even into Divine Vision, but who, unable to find equipoise of Being at that height, falls quickly into the equally powerful stream of positive Energy, and is by it swept helplessly outward into what to him appears irretrievable disaster—into narrow Spheres of personal selfhood, from out of which after years of pain and labour he

may perhaps rise again, but which more often, because of his ignorance of the Science of Life, hold him bound throughout his earthly existence in what is true Purgatory.

Because every successive focusing of the Powers of Being bringing Vision of the Soul and new freedom to Self calls into existence new hierarchies of embodied Energies of increasing potency the effort is known as INVOCATION. When the Soul has been found upon the Plane of Thought, and when the Candidate has become an accepted Neophyte, the MASTER confers upon him the *Privilege of Invocation*. It is a privilege, for it means drawing to the Self that which is higher than self; yet it is also a right which is earned by obedience to the LAW of LIFE. But to avail himself of the right and privilege he has earned is for the Learner a task not to be lightly approached, for it means entry into a time of *testing*. Conscious progress is always a testing, but this that has now to be encountered is of a special nature, far more intense and far more subtle than any previously experienced. It is a necessary preparation for the *penultimate step* that every Aspirant must take before he reaches the Threshold of the Gates of Gold and gives the knock which if rightly given admits him into Discipleship and the Way of the Spirit. Like every step, low or high, this testing comes through experience, and the Fields wherein it is sought must be new and rich to yield the rich harvest desired.

Modes of Invocation.

Of modes of Invocation known to and practised by advanced Occultists there is to their number scarcely any limit, but for you, who are as yet only a Learner, and without an experienced Guide by your side to direct your every step and check the results, only a few of the number are readily available and profitable and *safe* to use. Four methods of invoking power are briefly described in the present lesson, and hints given as to the most fruitful modes of utilizing them. If you study them closely and apply them intelligently, always bearing in mind what the preceding lessons have taught, you cannot fail to profit. If you work diligently, thinking not of results but of the work, knowledge of your own will grow up within you and will tell you how, more and more, to make your efforts effective. Such knowledge

will serve you infinitely better than any instruction that may be given by a teacher, for the teacher can only point the way and mark its bounds ; the Learner must traverse it for himself.

The Guardian Lords.

The Fields of Experience through which power may be invoked, which I shall describe in this lesson, are as follows :
(1) Study of the Scriptures. (2) Study of Poetry, Music, and Art. (3) Study of Nature. (4) Ceremonial Magic. (A)

Now, enclosing every Sphere of Ignorance into which Self enters, or into which it may enter, there are, as already indicated in this and in the last lesson, influences or forces called Monitors, Delimiters, and similar names, which, by means of the attraction and repulsion they exercise, continually condition the Self in its explorations. Behind these Monitors, no matter what appearances they present, stand their Creators, or Emanators—four hierarchies of Powers called by the Adepts of old the *Guardian Lords*. They are *Sound*, *Colour*, *Number (or rhythm)*, and *Idea (or form)*. There is nothing objective or subjective in all manifest Life that is not a synthesis composed of these four elements in varying proportions. All four exist in every Field of Experience, but in any particular Field one of the four always dominates the rest, hence the title they are given. When, as we are now preparing to do, we seek out special Fields of Experience for special purposes, it is most essential that we recognize the *Lords* that hold sway in them, and more especially the *Ruling Lord* in each, and strive always to utilize their power, not bring ourselves into conflict with it.

Over the Fields now chosen for exploration the *Guardian Lords* rule in the general order of precedence shown below :

<i>Scripture</i> :	(1) Idea.	(2) Sound.	(3) Number.	(4) Colour.
<i>Poetry</i> :	(1) Number.	(2) Sound.	(3) Idea.	(4) Colour.
<i>Music</i> :	(1) Sound.	(2) Number.	(3) Colour.	(4) Idea.
<i>Art</i> :	(1) Colour.	(2) Idea.	(3) Number.	(4) Sound.
<i>Nature</i> :	(1) Idea.	(2) Colour.	(3) Sound.	(4) Number.
<i>Ceremonial</i> :	(1) Magic.			

The order varies according to the knowledge and will of the practitioner, but basically it is the same as that which prevails in Nature. The same may be said of all Fields, though in a much less marked degree. (B)

Scripture Study.

By the term Scripture or Scriptures is meant something of much wider range than those writings held sacred by Jews and Christians, and thus commonly named. Any written attempt made by a teacher to express such knowledge as he may have gained concerning the hidden truths of Life, and to teach others the Law of Living, is a Scripture. Religious, theological, and philosophical writings that are speculative or merely dogmatic are not Scriptures. For a writing to be Scriptural the writer, or the Teacher whose words are recorded, must be one who has risen above individual considerations, and one whose mind has become illuminated by the commingling of his Consciousness with the Consciousness of a Being that has transcended the human Sphere ; and not merely that—he must speak not as a man but as an instrument that the Higher Consciousness uses to carry its Light into the world.

It is important to understand that all that may be spoken or written by an Adept teacher does not necessarily emanate from the Sphere of the Spirit. "*The Adept is not always an Adept*" : so it has actually been stated of himself by one known to wield Adept powers, and so it is understood by all who have gained true understanding. No matter how far advanced a man may be, while he wears a human form he will in ordinary human intercourse act and speak as does the ordinary man : as a man of outstanding insight and capacity, no doubt, yet without any Spiritual authority. Of the Learner, therefore, who approaches the Study of Scripture for invocatory purposes, discrimination is demanded, for without ability to select that which is Spiritual and reject that which may be but intellectual he may labour long and find no profit. In your early efforts you may be helped by one of greater experience who can direct you to books that contain the true Light, but ultimately you and all pilgrims must take your own way alone and unaided. Not until you can do so will you reap from the Fields you enter a full harvest of Truth. For none is there any escape from the Law expressed in the words : "*To him who hath shall be given*". I may tell you that if you walk in this Path the Light will shine upon you, but I cannot give you eyes that can see it : I can only hope that the power it pours around you may one day wake in you the gift of sight.

Of true Spiritual Scriptures the number available for study by the Western student is not large, but what there are of them are all sufficient, if utilized, to give you all the experience you need in this life, no matter what your diligence and receptivity. The majority of true Scriptures come from the East, and can seldom be studied except in the form of translations ; in endeavouring to decide which translation to select for study you will encounter your first difficulty. In the translator of an ordinary book scholarship and linguistic ability are attributes of the highest importance, but in the translator of a Scripture they are but secondary. In him, perception of the Spirit embodied in the work he handles comes before all else, but if to that he can also add knowledge of the language, scholarship, and literary ability the value of his work will be greatly enhanced. Nevertheless defects in a translator, though they make a Scripture less useful to a Beginner in the study, can never wholly obscure the Light of Truth it contains : it will, no matter how veiled to ordinary perceptions, always remain visible to the eye of the true Seeker. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Christian Bible. There the Message appears clouded and marred by the hands and minds of many different translators and interpreters, and not merely that, but also by the hands of men who did not scruple to alter or suppress the words of the Teacher, and for them to substitute their own, with intent to justify some sectarian or personal policy. Yet for all this, for those of vision, the Light of the Spirit shines throughout the Bible, and in many parts blazes forth so brilliantly that even the blind become conscious of its presence.

Of other ancient Eastern Scriptures, such as the *Upanishads* and *The Bhagavad Gita* of India, *The Divine Pyramider*, and other Hermetic fragments, it may be said that all have suffered at the hands of translators, though to a much lesser extent than has the Bible. In their case, however, unlike the Bible, the wrong lies less with the Christian, or at least European, translators, and more with ignorant followers of the original Teachers, and with the priests of the many sects that grew up around their names and teachings.

Because of this difficulty in procuring really reliable versions of the great Oriental Scriptures I advise the Learner to

confine himself in his early attempts at invoking power through Scripture Study to such illuminated works by modern Western Teachers as are obtainable. In choosing these some experienced guidance is even more necessary than in choosing translations of ancient Scriptures. The modern Theosophical Movement, initiated by H. P. Blavatsky sixty years ago, has, through the almost innumerable branchlets into which it has split, produced a vast flood of literature dealing with things occult and spiritual. Of this the authors, though in many instances claiming Adept guidance and even inspiration from the loftiest Spiritual sources, were, and indeed *are*, with a few rare exceptions, either ignorant copyists, self-seeking charlatans, or self-deluded psychics, and often a curious compound of the three. Because of this the Learner should rigidly restrict himself to study of modern works that are really Scriptural, of which a list is appended to this lesson, at least until such time arrives when his own developed intuition gives him power to select instruments for himself. In the appended list I give also the titles of certain Eastern Scriptures and the names of their translators, and other information useful to a Beginner in the practice of Invocation.

Rules of Study.

Having selected a Scripture for study as a means of invoking Spiritual Power, observe the following rules when using it.

Always hold firmly in mind the thought that you are not seeking intellectual understanding of Life, nor yet laws of living, but Spiritual Power.

Put forth no greater intellectual effort than suffices to enable you to grasp the sense of the words you read, and strive not to build up complex three-dimensional images in the mind from any form of understanding that may impinge upon your consciousness. Images will of necessity form in the mind as you study, but they will remain nebulous if you refuse to dwell upon them and allow them to lead you into intellectual speculation. If you permit yourself to dwell upon them, and indulge in speculations concerning their meaning, they will draw to themselves and absorb the power called forth ; and instead of being raised into a loftier freedom you will find yourself imprisoned more firmly than before.

The Power you are seeking exists in the Teachings and in that which teaches—not in you, the Self that is being taught. To gain that Power strive to *be* it : imagine yourself into it and endeavour to *feel*, not to *think*, that you are the Voice that speaks and that which it declares in speech, not that which is addressed.

The man of intellect is confused and confounded by sayings such as those that follow :

*Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.**

*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.**

With this myself I establish the whole Universe, and remain for ever separate.†

Kill out ambition. Work as those who are ambitious.‡

Kill out all sense of separateness. Yet stand alone and isolated.‡

True Light lies hidden behind Giant Rocks, and its only approach is through the Caverns of Mind.§

True Peace is encircled by seething whirlpools, and can be entered only while Tempests rage.§

To the intellect each of these sayings appears to involve a crass contradiction. Meekness may be “blessed”, but the meek most obviously do not possess the earth. If Krishna’s words are true, that the Universe is created out of his own Being, then it cannot be true that he remains for ever separate. No man who is not ambitious has ever been known to work ambitiously. The “Caverns of Mind”, if the words mean anything at all, cannot mean other than blank inactive aspects of intellect through which “Light” cannot conceivably come.

Thus of necessity will the ordinary thinking man reason, or puzzle, and as he does so, striving either to “make sense” of the sayings or satisfactorily demonstrate their nonsense, the Power that should be upraising him to higher levels of Consciousness is being used up to build more firmly the prison wherein he dwells.

If you would bring to your aid the Powers of higher spheres you must abandon mental activities such as I have sketched. Let *Aspiration* take you upward into the Being of the Christ, of Krishna, of the Teacher, of the Ancient One ; be yourself

* The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, New Test.). † Krishna, in *The Bhagavad Gita*. ‡ *Light on the Path*. § *The Sayings of The Ancient One*.

the utterer of the words attributed to them, and soon, if not immediately, you will feel the uplifting hands of superhuman Powers touching and guiding you. Then also will you begin to hear and understand the whisperings of the *Voice of the Silence* : "*I mourn in a myriad imprisonments of myself,*" whispers the voice of the Christ within, "*but I am comforted, for I am BEING and the possessor of the keys of all prisons.*" "*Meekly am I effaced in my infinite manifestations, yet they are my dominions and I their Lord.*"

There you have the secret of Invocation. Scriptural rules and precepts and teachings are not such in reality : they are affirmations concerning the nature of Life made by a Being that is one with LIFE. Who is there who has thought and observed at all that does not know the strange power which even a feeble human affirmation concerning the body has upon the health of the body, and upon the Emotional principle that governs the body ? And if such is recognized, may not something of the Power invoked through affirmation of one's identity with the ALL-BEING also be recognized, even if only remotely and dimly ?

Never read a Scripture as you read a common book, thinking that before you can grasp its full meaning and know what effect it is designed to produce you must read it to the end. No true Scripture has any real beginning or any real end. Thought of end and of beginning drags the mind down into the Time-Consciousness. It is wholly unnecessary to progress and true comprehension for you to know every sentence, page, and chapter that a Scripture may contain. One single precept from *The Bhagavad Gita*, or from any other Scripture of similar status, if truly understood, will suffice to give you comprehension of the whole book. Why then, it may be asked, are the teachings given in such books reiterated in such a host of forms ? The answer is : Because LIFE is EVERBECOMING, ever expressing itself in innumerable aspects of itself. This "Procession of the SELF in Self" revealed in all great Scriptures has also a highly important suggestive value for the student who approaches them seeking their power.

Whenever conditions make it possible read or recite aloud the passages which you are studying. *Sound* is one of the

Guardian Lords : it is Power, and has its most potent manifestation through human voice and speech. The words and phrases through which a Teacher of Spiritual Knowledge expresses himself are chosen because of their sound-value as much as because of their aptness in conveying ideas. Lack in a translator of knowledge of the functions of the *Guardian Lords* deprives many accurate and scholarly translations of Oriental Scriptures of most of their value as instruments of Invocation.

Though the building up of purely intellectual conceptions from your studies should be discouraged, the prohibition does not apply to the growth of *ideas* that emerge upon Spiritual planes of Consciousness. As your study proceeds you will frequently find in the midst of a sentence, and sometimes in the midst of a word, an awareness of understanding arising in the depths of your Being—an understanding in no wise due to any of the familiar processes of intellection, but formed out of an interplay of ideas somewhat akin in nature to instincts, yet as much superior in authority to reasoned thought as instinct is inferior to it. These *intuitions*, as they may be termed for lack of a better name, should be allowed to rest upon the plane upon which they have arisen, there to develop or fade out of consciousness, as the case may be, without any effort being made to draw them down and possess them by means of the intellect. They indicate the coming into existence of an embryonic Spiritual Self, and its association with lofty and hitherto formless Energies. This Self, which is, as all other grades of Self are, of many aspects, each a Spiritual *Idea*, will be shattered by the touch of the Thinking Self, and will have its power absorbed by and dissipated among the Powers of the human Spheres.

True Invocation therefore does not, as is commonly understood, mean summoning Powers to the side of the human Self, but is rather the embodiment of formless Energies into new Powers on a superior plane, through the instrumentality of a new Self born upon, and native to, that plane. How the Central Self should bear itself in relation to these Powers will be dealt with more fully as the lesson proceeds. An ancient Hermetic aphorism says :

"Invocation waters the buds of the Plant of Self : human study applies fresh mould to its root." (C)

Poetry.

The rule that Invocation through Scripture study should be practised only through the writings of Teachers of genuine Spiritual knowledge holds good as regards the use of Poetry also, where only poems of genius should be used. Genius and Spiritual illumination are identical. Teacher, Poet, Musician, Artist, true Nature-lover and true Scientist all draw their power from a single transcendental point of Being. How they may manifest it depends not upon its source but upon the steps its manifestors have trodden on the Path of evolution of the Self—in other words upon the nature of the instruments of expression they have fashioned. Teacher and Poet are closely akin in nature and function. Often they exchange functions, as may be seen from the fact that the Lords of *Sound* or *Number* often dominate in a Scripture, and those of *Idea* or *Sound* in a poem. Between true Teacher and true Poet the chief distinction is that the latter sheds upon the world the Light he has found because he loves the LIGHT, and the former strives to evoke his Light in the world because he loves the world.

As with Teacher so with Poet : all that emanates from his mouth or pen is not always of the same high quality. When seeking a Poem as an instrument of Invocation discrimination is demanded of the Learner even more stringently than when selecting a Scripture, for the reason that nominal poets abound far more plentifully than do nominal teachers. In the list I have appended to this lesson I give the names of poets who have all produced work illuminated by the Light of the Spirit, yet of them, with the sole exception of the first listed, it is impossible to say that they always wrote in this Light. Some measure of intuition, therefore, needs to be developed in the Learner before he approaches Poetry as a means of invoking Power, and this intuition is always most safely and most certainly acquired through study of the Scriptures.

The rules that govern the practice of Invocation through Poetry are in general similar to those that prevail in Invocation through Scripture study. Affirm yourself the Poet in his mood of inspiration, and be the expresser of the poem, not its reader or hearer. Let the *Rhythms*, *Sounds*, and *Ideas* ring in your Consciousness as your own, not as those of another. *Number* (rhythm)

is chief Lord in this field, and through it that which you affirm yourself to be has chiefly to be expressed. But *Sound*, though placed second, may act as twin ruler with *Number*, and greatly enhance its power ; and for this reason reading or reciting Poetry aloud should be practised as extensively as possible. In early attempts you may find results from reading aloud feeble or entirely absent for many reasons, but chiefly because you, like most English-speaking persons, have had no training in the use of the voice, nor in emanating power in sound and rhythm. Should you become conscious of lack of skill, do not think of remedying your deficiencies by taking lessons in elocution, for they will not help you. Continue your practice, forgetting as far as possible your own shortcomings as a medium of the Powers, but holding fast to your affirmation of identity with the Poet in his hour of illumination. Persevere, and the time will come when you begin intuitively to catch the true tones and cadences, and the power of the Lords of Sound and Number will move in you and begin to reinforce harmoniously the power of *Idea* already present. A true Poem is always a chant or a song, and should be read or recited as such, not according to any order or scale of notation composed for you by another or copied from the usage of another but by discovery of your own appropriate notes, key, and cadences, prompted by the Silent Voice that speaks within you.

Declamation after the manner of the ordinary "trained elocutionist" is completely destructive of the value of a poem as an instrument of Invocation, because it is not *Number* and *Sound* that rule in it, but rather the concrete idea, the gross material form of the true *Idea*, and thus between the coarse usurper and the true Hierarch an actual conflict is provoked. There is a hint here which if followed up can lead into unsuspected realms of Occult knowledge, but it is impossible to develop it further in lessons such as these.

When with patient practice mastery of the instrument of Poetry becomes more certainly yours you will find it becoming possible to utilize not merely the dominant Lords of *Sound* and *Number* but also those of *Idea* and *Colour*. The power of the latter always operates subjectively except in those in whom the psychic nature is specially strong, when the influence may

be perceived objectively. Gradually intuitive understanding of what Numbers and Ideas correspond harmoniously with what Sounds and Colours will come to you, but never let such discovery be the goal towards which you work, or forget in happiness in the instrument that the instrument is not the end but the means.

Music.

In Music as in Poetry *Number* and *Sound* are in very many instances twin ruling influences, but whereas in Poetry when there is any predominance of a single Power it is *Number* that takes it, in Music it is *Sound*. Among the secondary influences in Poetry *Idea* dominates *Colour*, but in Music *Colour* dominates *Idea*.

Because only a minority of Learners are practised instrumentalists Music as a means of Invocation is much less readily available than is either Scripture or Poetry. As an instrument also it is less easy to handle and control, for between the would-be user and the LIFE behind which he aspires, or should aspire, to touch through such use there stands not only the Being of the composer but also that of the executant musician. That which reaches the hands of the Aspirant, therefore, is always coloured by the individualities of others in a way in which Scripture and Poetry are not.

Accordingly, although the rules of Invocation as already laid down apply in a general way to the use of all instruments they are subject to various modifications according to the special nature of that to which they apply. In Scripture or Poetry it is with the lofty, pure, Spiritual Soul of Teacher or Poet that identification of Self is sought. In Music, on the other hand, for the reasons given, identification should not be sought with any human Soul however lofty, but with the Powers of *Sound* and *Number* themselves, which Powers, though they are called Lords, are simply the high spiritual, unindividualized (as far as the human Sphere is concerned) aspects of the *Soul-Power* of a *Being* whose nature is all-embracing and omnipresent in our worlds. (D)

Affirmation of identity is therefore to be made with a *Being* to whom the name of *Sound* or *Number* is given, but who to the

Neophyte is actually wholly unknown, or apprehended only as a far-felt formless *Idea*—an effort which, as can easily be realized, is highly difficult, and may well be unsafe to make. It should, in fact, not be made until Intuition is well developed, and stabilized by diligent exercise with the instruments of Poetry and Scripture. If indulged in prematurely by one of a nature at all sensitive there is danger of a too-eager and sudden surrender of Being to those remote and subtle Powers, resulting in (temporary) loss and absorption of Self in Deep Being, and a simultaneous waking on human levels of the *Dream* or Psychic Self. Of such a break, or transition of Consciousness, there is always a risk in every form of Invocation attempted by unprepared persons, though not a serious one for those of normal sensibilities. For this reason Learners have already been warned in the preliminary lesson of this series not to proceed beyond Lesson IV until it and its predecessors have been thoroughly mastered. The Occult Way, as taught in these lessons, is entirely safe if followed step by step as directed, but no way that is in any real sense occult can be made safe for the rash and foolish. Psychism, or psychic states, are always traps into which the unprepared, the unguided, and the misled Aspirant may fall ; but I do not speak to such as he in these lessons, and consequently shall not, at least in the body of my instructions and expositions, give anything more than hints such as those just given concerning the dangers he may meet.

Sensitiveness is necessarily increased by the practice of Invocation, no matter through what means it is pursued, and for this reason the Neophyte who lives surrounded by the influences of our unnatural and unbalanced civilized life must look to meet assaults tending to unbalance his Being of which the man of dull perceptions knows nothing. When power is sought through the agency of the Lord of *Sound*, as it is when Music is taken up as an instrument of Invocation, the Learner will quickly discover how open to unexpected attack he has become. In city life, at least, Music, or what is called by that name, impinges almost incessantly upon the Consciousness, and the effects produced by it should make it obvious that the influence of the Guardian Lords is by no means always an uplifting force. These Hierarchies have innumerable aspects,

and though benevolent when emanated by the Soul of Genius may at other times be the reverse. Ordinary "music" is far more often a disturbing, or even a definitely lowering, power than a unifying and elevating one ; therefore arm yourself against it, not by bracing the will to resist its assaults but by holding steadily the *Will to Serve* balanced against *Understanding of Duty*. *This is a testing.*

Art.

All that has been said of Music applies equally to Art, by which term is meant the art of the painter, except that in the latter the order of precedence of the Lords is reversed, *Colour* and *Idea* predominating over *Number* and *Sound*. The advice as to the right use of *Sound*, and the warnings as to its possible adverse influence, apply with equal force to *Colour*.

Nature Study.

Of all instruments of Invocation that of unspoiled Nature is the most true, safe, and effective, but unhappily in our civilized world it is the one least available to the Neophyte. Except in isolated aspects it is practically out of reach of the city-dweller, and even in the country it is not easy to find it unadulterated by the mind and uncorrupted by the hand of man.

Although in Nature the Guardian Lords are said to precede one another in influence, in a certain order, *Idea* in the sense of form coming first, in reality neither of the four can be regarded as permanently dominant in her Being as a whole. Even in her separated aspects *Colour*, *Sound*, *Number*, and *Idea* continually give place one to another without strife, so that to the Aspirant who through her aid strives to invoke the power of the Spiritual Soul Nature will present herself now as a painting, now as a musical composition, now as a poem, now as a Scripture, and again—and this is her highest aspect—as a synthesis in which each of those instruments plays an equal part, but a loftier part than either can play alone.

Invocation through Nature is rather for the more advanced Occultist whose lot in life, created by himself by past labours, is cast far away from cities and unthinking crowds, than for one just barely entered into Neophyteship. The Neophyte has but

seldom earned the privilege of using so perfect an instrument, and seldom does he possess the intuition needed if it is to be utilized effectively.

Those who would invoke the Powers of Deep Being through the instrument of Nature need no rules to guide them other than those already given. Approach Nature not as a curious observer, not as an admirer, not even as an ardent worshipper, but let her myriad perfections absorb your Being, and affirm yourself **THAT** which shines behind them. Imagine yourself **THAT** which is the chant in the wind, the music in the note of bird and in the fall of water : be **THAT** which speaks of the mystery of Eternal **BEING** in the budding forth and the withering of the tiniest flower. But do not mistake me when I say *imagine*, for I do not mean by the word the common mental picture-making usually known as imagination. I speak of a species of effort which though it has a transcendental analogy with ordinary imagination produces no forms in consciousness : it has been described by a modern sage as "*the inexpressible yearning of the inner man to go forth into the infinite*".

With some justice it may be complained that teachings like the foregoing are of little help to Beginners seeking to master the technique of Invocation, but the truth is that this cannot be taught. It may be learned if one has reached that step in progress whence real learning becomes possible ; but that step can be reached only by taking one by one all the steps indicated, in earlier lessons, thinking not to avoid any. The Keys of the Inner Path have been placed in your hands : be the *user* of whatever instrument or power comes to you ; think not of its quality nor of the results that may accrue to you from using it, for they also are instruments to be used, worn out, and forgotten : thus will you learn.

Ceremonial Magic.

Rightly understood and rightly used, Ceremonial Magic is the most effective and powerful instrument of Invocation immediately available to the Neophyte. The most perfect instrument of all is Nature, but Nature, as already pointed out, is largely beyond the reach of the Beginner, and may be touched only occasionally and tentatively. Nature also as an instrument

has two aspects : the first, which has been commented upon, and another wider and higher which will form the subject of the final lesson of this series. Study of the first aspect will not lead to real mastery of the instrument of Nature, but it will help greatly towards true understanding of, and safe and effective use of, Ceremonial Magic. In its turn the latter, though as a step not actually essential, will prove a help when the time comes for study of Natural Magic.

Let it, at the *outset*, be very clearly understood that as far as the Learner in his present stage of progress is concerned Temple observations and Ritual, called together Ceremonial Magic, have no purpose whatsoever other than as a means of invoking Spiritual Power. They may be, and constantly are, used for quite different purposes—for evoking lower powers, for effecting temporary changes in the character, and so forth, but their use in such ways is fraught with many dangers unless the user has an Initiate's knowledge and power. Even when used for professedly invocatory purposes, there is always some risk to the Neophyte unless he himself is the operator, for another who acts as "Hierophant" on his behalf may be impure of motive, or even if pure may lack knowledge and skill. It is always safest therefore to avoid Magic in any of its forms until development of spiritual Comprehension gives you power to act as your own hierophant. All that I shall say, and that rightly can be said, concerning Magic in these lessons is intended to help you towards becoming a minister to the Self, and no more.

Ceremonial Magic, like Nature, is really a synthesis of Scripture, Poetry, Music, Art, but unlike Nature it is a man-made instrument. The Guardian Lords of *Colour*, *Sound*, *Number*, and *Idea* are in it assembled together in such relative order and proportion that the power of each as an elevator of Consciousness is reinforced by that of every other. Thus when the instrument is created by expert hands a miniature world—a concentrated epitome of the larger world of Nature—is fashioned. Very aptly it has been said that Ceremonial Magic is a *Distillation of Nature*, but in the definition truth and a warning are intermingled. A distillation is an expression by artificial processes of certain essences from out of natural products, and it

depends altogether upon the intention of the distiller and upon the skill with which he selects and compounds his materials whether he distils a life-giving spirit or a poisonous potion. Thus it is with the fashioner of an instrument of Ceremonial Magic.

In applying the instrument of Ceremonial Magic observe the following rules, or rather hints :

For your practice have a room not used for any other purposes set aside, if at all possible. If not possible, then have one that when arranged as required can be left undisturbed by the presence of others, and even by your own, for twelve hours prior to your using it for invocatory practices.

It is obvious that in this first rule the average Learner may encounter an obstacle difficult to surmount, for it may be impossible for him to secure a room that will conform to the conditions outlined. The rule, however, cannot be abrogated or modified. Good results cannot be secured in a room used for everyday purposes, because although its furnishings and ornaments may be changed, its basic outlines will remain. These latter, because habitually associated in the Consciousness with happenings and ideas not at all Spiritual, will exercise an obstructive suggestive influence over the mind sufficient to prevent any free withdrawal of the Self. Worse still, because the specially created conditions tend to free the Self, and the permanent conditions to hold it, an inner conflict will result, and may be productive not merely of disturbance of Being but even of serious injury. If therefore no suitable room is obtainable, be content with the best use you can make of other instruments and leave Ceremonial Magic aside.

Robing the room for ceremonial purposes is an art that can be acquired only through long experience, and cannot possibly be taught in lessons such as these. For the simple invocatory exercises of a Neophyte, enough should have been learned from the work done through Art and Nature to enable you with the aid of the following hints to create effective conditions for yourself.

Throw your mind back into your invocatory experiences through the media of Art and Nature, and recall what basic Colours there were in them that helped to free your higher

imagination. Upon a calm June afternoon you surveyed a certain peaceful country scene of hills and woods and streams : what were its basic colours ? A mosaic of varied greens below, a golden light bathing the whole, and a vault of blue flecked with amethyst and rose and white impending upon it from above. Subsidiary colours will also be recalled, but those named suffice. Gather those colours in similar groupings and inter-relationships into your Temple.

In invocatory ceremonials the altar stands to the East and may be robed in white, or green, or yellow, or red, as intuition directs. If you read or hear elsewhere that the altar should occupy the centre of the Temple, know that the rite has a purpose other than that of Invocation of Spiritual Powers.

Light rises in the East : therefore upon the altar is placed a symbolic light.

In this instrument *Idea* is normally the Ruling Lord, and for this reason symbols, which are the most potent means of summoning him, occupy a prominent place in the furnishings of the Temple. To serve the needs of a Learner, however, they need but be few in number and simple in character. Study of symbols is in itself a powerful secondary instrument of invocation, and in more advanced stages of Occult progress has to be taken up systematically, for if a symbol is to produce its due elevating effect the Consciousness has to become conditioned to it. In early efforts be content with traditional symbols of simple geometrical patterns, such as the various Crosses, Pentagrams, Hexagrams, and Triangles, the significance of which, in a broad, general way, is not difficult to grasp.

Next item to engage attention should be the construction of the Ritual to be enacted in your Temple. For it take as model the Rite which Nature herself perpetually celebrates. To this add as intuition directs appropriate Sounds and Numbers (rhythms).

From out of darkness and formlessness into light and form all things always emerge : let your rite begin in darkness accompanied by a chant suggestive of the state from whence it emanates. The instrument of Scripture or of Poetry here comes into use. Dawn follows with a shining forth of light, a louder chant, and the rhythmic movement of waking Life.

At Noon light is strongest and shadow deepest, and the phase is fitly symbolized in sonorous prose periods and stately rhythms. Thus may the rite move onward to its close in evening, when light departs and silence and stillness reign again.

The intelligent Learner who has done the work taught in the preceding lessons, and has learned through it and through philosophic study of Life to understand the cyclic movement of Everbecoming Being, should need no more than these hints to enable him with a little practice to prepare and use a very effective instrument of Invocation. Such practice, or tentative effort, is in itself a valuable exercise out of which unexpected knowledge often arises. Working with your own creation, no matter how imperfect it may be at first, has many advantages, chief of which is that it is a direct and powerful suggestion of that State of Being you should ever strive to achieve while wielding an instrument of Invocation. Silently your Temple and your Rite declare themselves your emanated servants, and as you take them up and use them you declare yourself Lord and Emanator of the Powers of which they are embodiments.

Concluding Comments.

Invocation no matter how pursued means bringing a budding Self into association with high formless Energies belonging to Deep Being, and results always in the manifestation of a new Power. That any awareness of such a Power, or of intensified knowledge of any kind, is followed at once by a powerful urge to express it the intelligent Learner need hardly be reminded. With the appearance of such an urge comes a time of testing, for the Energy it represents must not be given free rein, else it will sweep the Being into unbalanced action and dissipate itself unprofitably in lower Spheres of Self. The newly embodied higher Energy, or aspect of the Spiritual Soul (for it is both), must, as it enters the Sphere of the Thinking Self on its way towards outward expression, be seized and held by the freed and balanced Self, whose realm is that Sphere, and added to the Body of Knowledge already possessed. In this way, and in this only, will a Power developed through an act of Invocation become an addition to the Powers of the Self giving it a wider freedom.

The great and perpetually repeated error of the uninstructed Aspirant, the moment a new spark of understanding dawns within him, is that he rushes forth instantly into expression of it, to teach, to help (as he thinks), to share with the world what he imagines he possesses, but which, as should now be understood, was never really his. This new Self rushing blindly into expression is not the true, free, Central Self but only an undeveloped infant, lofty, admittedly, but wholly unbalanced. Probably ninety-nine per cent of the scattering of Spiritual Energies, and the shattering of Spiritual works painfully raised by the labour of Wise men, has occurred, and occurs, through the actions of untrained Aspirants motivated as outlined. Never be in haste to express knowledge, no matter how brilliant the spark that reaches you may be. You can exercise no true Power or true Wisdom outside the scope of the Body of Knowledge out of which you, the Freed Self, have risen. Within the limits of that Body you have freedom, and the Power that comes from seeing all things in just relative proportion as inseparable aspects of a whole.

Never when conscious of a glow of Power use that Power to influence another, even for what you conceive to be his good. When you are the passed Magician you will know how to give true help ; but to influence another in your present undeveloped state will but rob him without in any way enriching yourself.

It has been said that it is infinitely better (and harder) to love your neighbour as yourself than to persuade, by any power you may bring to bear upon him, a warlike Emperor to love peace.

Should you feel, as is very possible, that one selfishly deprives others of benefits by thus conserving knowledge and power unto oneself, pause and reflect that there is but ONE BEING of which you and all are expressions, and that therefore you can in no way better help others than by waking within your Being that SELF which is ALL.

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“Desire only that which is within you.
Desire only that which is beyond you.
Desire only that which is unattainable.

For within you is the light of the world—the only light that can be shed upon the Path. If you cannot see it within you it is useless to look for it elsewhere. It is beyond you ; because when you have reached it you have lost yourself. It is unattainable because it for ever recedes. You will enter the light but you will never touch the flame.”

(Light on the Path.)

Poetic and Scriptural Works Recommended :

SCRIPTURES (Modern) :

DEVOTIONAL :

Light on the Path (Mabel Collins).
The Perfect Way (Anna Kingsford).
Clothed with the Sun (Anna Kingsford).
The Vow of Poverty (Jasper Niemand).
Letters that have Helped Me (W. Q. Judge).
The Candle of Vision (A. E.).
Song and its Fountains (A. E.).
The Sayings of the Ancient One (P. G. Bowen).

PHILOSOPHIC :

The Secret Doctrine (H. P. Blavatsky).

ORIENTAL (Translations) :

Teachings and Parables of Jesus (New Test.).
 Pauline Epistles (New Test., Authorized Version).
The Bhagavad Gita (Charles Johnston).
The Bhagavad Gita (W. Q. Judge).
The Great Upanishads (Charles Johnston).
The Voice of the Silence (H. P. Blavatsky).
The Divine Pyramider of Hermes (Everard).

POETRY (Modern) :*

Collected Poems (A. E.).
The House of the Titans (A. E.).
 Works of Shelley.
 „ „ Swinburne.
 „ „ Browning.
 „ „ Keats.

* Many other poets, notably Tennyson and Wordsworth, have produced poems of genius, but for some mysterious reason they lack the fire needed in an invocatory instrument.

LESSON VI

EVOCATION

Kill out ambition.

Kill out desire of life.

Kill out desire of comfort.

Work as those who are ambitious.

Respect life as those who desire it.

Be happy as those who live for happiness.

(Light on the Path.)

AMONG the many earnest students of Occultism who read and meditate upon the above quoted precepts and kindred aphorisms from the same book and from other Scriptures, few indeed understand their true meaning and application. Fewer still realize that the second three are not merely of equal importance with the first but that their practice marks a stage of progress more advanced than that marked by practice of their predecessors. For this ignorance teachers who profess to teach while yet lacking true knowledge of their own are mainly responsible. True knowledge is obtained by patiently treading every step of the Way that leads towards the PATH, omitting none, and in no other way. The inexperienced may understand, intellectually at least, that separative desires such as ambition are obstacles that must be destroyed, but rarely or never do they realize that no power in the Universe can be obliterated without raising another power in its place. Lives are wasted fruitlessly battling with forces which are never conquered or destroyed, but don a new disguise when challenged, and remain in essence for ever the same. Of this truth experience alone gives knowledge, and experience alone leads to the further truth that it is not the shapes and names of Powers that have to be changed but the *place* relative to them

which the Self occupies. Can the Power of Ambition actually be destroyed? It cannot; but the Separate Self that is possessed by Ambition and identified with it can be deposed from its rulership of the Being, and another and non-separate Self that possesses all desires in the shape of aspects of itself can be exalted into Kingship. Ambition may then no longer manifest the Man, but the Man if he so wills may manifest an aspect of himself that bears the name of Ambition.

True Occultism is the Science of Life, through which comes mastery of the Art of Living. Without scientific knowledge the Aspirant, no matter how excellent his intentions, is always liable to be swung from the strait Path into one or other of the twin whirlpools, the Scylla of Psychism or the Charybdis of Mysticism. Of the danger of the first you, the Learner, have already been warned, but you have not learned that Mysticism, though it is of a far loftier nature, can, because of that very fact, prove a graver and more subtle danger. Little suspected, it lies in wait as a snare for all who, having attained to Invocation, rest in it, as in a harbour gained, and forget to recognize it for what it is, a step only, meant to lead to a higher. The Teacher who speaks in the name of *The Ancient One* warns his pupil thus: "*Rest upon no step however high; if you do it will change and become a snare.*" It is a warning which the Mystic forgets if it has ever reached his ear. He yearns for union with the Divine, and thinks that there he will find final rest and peace, knowing not, and heeding not, the warning that in attaining his ambition he is but entering another prison. True he may thus enjoy an eon of slothful bliss, but at last the LAW will cast him forth again, and wake him to the truth that he is but a loiterer upon and an obstructor of the PATH of eternal BECOMING.

The real Divine Union does not mean escape from Life and from the activities of Becoming Being, as the Mystic, whether of the West or of the East, conceives. It is that which the true Occultist seeks, under another name, when he aspires to become a Conscious Co-worker with Universal BEING. It means conscious identification of Self with LIFE, which, though eternally at rest in itself, is eternally active in its own BECOMING.

The true, the only, real goal of the Scientific Occultist is

perfectly expressed by Krishna, the embodied Lord of all Being, in the words : "*With this myself I establish the whole Universe, and remain for ever separate.*" He, conscious Ruler of Life because Life itself, rests for ever in *awareness* of his Divine Selfhood, and is yet eternally active in the least to the greatest of his infinite aspects. This conception of attainment is very different from that escape into "The Bosom of God" which is the goal of the Western Mystic, or from that of the Nirvana of the Eastern devotee, both of which are manifestations of transcendental selfishness ; and the truth is clearly recognized by Northern (Mahayana) Buddhism in its teachings concerning the Buddhas and their nature. The Pratyeka Buddha, who, indifferent to the sorrows of the world, escapes from them into Nirvana, is ranked far below the Buddha of Compassion, who, renouncing all reward for his labours, remains in the world to help mankind. In the story of the Christ the same teaching, though not often perceived and understood, is implicit. Christ is born into a human form, lives through his human phase, dies to it upon the *Cross*, which is the symbol of generation, and through that death is born into true LIFE. But does He escape thereby into eternal bliss remote from the world and struggling humanity ? On the contrary, He "descends into Hell", and there He "ministers unto the spirits in prison", rising thereafter not into any Heaven of separation but into Lordship over all things—into that perfect identification with all things that alone can make Him JUDGE of ALL.

Little though the uninstructed may suspect it, the self-same lesson that is taught in the words of Krishna, in the story of the life of the Buddha, and in the story of the life of the Christ, is taught also in those precepts from *Light on the Path* that I have quoted at the beginning of this lesson. To the Neophyte, when his eyes are opened, these few brief syllables reveal the nature of the effort he has now to make, and has to continue to make throughout Eternity. To dwell apart from Nature and Creature, yet to be identified with them in his aspects ; to be free of the thrall of ambition, desire of life, desire of sensation, yet to manifest himself in the Powers that bear those names, to be thus is to be a Conscious Co-worker with Nature, and consciously in union with DIVINE BEING.

This lesson on Evocation, and the preceding lesson on Invocation, are of the nature of commentaries of an extended, though elementary, kind upon those paradoxical precepts of *Light on the Path*, intended to lead the Learner into the first steps of practice of them. The practice of Invocation after the manner taught in Lesson V draws power from higher Spheres of Being for the raising of the Self. Held in equipoise by the Self upon its own plane, and withheld from descending into the planes of the lower selfhood, this influx of Energy is added to the Power-of-Soul already possessed, and is denied to those aspects of the separate self called Ambition and kindred names, which thus deprived of vitality are "killed out". In the practice of Evocation, begun as taught in this lesson, the Self sends Soul-Power downward into the separate planes by the exercise of the Free, responsible Will it possesses. There in association with the Personal Self in one or other of its multifarious aspects the Power expresses itself outwardly in forms which to the uninitiate are indistinguishable from Ambition, and other desires which Invocation has "killed out". For practical purposes the Powers thus evoked may be regarded as "resurrections" of the slain desires, with one profound difference, namely that their Energies are not now their own, but are *emanations* of Soul-Power born upon and belonging to a superior plane, and directed by a Self that is free. No longer do they execute their own will, but the Will of him who "dwells apart".

At this stage of the Learner's progress Evocation becomes necessary for many reasons, the chief of which may be briefly summarized as follows :

(1). Though it assumes very many different forms, the Power-of-Soul that enables Self to withdraw in continued freedom is really universal, and comes therefore from every plane of Life, not merely from those which relatively speaking are higher or wider in scope than that upon which the Self has created a balance. It pours in to the use of the Self from every Sphere of Ignorance which an aspect of Self, however insignificant, explores, and transmutes into a Body of Knowledge. Every subsidiary Knowledge-Body thus developed becomes merged in that already possessed by the Central Self, and thus adds to its power, and gives to its possessor a wider freedom.

(2). The greater the power consciously emanated into those separate aspects of Self which are engaged in exploring Spheres of Ignorance that belong to our lower (personal) world, the more rapidly are those Spheres exhausted and transmuted into Bodies of Knowledge.

(3). Of the Sphere of Ignorance delimited by the conditions which we call the life of the world much is dark, because the host of subsidiary Spheres of which it is composed have been very imperfectly explored by primitive aspects of Self, or are populated by aspects of Consciousness not of the realm of Self at all. If those dark places are to be transmuted into the Light of Knowledge the Self must send its Messengers (aspects) into them armed with the Power of Soul which it has found.

(4). By the measure of the power which the Self emanates into any Sphere the measure of the power it receives in return is determined : "*As ye sow, so shall ye reap.*"

(5). The Powers of the World *are* the World. The Spiritual Man must manifest himself through the Powers of which the world is created if he would have the world know him. He must make of the world a conscious aspect of himself, for an aspect of his Being it is, a dead burden, or an active foe when not recognized, a powerful servant when it is.

The laws that govern the practice of Evocation are the same that govern that of Invocation, but for the Neophyte their application is far more difficult and fraught with greater risks. It should never be attempted until certainty of some real mastery of Invocation has been gained—until through patient practice balance of the Self has been thoroughly tested.

Evocation is a far more stringent test of balance than is Invocation. In the practice of Invocation, when the *Swing of Being* mounts towards the negative spiritual *Power of Comprehension* (see Fig. 3) there is always what amounts to a momentary loss of balance, for as the lofty aspect of *Comprehension* dawns the poised Thought-Self is obscured. Poise, however, is instantly recovered when the positive spiritual *Power of Compassion* pours into the Thought-plane and is held there by the Self, balanced by the negative thought, *Understanding of Duty*. No corresponding loss of poise or obscuration of Self can occur in Evocation without a fall from the Way of Becoming that

may well be of a disastrous nature, for in this instance the Self if obscured becomes possessed by *separate* Powers, and whirled into a conflict with the Laws of Life, whereas in Invocation the possession, such as it is, is by Spiritual, non-separate Powers, and can cause no conflict. The greater difficulty of Evocation as compared with Invocation, and the greater risk of loss from any failure in its practice, was illustrated very aptly by a Teacher of old in the saying : "*It is easier to catch, hold, and cast back a spear that speeds towards you than to recall one that has sped from your hand.*" In the same symbolical drama the Teacher is made to say to his disciple : "*Let your spear be linked to your breastplate by a cord woven of pure silver strands ; then may you cast the weapon afar and withdraw it again to your hand ; but without the cord the spear is lost, and you become the prey of your foes.*" (A)

For the intelligent Learner who has with diligence worked thus far through these lessons no interpretation of such sayings is necessary. The Powers of Separate Being, of which Ambition, Desire of Sensation, and Sense of Separateness may be said to be chief hierarchs, may be safely evoked and safely used only by a Self that is free and poised upon its own plane, but which yet lives *in its aspects*—in conscious identification with them. Dwelling thus, the Man may rightly and truthfully paraphrase the Declaration of Krishna, and say : "*With this Self I create the World, and dwell apart with LIFE.*"

No philosophic exposition that I, or another, no matter how wise, can give will ever make you master of the technique of Evocation or give you safety in its practice. It is to be learned only by long and patient practice, not to be begun until you are thoroughly well grounded in Invocation—not even to be contemplated or approached except with circumspection and through many preparatory steps. Bear in mind the story of the Christ and think that that which you essay in Evocation is an analogue of his "Descent into Hell". Bear in mind also that though He descended as Master of LIFE He met the imprisoned spirits not as a conqueror but as a servitor. *Mayatmanum atmana pasyami*" : thus the Sanscrit Occult aphorism freely translated declares : "*I energize my illusionary aspects and thus I raise the Self.*"

Because these lessons do not undertake to guide any on into

full accepted Discipleship, but only seek to help the Aspirant over the first round of the long spiral ascent to the distant Gates of Gold, the practical exercises in Evocation presently to be taught will all be of an elementary character, effective if approached with understanding and practised with diligence, but, even if not so approached and practised, productive of no disastrous consequences. They are expounded under the following headings—all, with the exception of the first, analogues of the Instruments discussed in Lesson V.

Evocation may be practised through :

(1) Physical Training. (2) Reading—fact or fiction. (3) The Theatre : all its branches including *Oratory*. (4) Study of Humanity. (5) Teaching.

(1) *Physical Training.*

Some measure of attention given to the physical body is always necessary if attempts at Evocation of Powers are not to prove either abortive or disastrous. Doubly necessary is it that the Western student should understand not merely the nature of the care needed but just *why* it is needed, for it is a subject that in its true character receives little or no consideration from Western teachers of Occultism. Teachers whose outlook is truly spiritual neglect it almost totally. Others who are mainly preoccupied with the cure of bodily ills, or with the cultivation of psychic powers, emphasize it unduly and in a wrong direction, and between the two the Learner is either misguided or left without any guidance at all. The scope and general balance of this series of lessons prevent me from dealing with the subject as its importance deserves, but in Lesson VI of Part II of this volume a set of practical instructions is given in which the Learner will find all the guidance he needs. (B)

The Physical Body is the *Chief Monitor* of the Earth-world. Upon its quality and upon the manner in which it is utilized by the Self depend, first and foremost, how much or how little in the shape of Knowledge returns from earthly Spheres of Ignorance into Deep Being, there to be transmuted into Soul-Power to the raising of the Self. A Monitor is both a Delimitator and a Guide and Teacher. The less he attracts to himself the more is he Guide, Teacher, and valued Servant of the Self. The more

he attracts the more does he narrow and confine those outer Spheres which the Self should and must explore, and the more does he usurp the functions of the rightful Ruler of the Being. A body that is diseased or imperfect forces the Self to centre in it much of the Power-of-Soul that might be used with greater profit in transmutation of other Spheres. A body that is dull and insensitive, though not diseased, severely limits the range of exploration of the Self, because it fails to point out where Knowledge lies hidden. From the fact that it is entirely possible to turn Consciousness altogether away from mere earthly Fields of experience it is often most unsoundly argued that the quality of the physical body is altogether immaterial to progress towards Discipleship. The real meaning of earthly existence is either forgotten or never understood by those who argue so, for the Conditions that constitute it would not be manifest at all were it not that there remain on this plane many Spheres of Dark Substance still unexplored. Consciousness may indeed be turned away from those Spheres and from the Monitors that beckon the Self towards their exploration, but any such turning away means not that the "spirits" that dwell in them have been freed, but only left sleeping in their prisons.

For use as an effective instrument of Evocation the physical body has to be made :

(1). Harmonious in the interrelationships of its parts, balanced and stable, so that it as a whole, or in any of its aspects, shall obtrude itself into consciousness as little as possible.

(2). Finely sensitive, so that its efficiency as a Monitor, as a Guide to unexplored or imperfectly explored Spheres, is enhanced as much as possible.

To those ends and to no others is care and training of the body directed. Let it be well understood that Spiritual Occultism, the Path to the PATH, is in no way concerned with the healing of bodily diseases, nor with instructing persons not potential Disciples in the art of preserving and increasing health and strength. The rules and instructions given in detail in Lesson VI of Part II of this book are for the use of serious Learners, and for no others. It is possible that they may also prove of help to many not concerned with Occultism, but I do not

urge that such persons attempt to follow them, for to many they may be harmful rather than helpful.

The truth should be understood, though to many, I am well aware, it will be distasteful, that if a man is to enter the Path of Discipleship, or even to make any serious advance beyond the practice of the more elementary degrees of Invocation, he must be possessed of a measure of health and other physical attributes not commonly possessed by ordinary persons. In the Mystery Schools of the Ancient world, and indeed in all genuine Occult orders at the present day, certain bodily characteristics were and are recognized as indicating in a candidate for admission into membership his fitness or lack of fitness for the work required of him. The Occult "signs" which mark the potential Disciple are extremely numerous, but to give a detailed list of them in lessons intended for Beginners would serve no good purpose. There are, however, certain obstacles of a physical nature which make anything in the way of real Occult development difficult, impossible, or dangerous to attempt, and these should be known. They are as follows :

(1). *Age*. After the age of 54 in men and 45 in women little real progress towards Discipleship is possible, unless the individual is one who has already in the present life or in a past life done some conscious work towards the Path. Complete Beginners—known by the fact that even when they study hard (which is seldom) their studies are never accompanied by those flashes of intuitive Comprehension that always come to encourage the genuine Aspirant, and illumine a step before it is taken—should never go beyond Lesson IV, and usually not beyond Lesson II. Difficult to understand though the uninstructed may find it, it is a fact that even the more simple of the invocatory practices, such as the use of Scripture and Poetry as expounded in Lesson V, may lead to alarming reactions in unfit persons.

(2). Organic disease or definite deformity of body is an absolute bar to serious practice of Invocation, much more so to that of Evocation.

(3). No person afflicted by chronic diseases or defects of the types listed below should attempt serious Occult work of a character more advanced than that taught in Lesson III and Lesson IV :

(a) Diseases and deformities of the spine. Even a slight deformity of the spine is a serious obstacle.

(b) Diseases and deformities of the sex organs. In some cases these are even more hindering than those of class (a).

(c) Defects of the heart, lungs, and circulatory system.

(d) Kidney complaints.

(e) Organic and constitutional (not merely functional) diseases or defects of the abdominal organs, particularly of the liver, spleen, and colon.

Against the foregoing statements it may be argued that many persons afflicted with one or more of the diseases and defects named have exhibited, and do exhibit, lofty qualities, such as deep spirituality, seership, and genius of many kinds. All this is freely admitted, but it affects in no way the truth of what I have said. Spirituality, genius, or seership do not make the Adept. They may be qualifications for Discipleship, but not if they are not supported by quite different attributes. If the saints and geniuses who were afflicted with any of the disabilities above-mentioned be carefully studied it will invariably be discovered that their high qualities were but casual and isolated aspects of their natures, and that they lacked in a pronounced degree the perfect poise which alone can make a man a Conscious Co-worker with Everbecoming Life, such as the Occultist aspires to be. But let it not be thought that I teach that such persons have no high value to man and to the world ; on the contrary, their value is very great, as *Monitors*. Let it be understood that a way and an individual may be lofty and of high service to the world and yet be in no sense the Occult Way, or he the Initiate.

In an earlier lesson it was pointed out that extreme unbalance in world conditions permits, at the positive pole, a high manifestation of good, and at the negative, terrible evil, and the same law rules in the human Microcosm. Various species of genius, and more commonly clairvoyance and mediumistic qualities, are very frequently exhibited by persons who are diseased and deformed spinally and sexually, but it is not difficult to find other aspects very far from admirable in the same persons. Those diseases and disharmonies are either the outer manifestations of or the occasioners of an extreme

unbalance in the essential Being ; therefore those who suffer from them cannot be Occultists, for of the true Occultist balance is the hall-mark.

In training the body, especially in early stages of progress, the central thought should be balance. Balance gives easy freedom of movement, and enables the Self to withdraw attention from bodily things.

Sensitization is one of the aims of training, but care must be taken not to overdo it or it will defeat its own purpose. *The Ancient One* says : "*Regard your five senses as tax-gatherers to a King, for they bring you toll of the wealth of your kingdom, but beware lest the spoils they collect deceive you and cause you to forget that they are but liches.*"

The senses and other bodily perceptive powers, if such may be considered to exist, serve the Self inasmuch as they attract attention towards Spheres from which, for its further freeing, it may extract Knowledge. But if they are over-active they may lure the Self into Spheres that are remote and narrow, and which, because it lacks power to penetrate and explore them fully, may entrap it and hold it prisoner. Hence the warning of *The Ancient One* : profit from activity of the Senses, but let them not lure you into outer darkness in pursuits of phantom hoards of buried treasure.

Always, while utilizing the Monitor of the Body, maintain upon its own plane the freed and balanced Thought-Self wielding the Soul-Power of Responsible Will. In every form of Evocation of Power this rule prevails, but here, because you deal with objective Life wherein the Monitors are most powerful, observance of the rule is doubly necessary.

Before proceeding to study of other instruments of Evocation turn now to Lesson VI, Part II, and carefully study the detailed instructions in the care of the body there given. It will be well to wait until habituated in the mode of living advocated before beginning serious practice of Evocation through other channels.

(2) *Reading.*

Books (using the word to include all forms of literature not definitely Scriptural) provide civilized man with his widest

Fields of Experience, and open before the Self many unsuspected Spheres of Ignorance from which Knowledge, the Nourisher of the Power-of-Soul, may be extracted. Upon their own plane they correspond to the instrument of Scripture, and like it must be selected and used with discrimination. Books that are fictional are valuable to the extent that they set forth accurately before the reader phases of Life which it is *potentially* capable of exhibiting. Books that are factual are valuable inasmuch as they set forth phases of Life which it *actually* has exhibited or is exhibiting. The knowledge, capacity, and character of the writer are matters of high importance to the reader, for upon them the quality of the book depends.

Because Everbecoming Life is infinite and exhibits itself in an infinitude of forms, genius may manifest itself as fully in a prose romance or in a history as in a great poem or a great Scripture. Sincerity is the hall-mark of true Teacher and true poet, and no less is it the hall-mark of the fiction-writer or historian of genius. In effect, such a writer declares unto the reader : "*To you I transmit this Vision of Life emanated unto me by LIFE itself,*" thus consciously or unconsciously acknowledging to the world and to himself, as true genius always does, that he is a creator only to the extent that he has merged his Being in the BEING of the Eternal MANIFESTOR, become one with IT, and of its Energies made himself the transmitting medium. It is the common writer, he who has never bathed in the Divine Flame, who arrogates to himself the power of creation, and who in a certain sense actually does exercise it, for he expresses in his works not LIFE but his own separate Being or an aspect of it. Within the Sphere of his limited Consciousness he may be sincere, but that which he evokes in his work is only an emanation from that Sphere not powerful enough to illuminate the realm into which it is projected ; consequently his creations lack that completeness and reality, instinctively recognized by all as sincerity, the hall-mark of genius.

It is true that the Occultist who has actually entered the PATH and become the initiate Disciple can profit from any book, as he can from every Field of Experience that opens before him. Not so the Neophyte in his first approaches towards the practice of Evocation : he should not, until the test of

experience, patiently applied, has established in him the power of discrimination, use as instruments any others than books of recognized genius.

As in Invocation so in Evocation, the inner effort demanded of the Aspirant is one of Imagination—using that word in the wider sense defined in last lesson. But whereas in Invocation Imagination is exhibited in a single aspect, in Evocation it is exhibited in two, and it is, therefore, a more complex and difficult effort than that demanded in the former practice. Application of those two aspects of Imagination is made in the following way : first, by making a negative or indrawing effort to lift the Ruling Self upward into identification with that of the writer, to see with his eyes and know with his mind the Vision of Life as he saw and knew it in his hour of creation ; and second, by making a positive effort to identify the human or Acting Self with some selected character in the book, to enter into his Being and live and move as the author depicts him living and moving among the events and conditions that confront and surround him.

When successfully executed, the two efforts are sustained together and become a single effort, though in practice, and more especially in early practice, one, usually the first, precedes the other. Complete success in the effort makes reader and writer one in Consciousness, not as either is in ordinary moments, but as the writer was in his creative, or, more accurately, *emanative*, mood. In that mood he himself was a true evoker of Power, dwelling at the culminating point of the Sphere of Thought whence spring all true works of genius—the *Mount of Transfiguration*, as it has been called by the great Soul whose life and whose will inspired the writing of these lessons—the point of Being wherein the Self, though still the Man-Self, is illuminated by the radiance of loftier Spheres ; yet dwelling equally in those energized aspects of his separate selfhood that take shape as the characters who move through his pages, characters that are truly alive, because they dwell in his Being and he lives in them.

The key to understanding of the true nature of Evocation is fully revealed in the foregoing paragraph. By some Teachers it has been called :

"Union of Being with the Genius in his mood of creation". And by others :

"Marriage with the Creative Spirits".

But the two sayings have only one meaning : that which I have striven to convey.

Not without prolonged effort and many failures can Evocation of this perfect and lofty nature be compassed, but to have in mind a vision of a goal towards which to aspire is an aid with which we cannot dispense while we live in the limited human Consciousness. Towards that goal you may take your earlier steps through the media of books of genius, but not until, with the enormous aid they give, you come within measurable distance of it can you hope for any unaided success. Not until you can in reading a great book rouse into powerful action such aspects of the lower selfhood as those which take shape in passionate love, in righteous anger, in consuming ambition, in all those desires and human thoughts that cause a man to outstand from his fellow men, and at the same time remain serene, poised, and watchful in the Ruling Self that rests at the Summit of the Sphere of Thought, can you with perfect safety handle and use less effective instruments, much less attempt Evocation in ordinary conditions, depending upon your own power to sustain your balance. Never forget that to be capable of true Evocation you must yourself have touched genius consciously, and that means that you will have risen into the degree of Magician.

While confining your more serious attempts at the practice of Evocation to the study of books of genius, you may, aiming not too high and accepting failure with detachment, approach the work experimentally through other forms of reading. Scope for such experimenting is given by common History, Biography, and most of all by the Newspaper. These types of literature, in most instances, present life or phases of life with a strong, often a calculated, bias, and in consequence assail the reader with Conditions highly stimulative of the Separate Powers. Few not Neophytes advanced considerably in exercise of free, detached thought realize how completely they are dominated by separative thoughts, emotions, and passions evoked by Conditions deliberately set up by their favourite Daily Paper, and by

popularly accepted histories. Invocation patiently practised devitalizes those lower Powers by killing what we call *interest* in the Spheres they delimit—diverting it to the use of the Self on higher planes ; but in Evocation the flow of Energy, interest, must again be sent out into the inferior Spheres, now with deliberate will by the freed Self, in order that added power and wider freedom may be won through fully and consciously exploring them.

Experimental Evocation through Newspaper or popular national history may be practised as follows. Aided by the conditions the writing provides, set yourself to the task of creating, as the fiction-writer does, a little world in imagination, entering into it and living vividly through it in your separate aspects—your *emanations*. Identify yourself with the editor who writes scathingly of public personages who are not of the political party that employs him. Be the plaintiff or defendant in some great lawsuit. Be the prisoner, or the prosecuting counsel, or the detective in a sensational criminal trial ; in fact throw yourself wholeheartedly into “taking sides”. Such “side-taking” is the very essence of personal activity. Yet all the while when acting thus hold fast to your identity with the unsleeping Self, dwelling apart with him upon the lonely Mount, patiently gathering up with him the scattered threads of Knowledge spun by your busy children and from them weaving with unhurried hands a wider and more splendid robe of Royal Freedom.

(3) *The Theatre.*

The term *The Theatre* is used to cover not merely every form of histrionic art but staged exhibitions of all kinds, including public speaking. As an instrument of Evocation it is in many ways far more powerful than Reading, but much less available to the average Learner, and much less safe. What was said of *Music* in the last lesson applies even more strongly to the Theatre. In general, the Learner cannot be the actor in a stage play, or the principal in any staged exhibition, but must content himself with observing the performances of others. He is consequently subjected to the influence of the personalities of the actors as well as to that of the instrument they manipulate,

and for this reason is liable to have his own lower selfhood stimulated to an extreme degree, with corresponding danger of having his detached Self obscured. Not therefore until thoroughly practised and tested in Evocation through Reading should you make serious attempts to utilize the instrument of the Theatre.

Study of actors of genius, and other platform performers of distinction, among whom great Statesmen and Politicians are prominent, is highly instructive, for by persons of these classes the art of Evocation is often very effectively exemplified, though in most cases not consciously, or only semi-consciously. By his absolute sincerity the great actor makes the characters he assumes impressive. He himself actually *is* the character he depicts, and does not merely dress his own personality in a cloak of pretence as does the actor who lacks the fire of genius ; yet withal he is not possessed or obsessed, and returns serenely when the play is over into his own lofty Thought-Self. It is to the same power of Evocation that great Statesmen, great Counsel, great Soldiers, indeed great Leaders of every kind, owe their distinction. They are all in their own walks of life conscious or unconscious workers of Magic.

(4) *Study of Humanity.*

As an instrument of Evocation Study of Humanity occupies a place parallel to that of Study of Nature as an instrument of Invocation. It is the most powerful and most readily available of all instruments. Ultimately it must come to be, practically speaking, your sole instrument ; you merely prepare yourself to use it by means of your exercises with others—a preparation indeed most necessary because of the varied and complex character of the work. Through weaker instruments the laws which govern the Art may be learned and applied without danger, and none but these are needed to guide your use of the greater weapon.

The Laws of both Invocation and Evocation are declared in the mystical words of the Teacher who speaks in the character of *The Ancient One* :

“Look earnestly into that Mirror which is named the World of Men, and see therein countless images each the shadow of a part of your

nature. Thus learn that your fellow men are but shadows, and that you while you live among them are but a shadow also. . . ."

"Cover the Mirror named the World of Men with the Veil of Knowledge and look upon your Self. Thus learn that though your Shadows are Legion your true SELF is but one. . . ."

Elsewhere in the same ancient Scripture the Teacher says :

"The Shadow moves but the LIGHT moves not. The Shadow darkens and fades but the LIGHT is always LIGHT. Be thou the Shadow that dances with the Shadows, but be thou always the LIGHT, for without Light no Shadow can be."

(5) *Teaching.*

Sooner or later in every cycle of learning the Aspirant is required to teach. Real Teaching is the truest form of Evocation, for in it aspects of the Self are called to life within the Being of another, and the Learning Self of the other is evoked within the Being of the Teacher. It is required of the Teacher who would truly teach that he be able to live within the Acting selfhood of others, feel with their Emotional principles and think with their Thought principles, and yet live apart, alone and isolated in his own Thought-of-Self upon the highest peak of the World of Mind.

In any such real sense as this the Neophyte cannot teach, yet something approaching it he can do, and because he can he *must*. In saying this let me not be misunderstood : when I say that the Learner must teach I do not imply that he should rush about trying to convey to others knowledge upon which he himself has no sure grip. That is the way of the average man ; particularly is it the way of the untrained student of Occultism. It is the everlasting cause of the corruptions that at once begin to darken the LIGHT at each fresh unveiling, whether that unveiling occurs in a world-wide Sphere or in a circle of two or three. Men who lack any gleam of real knowledge, who have but cast an unpractised eye over the ground whereon rests the Ladder to the PATH, who, if they have perceived the presence of the Ladder at all, have not placed a foot upon its lowest rung, go forth to gather followers no more ignorant, but less self-confident, than they, and preach and teach of things no more (and no less) real than are the phantoms of an opium-eater's dream. Thus do the blind lead the legions of the blind, and thus

do leaders and led flounder blindly in the mire of Separateness, the first loudly proclaiming, and the last fondly believing, that they have found and are treading the Path to LIFE.

When I say that to the Learner a time comes when he must teach I imply that in the course of his advance he will inevitably come to a point where the Knowledge and Power drawn into and conserved within his Being through Invocation will transform that Being into a *Spiritual Magnet*, as the inspirer of these lessons has termed it, a magnet towards which others dwelling within his Sphere of Self, who have freed the *steel* of Soul from its scabbard of separateness, will of necessity gravitate. When this occurs Conditions multiply around the Aspirant, compelling him through their special nature to put forth some of the Light that burns within him. In, perhaps, simpler words, Conditions will irresistibly force him into the role of teacher, but he must beware that they do not lure him into trying to teach those whose nature neither calls for nor is capable of receiving enlightenment.

To segregate a circle or group of true Learners from out of the numbers who will blindly or half blindly gather round you when any real Knowledge and Power emanate from you is in these Western lands a task of extreme difficulty. To succeed in doing it, even to the extent of two or three, is to have in your hand an instrument of White Magic, a veritable Enchanter's Wand through which blessings may be scattered abroad, because each unit of the circle becomes a true emanation of, or aspect of, your own freed Self, and in his turn an emanator of true Soul-Power.

It is a fact that the Beings of all persons who gather in devotion about a teacher, especially one with claims to any Occult standing, become instruments of Magic. But rarely indeed is the Magic *white*, for devotion is centred in the Self of the *Man*, not in the true SELF of LIFE.

Though you may find it impossible to create about you a circle of genuine Learners, yet any body of persons who habitually congregate round you seeking teaching will form for you a useful instrument of Evocation from which you may profit much, irrespective of any outwardly manifest profit that may accrue to your pupils. To use such an instrument rightly is

difficult, and is for him who attempts it a severe test. If you would not fail badly give close thought to the following hints :

Hold firmly aloof from any concern whatsoever of a *personal* nature with the trials and failures of those whom you try to teach, not that you have no responsibility for them—you have the greatest, because you have caused them by evoking some sparks of your own Power within the Beings of the sufferers—but because you risk obscuring your own Light by such concern, and give no real help.

The moment your teachings, which are Energies emanated through you associated with aspects of your Self, enter and touch the Consciousness of another, activity in his Being is at once increased, and with that increase he becomes aware of an inner conflict, a struggle, which is that of the legions of the lower selfhood fighting to maintain their hold upon the Higher Self which threatens to escape from their thrall. Outwardly, and in the separate Consciousness of the sufferer, this conflict will manifest in strange emotions, disturbed thoughts, dissatisfaction with self, and very often with the teacher or teachings, vague feelings of loss and loneliness, evil dreams, and general unhappiness. Should you unwisely expend yourself in personal sympathy with a pupil so afflicted, and try in human ways to relieve his sufferings, your Ruling Self may be dragged down from its high place and become possessed by the Powers you have evoked ; for remember that those selves that make a battleground of the Being of the other are your own evocations, aspects of your own separate selfhood objectified in him. From these it is your task to remain remote and detached and gather up new Power and Knowledge from their activities.

The Beginner may think that the attitude I advocate indicates coldness and indifference—a shirking of responsibility, in fact. It is not so, nor is it possible to get rid of responsibility. For the results of the action of any Power you evoke you are responsible, and this is brought home to you in the object lesson which the troubled state of your pupil furnishes. You see and feel his burdens as yours, and the one true and certain way of helping him to bear them is to remain unshaken by them, serenely poised in your true Self.

Most Learners will have read stories such as Bulwer Lytton's

Zanoni, wherein the Adept Teacher withdraws and leaves his pupil a prey to the dark phantom he has evoked, and may imagine that such behaviour means complete heartlessness. Nothing could be further from the truth than such an idea. The Teacher, though he appears to withdraw, must (by the Law of BEING) remain linked with and burdened by the troubles and failures of any pupil in whom he has evoked any of his own Power, until such time as the latter has found peace and freedom through his own efforts. The withdrawal of the Adept depicted in tales like *Zanoni*, written by authors of knowledge, is merely an allegorical representation of happenings in the inner Being of all Aspirants. Mejnour, the Arch-Adept in *Zanoni*, typifies the lonely, detached Self, the Initiator. *Zanoni* is the adept *Soul* through which contact between the Initiator and the Neophyte, typified by Glyndon, is established, and it is through that *Soul* that the perfect sympathy of Divine Consciousness goes out and shows the afflicted the Way to Peace. In every man these three aspects exist. Much that is illuminating may be learned from intelligent study of *Zanoni*.

I do not say remain cold and indifferent to the sufferings of a pupil in whom your Power has evoked an inner conflict. I say let not your Ruling Self involve itself in the struggle. But, through the *Zanoni* in you, you can and you must go out to the afflicted in Compassion, while yet in your *Mejnour* you dwell on the *Mountain* in cold and lonely peace.

Concluding Comments.

In the various hints contained in this lesson—for hints and suggestions they are rather than direct instructions—all has been given relative to the practice of Evocation that may be safely given to a Beginner. To what extent you pursue the hints thus given must depend upon yourself ; but remembering that this is only the first round of the long spiral ascent to the PATH you will, wisely, not pursue them too far. It is better to lag a little than to advance too fast, only to be flung back violently by collision with some hidden barrier. At every stage of the ascent there is risk of a slip and fall, and the risks become greater and the results of a fall more disastrous the higher you ascend. Take therefore this step of Evocation with extreme circumspection.

Confine yourself in your attempts at Evocation to use of the "Instruments" mentioned in this lesson until some distinct certainty of stable balance has become yours. There are numberless other means of evoking Powers, and of these Ceremonial Magic is chief. For invocatory exercises, used as outlined in Lesson V, Ceremonial is not only highly efficacious but entirely safe, but as an instrument of Evocation it is, though enormously powerful, utterly unfit for the use of a Beginner. Any experimentation with it, whether you operate it for yourself or allow another to operate it on your behalf, is fraught with many dangers : danger of being possessed by too intensely vitalized lower Powers ; danger of being obsessed by sub-human Powers, commonly called *Elemental*, which may be called to life within the Sphere of Self by over-stimulation of its embryonic aspects ; danger indeed that all these roused Lower Legions may obscure the Light of the detached Self, and hold, perhaps for a whole lifetime, Consciousness imprisoned in the state known to mystics as "*The Dark night of the Soul*".

All instruments of Invocation described in Lesson V may be used equally for evocatory purposes, but it is better and safer that a Beginner should not use the same instrument for both practices. The advanced Occultist may do this, for all Conditions are his to use as media both of Invocation and of Evocation ; but such use implies that he has risen to the status of Natural Magician.

Warnings such as these have of necessity to be given for the protection of Aspirants who lack any direct guidance, yet the mere possibility of risk must not deter you from essaying the step of Evocation. The round of the Spiral Ascent which you are now treading cannot be completed if you omit any one of the Seven Steps. By patient study of this lesson and by diligent practice of the exercises it teaches you may perfect yourself in the *technique* of the evocatory Art in its less developed aspects. Armed with this Power, and illumined by the Light which experience gives, go steadily forward, fearing no danger and thirsting for no reward. Armoured by obedience to this Law you can never fall or fail or stray.

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"Seek out the way. Seek the way by retreating within. Seek the way by advancing boldly without. Seek it not by any one road. To each temperament there is one road that seems most desirable. But the way is not found by devotion alone, by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self-sacrificing labour, by studious observation of life. None can take the disciple more than a single step onward. All steps are necessary to make up the ladder. The vices of men become steps in the ladder, one by one as they are surmounted. The virtues of men are steps indeed necessary—not by any means to be dispensed with, but though they create a fair atmosphere and a happy future they are useless if they stand alone. The whole nature of man must be used wisely by one who desires to enter the way. Each man is to himself absolutely the way, the truth, and the life. But he is only so when he grasps his whole individuality firmly and by the force of his awakened spiritual will recognizes this individuality not as himself but as that thing which he has with pain created for his own use, and by means of which he purposes as his growth slowly develops his intelligence to reach the life beyond individuality. When he knows that for this his wonderful, complex, separated life exists, then indeed, and then only, is he upon the way. Seek it by plunging into the mysterious and glorious depths of your own inmost being. Seek it by testing all experience, by utilizing the senses in order to understand the growth and meaning of individuality, and the beauty and obscurity of those other divine fragments which are struggling side by side with you, and form the race to which you belong. Seek it by the study of the laws of being, the laws of nature, the laws of the super-nature; and seek it by making the profound obeisance of the soul to the dim spark that burns within. Steadily as you watch and worship its light will grow stronger. Then you may know that you have found the beginning of the way. And when you have found the end its light will suddenly become the infinite light."

(Light on the Path.)

LESSON VII

NATURAL MAGIC

HE who walks the PATH OF LIGHT is marked by :

- (1). COMPASSION : *for he understands the Needs of the Weary Animal, the Sorrows of the Child, and the Mind of the Stranger.*
- (2). HARMONY OF SOUL : *for his Eye perceives Nature, his Heart comprehends Nature, and his Courage enables him to dwell with Nature.*
- (3). SKILL IN ACTION : *for he Loves his work, he Knows his work, and he Works with Will for no reward.*
- (4). UNIVERSAL VISION : *for he loves all things, he is just towards all beings, and he serves the Law with gladness.*
(*The Sayings of the Ancient One.*)

IN the days of old when the Mystery Schools of the Mediterranean world flourished openly, and Magic was as much an accepted reality as telegraphy is today, the candidate for admission into their teaching degrees, having passed through six stages of Neophyteship in the initiatory lodges of Egypt, Greece, Chaldea, or other centre, was required to go to Ireland, and there undergo a further initiation at the hands of the Druids in order to become fully qualified as a Magician.

The Druids lived and worked with Nature as her conscious agents and servants. Their Temples and Holy Places were no edifices raised by human hands, and consecrated to sacred uses by mere power of human mind, but were Centres taken direct from the hand of the Universal Mother, altered only, if altered at all, by the addition of rude but intensely significant symbols of Nature's own designing. The true Druids, of whom and of whose lore less than nothing is known in the Outer World, or guessed by those who in these modern times pretend to know-

ledge of the Ancient Mysteries, were the High Priests of the Most High Gods—those Old Ones whose forms, never visible to human eyes, were never degraded into human semblance in wood or metal or stone by human imagination and human hands, but were ever known only in their robed outlines, in the sun-blaze and the fire, in the sea and the lake and the river, in the wind and the rain, and in plain and forest and mountain. Custodians of and Initiators into the secrets of Natural Magic were those High Priests, and their Art was an art more difficult to master because more lofty than the Art-magic of temple and secret shrine. No Hierophant of that lost world was ever regarded as fully adept in his craft until initiated into the service of the Mother by the Wise Men of the Sacred Isle. (A)

What was a law unto the Men of Wisdom in those ancient days, before the Age of Iron threw its black shadow over the Western World, is still a law unto the Aspirant who would achieve the high dignity of companionship with those who are Conscious servants of the All Mother. Through six stages or degrees, analogous in essential nature to the six lessons of this series already given, no matter how different in detail, the Neophyte or Disciple treads every round of the Spiral Path to Knowledge, and is then initiated, or rather initiates himself by virtue of what he has become through previous effort, into the seventh, which is the practice of Natural Magic. No round, from the first which he essays as a semi-conscious Learner up to the last which he will tread as a human being, can ever be fully completed and left behind unless and until he has roused within himself the power, in some measure however slight, of acting as conscious servant of, and agent of Universal Nature. But when once the least spark of that power has become consciously his he will have joined the Company of Workers of Magic—those who are said to follow the STAR—and never again, let him stray and stumble as he may upon the higher rounds of the Ascent, can he be as are the men of the World of the Blind, upon whose open but sightless eyes the beams of the STAR have never shone.

A lesson—using the word in its ordinary sense—on Natural Magic cannot be given, not even a lesson of a nature as qualified as that of Lesson VI. To attempt it would be not merely useless

but presumptuous. The Art of Magic develops through the processes of natural growth, exactly as do strength and stature of body, and when it is developed the teacher, like the physical trainer, can do no more than show, by hint, suggestion, and example, how best it may be applied and conserved. For this reason the various comments which I shall permit myself to make in the present lesson will be deliberately incomplete, discursive, and disjointed, even to the extent of being, as some students not real Learners will doubtless think, devoid of any real meaning. Yet for those who have followed the preceding lessons intelligently, and know therefore how to look for it, meaning will disclose itself, and will continue to disclose itself in greater and greater abundance each time the Aspirant moves through the seven steps of the *round*.

At the head of this lesson there is quoted a passage from *The Sayings of the Ancient One*, setting forth the four principal attributes that mark, as the Teacher declares, the Man who walks the PATH OF LIGHT. In this passage the very essence of the old Druidic Law is expressed. Compassion, Harmony of Soul, Skill in Action, and Universal Vision were called the Four Magic Weapons of the Druid ; therefore I cannot do better than make them the text of the comments which will constitute the lesson. The explanatory clauses attaching to each "Weapon", known as the Haft, the Blade, and the Point, are a particularly valuable study, and in considering them it may be possible to rouse in the Consciousness of the Learner some real understanding of the nature of true Magic.

(1). COMPASSION.

(a) *The Weary Animal.*

Once upon a time, both in the Macrocosmic and the Microcosmic sense, the Being that now manifests as Man exhibited itself in a phase of Becoming wherein the Principle of SUBSTANCE, the objective analogue of which is *earth*, did hold and condition it far more stringently than it does in the present phase. Then its *head* (the symbol of Consciousness) and its *body* (the symbol of Soul, or the executive agent) were

equidistant from *earth* ; and its *limbs* (symbols of Energy) were not free of *earth*, as, comparatively speaking, those of Man are, but were all four closely conditioned by it, and in range of action narrowly restricted. Out of that *Sphere of Ignorance*, the Animal Sphere, the Being in due time won up into the larger freedom of the Human Sphere ; but the essential animal nature, the Body of Knowledge developed by experience in the animal Consciousness, was not abandoned or destroyed, but was absorbed into, or incorporated within, the Human *Sphere of Ignorance*, and therein it continues existence as a Monitor and Delimitator.

Now, every intelligent man is aware that during his growth from birth to adult manhood he has passed through many different phases, and that the earlier of these phases were purely animal. Consequently he, the Man that is, has evolved from, or, as some would say, has descended from, the animal. Furthermore he is aware that that essential Animal still exists within him, for as he explores his Human Sphere he meets its conditioning influence everywhere—he, according to the measure of his intelligence, constantly evokes it to his aid or to his hindrance in forms passive or active, gentle or terrible. Being aware of all this, he cannot fail to recognize as well that the Animal within, though it influences him, is not independent of him, for it depends entirely for its life and activity upon the vitality he emanates into it ; therefore he is actually its creator and fount of life, and it is his creation and emanation. (B)

As in the Inner so in the Outer—as it is in the Microcosm so it is in the Macrocosm : the Being which is a Man in the present world-cycle was an Animal in a past world-cycle. Men have evolved from animal progenitors, not in the manner conceived by the Darwinian evolutionist but from a phase of Planetary Becoming that preceded the phase which man calls the World. And the Animal, the progenitor of Man, has come forward with its descendant, reappearing not as Parent Being and Ruling Lord, as it was of old, but as the child, the potential servant, the emanation of Man. Man therefore is doubly linked with the Animal : he is its child and should consider its needs as the young man considers those of the aged parent ; he is its parent and should rule and guide it as the wise father

rules and guides the unthinking child. This knowledge must be made a living part of the Soul of Man before he becomes fit to grasp the Haft of the Magic Weapon of Compassion. (C)

The secret of Magic is bound up in a living understanding of Macrocosmic and Microcosmic correspondences, of which those outlined in the preceding paragraphs are an example—an example which if closely studied may prove a clue leading to the discovery of many others. The intelligent learner should easily realize from what has been said that Invocation and Evocation consciously used in a single effort is the root of the Wand of Natural Magic, for it implies the willed use of the Law of Evolution itself.

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Why is the Animal weary and what are its needs? It is weary because of its long slavery to *earth*. Above all, and inclusive of all needs it needs extended towards it the hand of Man, its parent and its child, to help it in its struggle to rise into a larger life and a wider freedom. And yet how, it may well be asked, can man give the asked-for aid? Has not the Animal Being its own *Sphere of Ignorance*, and has it not to exhaust it and free itself from it by its own unaided efforts? The answer is that the Animal, like every other of the infinite aspects of **EVERBECOMING**, must find freedom as the fruit of completed experience, and in no other way; but nevertheless it has help, for it is in essence **BEING**, an aspect only, phenomenally, but a link, as is every aspect, in the indissoluble chain of the **EVERBECOMING** of that **ONE BEING**. By diligently pursuing the experiences which its *Sphere of Ignorance* affords it, every Being wins for itself a continuous expansion of Consciousness, and thereby helps towards freedom the united host of **BEING**. The Beings of the Lower Kingdoms, which are conscious but not aware that they are so, are helped by their own experiences and by those of Beings of other kingdoms, but know nothing of growing, or of helping or being helped. Man who is aware only of a Consciousness of separate existence struggles half blindly to help himself: he gives no conscious help to Beings of the Lower Kingdoms, and is unaware of receiving any from higher Spheres, yet he does receive the

latter, and without it would perish. But Man become conscious of true Being extends his awareness to those both behind him and beyond him, and knows that in that expansion of *Self* he helps both himself and all other aspects of LIFE.

Let us now consider a concrete example of the manner in which man may help and uplift the Being of the Weary Animal. Hold firmly in mind while studying the conceptions I set forth that my aim is not to lay down any law, but to point a way that may if followed lead you to know the LAW.

Imagine that you are passing, on a Summer afternoon, along a peaceful country lane. Through the agency of your "Tax-gatherers", the senses, you become aware of the elevating influence of the hierarchies of the Guardian Lords, manifesting in the varied colours of tree and grass and flower and sky and cloud ; manifesting in the song of bird, the distant low of ox and bleat of lamb, the rustle of leaf, and the soft music of the breeze ; manifesting in the rhythmic movement of wind-stirred branch, drifting cloud, and stately procession of light and shadow ; manifesting, above all, in the *Idea* of Beauty that takes possession of your Consciousness. Suddenly from the open gate of a peasants' homestead a large dog leaps out and confronts you. Bared fangs, bristling neck, and deep growl warn you that you are in imminent bodily peril. What course should you pursue ? One of three obvious expedients would certainly be the choice of the ordinary man so situated. He might go forward boldly and by a show of courage overawe the animal. He might advance cautiously, and with friendly words and gestures strive to placate it, and perhaps succeed. Or he might consider that a discreet withdrawal was the wisest course, and retire with all the dignity possible in the circumstances.

Now, for you, if you adopt either of those expedients, the harmony of nature that has hitherto prevailed will at once be destroyed, and the *Idea*, Beauty, will become obscured. All of your happy vision that will remain with you will be regretful memory of a blissful dream. But should it happen that you are master of Natural Magic, quite a different

result will become possible if you will it. The Art of Invocation is yours to use, and you may, from any aspect which life presents to you, assemble the Guardian Lords of Sound, Colour, Number, and Idea and command their power to lift you above the illusion of danger which springs only from the sense of separateness. You will look upon the animal and see no menace in its appearance. From the lights and shades of its glossy coat, from the fire of its eyes and from the pure whiteness of its teeth, you can assemble a hierarchy of power sufficient in itself to lift your Consciousness above the separate planes. But when to reinforce it you summon the Lords of Sound that dwell in the note that issues from the animal's throat, and those of Number and Idea manifest in its lithe movements and in the beauty of its form, you will find yourself raised into Spheres of Consciousness where sense of danger cannot intrude and live. In the moment that you ascend out of the Sphere of Separation you will, as a potential enemy, vanish out of the consciousness of the dog, and he will accept your presence and movements with as little antagonism as he accepts the features of Nature, for of them you have become one.

Possibly, even probably, it may be thought by those to whom conceptions of the foregoing nature are altogether unfamiliar that my idea as to what Invocation may accomplish is at best but a theory unsupported by concrete evidence of any kind. For the benefit of those who think thus I will point out certain facts, some of them very well attested, though in so doing I go slightly outside the bounds I have set myself in this lesson :

(1). Numerous unbiased and intelligent persons, in all ages, have borne witness to the fact that certain men, called variously yogis, saints, mystics, holy men, and the like, have the power of rendering harmless animals as dangerous, even, as a hungry lion.

(2). Of much more general knowledge is the fact that persons in states of trance—somnambulistic, hypnotic, or mediumistic—often approach and even handle ferocious animals with impunity.

(3). When a youth, I, who give these lessons, was very

subject to trances of a somnambulistic character, and often during their continuance caught and rode a wild, unbroken stallion which even the most daring of professional horsemen feared to approach, much less attempt to ride.

In all such instances as the foregoing the power exhibited arises from a single cause, namely from detachment of the ruling principle of Consciousness, or *Self*, from the vehicles through which it manifests normally—from the physical body and immediately subjective nature. These vehicles left thus, practically speaking, untenanted, void of consciousness, are perceived by the animal—if it perceives them at all, of which in some cases there is a doubt—merely as an integral part of its conditions, no more separate from it or inimical to it than a tree or a hill or a wreath of cloud. Facts such as these conceal an immense and seldom suspected significance, which if sought out and followed up would lead man to a newer and truer view of life than that which he now entertains.

The condition induced in himself by the Adept in Natural Magic through the processes of Invocation corresponds exactly to that of the ecstasized yogi or mystic, and to that of the hypnotized subject or the somnambulist, with the single but highly important exception that it appertains to superior planes of Consciousness, and is induced with conscious knowledge by the application of the power of Conditions, over which the Magician exercises control. In your hypothetical encounter with the dog, Invocation carried out in the manner briefly outlined lifts the Self from out of the purely human and separate planes into Spiritual Spheres where Being unites with Universal BEING, and leaves the animal confronted by an appearance no more hostile or exciting than the shadow of a passing cloud. Had it been that you were at the moment of the encounter fully immersed in your invocatory exercises, you would have passed the animal, seeing it no doubt with your physical eyes, but only as a feature of Nature as innocent as a tree, and without exciting in it the least symptom of antagonism.

INVOCATION alone, though it secures you immunity from attack, will not enable you to minister fully and consciously to the needs of the Weary Animal, and will therefore not give you complete grasp of the Haft of the Weapon of Compassion.

Evocation has also to be used. You are aware that the Animal is both your parent and your child. You know that you are linked with him eternally. He has served you by enabling you to take birth in your Man-Sphere, and you must now repay that debt by helping him to rise. That you cannot do by retreating from him into realms where he cannot follow, nor by any other means whatsoever that include standing aloof from him. In one way only can you give him the help he craves, and that is by going out to him, by entering into his Being and vivifying and quickening his Consciousness by uniting yours with it. This you can do if you are a master of Evocation. Still dwelling remote at the summit of your Sphere of Self, to which Invocation has raised you, you can emanate an aspect of your Soul-Power in a form corresponding, more or less, to the Lower-emotional Power called "Fellow-feeling" (see Fig. 2, Lesson IV). In that power you may consciously identify yourself with the Animal Being, and look out through his dim eyes with the eyes of your awakened Self, and thus come to see and know all his actions and attitudes as supremely right, as pursuance of needed experience in the *Sphere of Ignorance* confronting him. Of that Sphere the chief Monitor and Delimitator is your own separate Being ; but it you devitalize by the power of Invocation, and by the power of Evocation resurrect it as a Body of Knowledge within the Animal Consciousness, with the instantaneous result that to him you cease to be a potential enemy and become a fully comprehended friend. By this conscious identification of yourself with his Consciousness you with the Power of your Free Will grant him perfect freedom to attack you, but with the same act leave him nothing to attack.

You will find that these imperfectly outlined conceptions, if studied deeply and surveyed from every angle of approach you are capable of compassing, will bring you many useful items of new knowledge, and perhaps even flashes of true illumination. Among other things the study may lead you to understand how man, in the far remote past before the Separate Self became dominant in his Being, succeeded in domesticating so perfectly so many different species of animal ; and it may also show you how further domestication will, and must, be carried out in the distant future, before the day when the lion will lie

down with the lamb dawns upon the world. And again you may find enlightenment concerning the true significance of the saying, "*Resist not evil*", and learn how to obey the command. Without the power of Natural Magic you cannot obey it, and blind attempts to do so lead always into grievous error.

(b) *The Sorrows of the Child.*

Like the Animal, the Child is equally the parent and the offspring of the Man, and like it also has a subjective existence in the Microcosm and an objective existence in the Macrocosm. It is nearer akin to the Man than is the Animal, and for that reason it encompasses and conditions him even more straitly. As the Animal is "weary" so is the Child "sorrowful". What is *weariness* in the Animal because of its slavery to *earth* manifests as *sorrow* in the Child because the Self within it has stirred into wakefulness and become aware of its captivity. With cries for release from its prison it unceasingly besets the Man, and how to satisfy its demands is for him an ever-present and deeply perplexing problem.

The Key to the solution of the problem of the Child has already been placed in your hands in what has been said concerning the Animal. Constantly invoke to your own aid the power and wisdom of that Parent Being that stands above and beyond you, in relationship to you similar to that which you bear towards the Child, and living in that power and light evoke in its Being, through the Power-of-Soul which is yours, an aspect of your own Thought-Self. Or, to make the nature of the act more clear, shut out the Macrocosmic world and wake the Child within your own Microcosmic nature ; and let the Light evoked in you by your own *Parent* teach you how to guide it.

Because the Child is more closely related to the Man than is the Animal, it is more difficult to evoke within its Being any aspect of the Man-Self than it is to evoke it within that of the latter. Why this should be so may perhaps be not easily understood ; but let it be considered that the Animal Consciousness is still part of the Universal Consciousness wherein there is no Sense of Separateness, whereas the Separate Self is the ruling principle in the Child, and understanding may begin to dawn. The Animal still lives in EDEN, and is ready to

respond to the voice of any Being that lives consciously or unconsciously with the Divine, but the Child, in whom Self has just awakened has fallen from EDEN, and sees the Heavenly Power not as a guiding light but as a flaming *sword*.

To have power, therefore, to relieve the Sorrows of the Child implies a mastery of Magic greater than that called for when meeting the needs of the Weary Animal. It is only the real Teacher who has entered fully upon the Seventh Step who can say with POWER : "*Suffer the little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.*"

(c) *The Mind of the Stranger.*

Who and what is the Stranger ? Every man who thinks and feels that he is separate from you is to you the Stranger, and to every man who, you think and feel, is separate from you, you are the Stranger, and to your own True Self also.

The Stranger is always with you, nearest to you, and most intimate of all Beings, alive and active within you in the Microcosm, and alive and active all about you in the Macrocosm. He is your own living parent and your own latest-born child. To entertain him with true hospitality, to serve him with due respect, and to direct him upon his way with right wisdom demands exercise of a power that only the Magician who stands at the final Step of his round of progress fully possesses ; for the Stranger never comes to you alone, but brings with him, interlinked with him, his progenitors, and yours also, the Child and the Animal. Nevertheless the same Magic Weapon that makes gentle the fierce Animal, and makes obedient the rebellious Child, wielded now with greater skill, can make the Stranger your valued friend and guest, and you, the Disciple, his wise and just host.

The Magic Weapon is COMPASSION. Turn back and consider what was said in Lesson IV concerning Compassion, where the Weapon was exhibited in its *unassembled* state, and compare it with what it is here shown to be, when Haft and Blade and Point are conjoined into a perfect whole, and you will, if you are a true Learner, discover unto yourself an understanding that the words of another, no matter what his wisdom, can never convey to your mind.

(2). *HARMONY OF SOUL.*(a) *The Eye that Sees Nature.*

Without Harmony—a true relative balance between and accord among all the parts that compose it—no instrument can serve the purpose for which it is intended, no matter what the skill of the user may be. Of the Self the executive instrument is the Soul, chief of all instruments, embracing within itself all lesser instruments. There is therefore a profound significance in the fact that the Wise Men of the Lost World should have made Soul-harmony dependent upon certain associations of Self with Nature in the manner stated in the *Sayings of the Ancient One*.

Does not, it may well be asked, the eye of every man perceive Nature? The Teacher of Knowledge declares that it does not. Only a rare few ever perceive the true face of living Nature : of it most men see but dead aspects. As the child looks upon the face of a loving mother, seeing it not with appraisement of turn of feature, or of texture of hair, or of tint of cheek or eye, but from these drawing elements together into a synthesis always lovely and perfect, in like manner did the ancient Druid, and in like manner does the modern Adept in Natural Magic, regard the face of his Mother Nature. In this power lies the secret of True Magic. If he possesses not the Secret, whatever knowledge and power of other kinds he possesses will leave the Disciple short of the highest step in his round of progress. Not until he is able to see the face of Nature as the child sees the face of its mother, and equally as the mother sees the face of her child, can the Aspirant take sure hold upon the Haft of the Magic Weapon called Harmony of Soul.

Let it not be imagined that what I say is said in a merely mystical or allegorical way. I intend that my words be accepted in their literal meaning. I assert that it was the teaching of the ancient Masters, and that it is the teaching of all true Adepts, and my own profound belief, that the face of Nature is the actual objective manifestation of a *living Being*, and that the eye of the Disciple must be trained to perceive and interpret her manifold moods and aspects as readily as he does those that appear and disappear in the face of a loved friend.

The exposition I have given concerning the nature of the

Animal, and of its relationship, Macrocosmic and Microcosmic, with Man, can readily be extended to explain the Being of Nature also. Nature—the Being, not its objective aspects—is Man's first parent, and equally his first-born child. In the dim remote dawn of Time the entity that Man calls his World was a single homogeneous Being, living but unconscious, exactly analogous in nature to the primary cell out of which the body of every man evolves. Out of that primordial Being the entity now manifesting as Man evolved, exactly as in later ages it evolved from the Animal, and again from the Child, and as it will in future ages evolve out of the Man-phase. But no more than Man has left behind the Animal and the Child has he left behind his Mother-World : macrocosmically and microcosmically he has brought it forward with him, interlinked with him for all Eternity.

When this knowledge becomes an integral part of the Being of Man it endows him with that degree of Soul-Power that made possible the marvels accredited to the ancient Druids : to bid inanimate things to move as though alive ; to command the elements into terrible action or peaceful sleep ; to change base metal into pure gold ; to be, in fact, possessed of the Philosopher's Stone ; all this and more is the prerogative of the man who has mastery of Harmony of Soul.

To the Learner newly entered upon his first round of conscious progress ideas like the foregoing cannot seem other than baseless superstitions. Yet, unless the Law of LIFE is other than ages of occult research have demonstrated, such powers must of necessity have existence. There is no man who does not unconsciously work Magic. The less Self-conscious he is the more expertly does he work, for it is the Sense of Separateness that kills Power. The lover who sees beauty in the face and form of his loved one, and hears sublime music in her voice and laugh where others sense naught of distinction, performs an act of Natural Magic, for he has commanded in her Being, little though he knows it, the hierarchies of the Guardian Lords, and wrought with them a *synthesis* which to him is Beauty. And if he wins his mistress and makes her truly his, he does it by evoking within her an aspect of his own Soul-Power. Thus is Magic worked.

Except that he works with Free Will, and with fully awak-

ened Consciousness upon his own lofty plane, the Arch-adept does with Nature, who to him is Child and Lover and Mother, nothing more than does the lover with the Being of his beloved. The Adept-eye sees, selects, and assembles together from the Face of Nature the Guardian hierarchies, and marshals them into legions perfectly harmonized ; and upon their united power he ascends into the Heaven-world, even unto the great White Throne of LOVE, the King. Thence he evokes the Power-of-the-Soul in the Being of the All-Mother and All-Lover, and she turns in shining beauty to embrace him, and yields her secret treasures to his will.

(b) *The Heart that Comprehends Nature.*

To have possession of the Eye that sees Nature leads the Aspirant towards possession of the Heart that comprehends Nature. She is the long-forgotten, the outcast, the neglected daughter of man, and recognizing her as such he must go forth to her in his heart-life, and embrace her, and wake within her the Soul-Power he has found, as he wakes it also in the Animal, the Stranger, and the Child. Thus only can he raise her, as raise her he must, if he is ever to shake off the shackles which the Age of Iron has fastened upon his limbs, and recover to himself the forgotten glories of the ancient Age of Gold.

It is a dream or a cherished fable of the men of every one of earth's myriad races that their forefathers walked with the gods over the face of the young earth, and were themselves as gods. It is an occult truth that man cannot dream that which is impossible or utterly untrue. The Golden Age is no fable : it existed, and it still exists all about us, though unseen by the eyes of fallen Man. It is Man who dreams when he imagines that the world he perceives is a reality, and not until it dawns upon his Consciousness that he lives in a nightmare does he approach any realization of the true world. But his full awakening will come only when he embraces Nature with a comprehending heart, and wakes within her Being the Soul-Power that has flowered silently in his own Being during his long dream in the darkness.

Little can be said, with any hope of being comprehended or comprehensible, in the way of direct comment upon the high

magical effort that wakes the Soul of the Adept within the unconscious Being of Nature. By long pondering over what has been said concerning evocation of Soul-Power in the Animal, some scattered grains of understanding may be gleaned. Roused by such musings, isolated gleams of Light may illumine your Consciousness, revealing glimpses of things glorious, yet often of things terrible. A flash may reach you and wake the thought that if Nature is in truth a living though unconscious Being, and if Man is charged with the duty of raising her by sharing with her the Soul he has won, then his crimes against her—his long neglect of her, his prostitution of her beauty, the hideous scars with which in his selfish exploitation of her he has marked her countenance—must surely bring upon him some dire retribution, unless, and very speedily, he takes steps to redress those wrongs. Whether such a thought is or is not any real reflection of the truth I shall not say here, but I will say this, that mankind must turn back to, or be driven back to, a life closer to the heart of Nature than that which he now lives before any true civilization can rise and flower on this earth.

(c) *The Courage to Live with Nature.*

When with the *Eye* the Magician compels to his will the Guardian Hierarchies that dwell in the Face of Nature, and when with his Power-of-Soul he evokes his own Being within her Being, he will have fitted the Haft to the Blade of the Weapon of Harmony of Soul, and will have power to use the Point when needed.

Little though they may recognize the fact, or admit it even when they do recognize it, men in general live in perpetual fear of Nature. The whole trend of what we call civilization shows that fear ; and the fear grows, for the flight from Nature grows ever swifter, revealing to the few who have eyes that can see and minds that can comprehend the occult truth that our race in general, far from moving spiritwards, has not yet reached in its cyclic course the point of extremest separation from the Mother Being. It has been said that Fear is the Great Enemy. Will fear of Nature ultimately destroy mankind? To that question neither I nor any other man, however wise, can

answer with certainty either yes or no. From analogies furnished by past human cycles it is possible to say merely that it is probable, indeed certain, that many sub-sections of the human race will not round the *aphelion* of their Race-cycle, but will pass beyond and be lost in the *Outer Darkness*. Many a race and many a civilization has vanished thus and left no trace ; and yet Man survives.

To use the Point of the Weapon of Harmony of Soul—to possess the Courage that enables the Man to live with Nature—implies identification of Being with the Father-Being as well as with the Mother-Being of this Planet. The power of Invocation leads to union with the Father, and the power of Evocation leads to union with the Mother. True UNION means identity with that which is Below as well as with that which is Above ; with that which is Outer as well as with that which is Inner. All united with ALL is the DESTROYER of the Destroyer, whose name is Fear.

(3). *SKILL IN ACTION.*

It has been said that to comprehend anything with completeness makes comprehension of that thing superfluous. To possess Skill in Action places the Disciple beyond necessity of acting. To reinforce understanding of this truth the Haft, the Blade, and the Point of the Weapon of Skill in Action are described as they are, for each expresses that truth in a different way. Love of a task, knowledge of a task, and performance of a task without thought of reward are not, as the uninstructed Learner may very reasonably imagine, *conditions* that when complied with lead to Skill in Action. Each is a condition, but it is the *sole* condition requisite to the manifestation of each of its fellows. It is therefore each of them ; each is the other ; and each and all are Skill in Action. No man may love that which he does not know, and no man may know that which he does not love. To love anything he must with his whole Being embrace the whole Being of that thing, merging the two into one. To know anything he must with his whole Being enter into the Being of that thing, and become it as it becomes him.

Knowing and *Loving* are but male and female, positive and

negative, aspects of a single condition, and the executive aspect of that condition is *Action without Results*.* (D)

Possession of the Weapon of Skill in action is completely attained only when all conditions that *compel* action have been obliterated, and when consequently all that is done is done with an absolutely unfettered will. Skill in Action is but another name for the Power-of-Soul of the Master, which he wields within the Field of Experience men call the World—a Sphere which he himself has completely explored, transmuted into Knowledge, and transcended. Within the more limited Sphere of the human, personal life, the Disciple, when he has similarly transcended it, has power to manifest Skill in Action ; but not until he has also transcended the Sphere of Discipleship does he become the initiate DRUID, the Man of Power, ready now to enter fully into the high office of Priest-King of the realm he has conquered, and to take into his grasp the Fourth Weapon—the Weapon that devours the other three, the Golden Sceptre of Universal Vision.

(4). *UNIVERSAL VISION.*

Of Universal Vision, called also Enlightenment, Realization, and in the East Samadhi, much may be said, but of that much nothing may be truly comprehended except by those who have passed beyond the need of instruction. Of it as a condition I will in direct words say nothing, but will instead give expression to a few incompletely formed ideas—ideas which may or may not have an indirect bearing upon it, but which, for you, the Learner, who are now nearing that point in your Path of Progress at which, and beyond which, real learning begins, may have a certain significance.

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Of Spiritual Realization the average man, and even the average Aspirant who has not yet entered the last stage of his first round of conscious progress, knows a great deal less than nothing. He lives in a state of illusion which at times is soothing, but at other times is terrifying in its oppression, and imagines in his blindness and bewilderment that should light come to him

* See Comments, Lesson VII, Part II.

it must come in the form of a phenomenal expansion of the intellectual knowledge, and human power he already has. He does not realize that when postulating such aggrandizement for his human Selfhood he is wallowing in the pit of *pride*, a condition anathematized by all true Teachers, and neglecting the way of *humility*, a way that all true Teachers extol. Yet, because he offends in ignorance, his offences, though they make laborious his progress, cannot hold him altogether away from the Light. Though he knows not towards what he aspires, his aspiration if real and strong will sweep him forward, until at last a moment dawns when the storm-clouds that enshroud and bewilder him break into shreds, and he beholds the Light of the STAR.

What vision does the pure Light of the STAR bring to the weary Pilgrim? Will it be sudden awareness of immensely expanded knowledge, and an influx of superhuman power? No! *It will be an overwhelming conviction of absolute ignorance.* Like nightmare phantoms that vanish when the eye of the dreamer opens at the touch of the first ray of the rising sun, those *great possessions* hitherto cherished by the Pilgrim, and fondly named knowledge and power, will melt from his grasp leaving him stripped and defenceless.

This conviction of nakedness and ignorance that falls upon the Neophyte on the Threshold has been described by others as void, blackness, silence, and to them it may so interpret itself; but I conceive it as neither, but as a condition which is at once pure white light and ultimate spacial blackness. Should the Pilgrim stand unmoved, and not flee, as so many do, in horror at that first revealing, from the White-Blackness two shapes will emerge and extend their hands in greeting to the daring intruder. The first will have the shape of a woman, and will bear the name HUMILITY written across her breast. The second will have the form of a man, and will bear the name KNOWLEDGE written upon his forehead. HUMILITY will take the pilgrim's left hand in both her hands, and KNOWLEDGE will take his right hand in both of his, and to him, the *Initiate*, they will by the act make manifest their BEING. Uplifted upon the *shield* of Blackness the freed Self names itself HUMILITY, and uplifting the *sword* of White-Light it names itself KNOW-

LEDGE. With the eyes of HUMILITY the Initiate sees the nothingness of his realm, a dimensionless point in the Circle of Eternity. With the eyes of KNOWLEDGE he recognizes how infinite is the dominion of which he has become possessed ; for a pin-point of true knowledge set side by side with the phantom lights of the Day of Illusion shines brighter than a lightning-flash at midnight ; it is a Sun of brilliance that passeth all understanding of man.

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It is taught that at the raising of the veil that separates the World of Illusion from the World of Knowledge the Disciple finds, waiting behind it, his Adept Teacher, and for the first time knows him in his real nature. It is a true teaching, but yet only relatively true, for the Adept whom the Aspirant discovers is not the MASTER himself, but only his Shadow. The Master Magicians of the ancient world, the Druids, recognized one MASTER only, and saw the hierarchies of the gods and Adept-teachers, Man, and the Beings of the inferior kingdoms as nothing but his *Shadows*, or emanated aspects. In all ages, and under many different names, that *One*, the MASTER, has been known to the initiate. He has been called THE ANCIENT ONE, The GREAT SACRIFICE, The INITIATOR, and by some simply THAT. When, embodied in a human form and passing through the life of this world as a man among men, his presence was recognized by Men of Wisdom, they gave him other names and titles, such as Krishna and Jesus, the Avatar and the Christ. Never has there been a race of men that did not accept the fact of his existence, and did not give reverence to his Being according to the habit of its thought ; but outside initiate circles few men have, or ever have had, any real comprehension of what his nature is, or what his existence means to the world. Of him little is taught to Aspirants of probationary degrees ; and the reason for such reticence is not difficult to appreciate when it is remembered what debased conceptions of him the common man entertains. True understanding of the Being of the MASTER cannot be conveyed to the Neophyte, yet concerning it something must needs be said.

The MASTER is a Conscious, Divine entity, the perfected product of a cycle of Planetary Becoming exactly analogous to that through which this world and all that appertains to it is now passing. Having transmuted his *Sphere of Ignorance* into a Body of Knowledge and made that Body an integral part of his Being, the MASTER became relative to it the wielder of the Weapon of Skill in Action : in other words he became a perfect and conscious administrator of Universal Law. As such he is a conscious transmitter of Universal Energy ; and in that capacity, at the opening of the present world-cycle he emanated an almost infinite host of aspects of his Being into the Dark Sphere from out of which in future ages our world and the myriad life-forms that compose it were to evolve—a Sphere that was not dark to him, but dark only to the dormant seeds of Life that slept entranced within it. That Dark Sphere was our Mother Nature in her virgin state. From and within her Being, during the ages that have sped since that dawning of Time, the Father-Being, THE ANCIENT ONE, has, through the never-ceasing flow of the Energies of which he is transmitter, evoked all that infinitude of aspects of himself known to Man as manifest Life.

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Here now, alone and unaided upon the Threshold of Discovery, the Learner must be left to prosecute his search for the GREAT INITIATOR—for THAT which stands silent and patient and invisible waiting to initiate him who by his own courageous pursuit of Knowledge has thus far initiated himself. By what signs that BEING may be known I cannot say, for none may know him but those who have taken Knowledge into their Being ; and they who have so taken it need no enlightenment that man can give. It can but be said that he is the great SACRIFICE, living in every Being and every thing both great and small, and giving life to each by the gift of his own life. He is the Adept waiting behind the Dark Veil to welcome and guide the Pilgrim whose high heart has borne him inward. He is the Model upon whose nature every true Disciple labours to mould his own. He is the Warrior of whom the secret and sacred Scriptures speak.

Whosoever lives in *The Camp of the Warrior*, faithful to Him, and forgetful of self, remains always, within the limits of his own Sphere of Action, the Chosen Instrument and Accepted Agent of Divine Law. Whosoever lives thus knows PEACE and shares her stronghold, though for ages his aspects—his Servitors—must battle through the Dust of Confusion, ere they come at last up the long ascent to the pure, still air of the Heights. Whosoever lives thus beholds with unclouded eye the myriad beauty of living Nature unveiled for his delighting, and hears with awakened ear the multitudinous melody of the song she chants in greeting to her lovers. Whosoever lives thus has the right to command the Elemental Kings that they yield him the secret of their Power, and the right to invoke the Ancients of the Earth that they share with him the secrets of their Wisdom. Whosoever, faithful and steadfast, lives thus, comes at last, unhurried and unwearied, to the final step of the final round of his human Path ; and there he pauses and extends his Right Hand ; and from the Hand extended towards him—the Right Hand of THE MASTER—he takes the Golden Rod of UNIVERSAL VISION : but in taking he has given, and in giving he has retained, for the Hand that gives, and the Hand that takes, and the Hand that holds ARE NOW ONE.

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By a Veil of pure Gold the Holy of Holies is hidden !
 O thou Shepherd of the Flock—Lord of the Sun,
 Lift up that Veil
 And give vision of the Face of the Real !
 Shepherd and Lord of Life, thou Master Seer—
 Lord of Death—Fire-bringer—Son of Darkness and Light,
 Send forth thy beams
 And melt into flame all Shadow !
 That Image of thine, miraculous, I behold :
 The Light of Life in the Shadow of Life—
 That, and That am I !
 Into that Form, lo, now I pass,
 And the dust of this body I leave with the dust !
 Who is the Offerer, and what is the Offering ?
 I am That ; That is I !

Lead, lead on, O WHITE-BLACKNESS ; lead, lead on,
O BLACK-FLAME—

Lead on by the Path invisible to jewelled victory !

Dark-Bright One—Nameless One—the Veil, the Veil has
lifted !

Hear now this salutation, O Child of Day and Night !

*Ayihaiyowuyehé !**

* The *Isha Upanishad* contains a passage similar in general significance to the above, but the latter does not derive from the Sanscrit, but from the initiatory language I call Isinzu.

PART II

FOREWORD

Instead of Notes, which are a usual and indeed a necessary accompaniment to lessons such as those given in Part I of this book, I give in the lessons that follow some questions asked by Learners, and my own answers thereto. The questions are not inventions of my own, but are selections from a volume of queries actually propounded by students who have heard the subject matter of the various lessons expounded by me in lectures, or have had private correspondence with me concerning it.

The questions I have chosen to answer here have been selected for two reasons : first, because a majority of students appear to be interested in the points upon which they bear, and second, because the answers they evoke serve in some measure to fill up the wider gaps which the lessons inevitably contain.

To fill all gaps in teachings such as I have given would naturally be impossible, and even if possible would not be desirable. To give just enough leading to induce in the Learner a desire to travel for himself is always my aim, not to give him so much as to cause him to feel that effort of his own is unnecessary.

Each question in each of the lessons which follow is designated by a *letter* (Question A, Question B, etc.), and relates to the passage or paragraph similarly marked in the lesson in Part I to which that in Part II corresponds.

Each lesson in Part II relates to a lesson of corresponding number in Part I.

P. G. B.

THE LEARNER'S QUESTIONS

I

Question A : You quote H. P. Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Movement : do you regard Theosophy as identical with Occultism ?

Answer : Theosophy, in its original meaning of Divine Wisdom and the pursuit thereof, was identical with Occultism, but nowadays that meaning has been wholly lost, and no two Theosophists of different societies, or even of the same society, would define the term in the same way, if they attempted a definition at all. It is best to regard it simply as a system of Philosophy and Ethics of a nature not very clearly defined. Occultism, on the other hand, has been defined by H. P. Blavatsky herself as the Science of Life, leading on to mastery of the Art of Living. In other words it is a definite Science, upon which the practical work of hastening the evolution of Consciousness is based.

H. P. Blavatsky drew a sharp distinction between Occultism and Theosophy. In a remarkable article in her magazine *Lucifer*, entitled "Practical Occultism", she makes it clear to any reader of intelligence that a Theosophist at his best guides his life by *human*, albeit very lofty, standards, whereas an Occultist orders his according to *universal law*.

Every Learner should study Madame Blavatsky's article, which, together with another of equal importance entitled "Occultism *v.* the Occult Arts", is obtainable in booklet form.

Question A (subsidiary) : Would it help a Beginner not quite ready to become a Learner to join a Theosophical society ?

Answer : One cannot say authoritatively what, in the way of experience, may be helpful to a Beginner. My opinion is that

it is always best to remain detached from any association to which the suspicion of sectarianism attaches. It should be remembered that there are at least three large societies each claiming to be THE Theosophical Society (the society founded by H. P. Blavatsky), and almost innumerable minor organizations, all calling themselves Theosophical. Each, by the simple fact of its existence, proclaims all others defective in some way ; in other words, not upholders of true Theosophy. It does not, therefore, appear to me that there is any real difference between joining a Theosophical society and becoming a member of a particular Christian sect.

It will be understood, of course, that in saying this I am not in any way condemning any of those societies or Churches. Each and every one of them serves a section of humanity in the only way it can be served in its existing phase of evolution. I speak only of their possible use to the potential Occultist.

Question A (subsidiary) : Is it not a fact that many, if not all, Theosophical societies have within them inner, esoteric, or occult schools ; and do not these give occult training ?

Answer : Many do possess such schools, but as to whether any of them give genuine occult training, I cannot say. As far as my own experience of them goes, I cannot say that I have found any that are in a true sense occult, or that give training in true Occultism.

Question A (subsidiary) : Do you not think that the Masters or adept Teachers who guided the Theosophical Movement in its early days still guide it ?

Answer : That question is a source of controversy among Theosophists themselves. Knowledge of Cyclic law compels me into the belief that the guidance you speak of was withdrawn three or four years prior to the end of last century. The writings of Madame Blavatsky, and of her Teachers on the question, as I understand them, fully confirm the belief which my independent studies have given me.

Question A (subsidiary) : Do you consider that Madame Blavatsky's Teachers were Masters, or perfected men ?

Answer : Their own letters are quite explicit in regard to their status. In those letters they state unequivocally that they were adepts of lesser degree—certainly not “perfected” men.

Here I would point out something not understood, or at least forgotten by the majority of would-be Occultists and Theosophists, namely that to the student it is of no moment whatsoever whether or not the Inspirers of the Theosophical Movement, and modern Occultism, are still in direct contact with any society, or whether or not they are perfected men. It is by virtue of what he is himself that the Learner profits, not because of the character of his school or of its Leader. A dunce may become a member of a class led by a master mathematician, but doing so will never make him a Senior Wrangler. I advise all who would be true learners to cease to concern themselves about "Masters" and inspired "schools" and concentrate upon such work as is taught in the seven lessons. If we want guidance from Master Teachers we already have it in such books as *Light on the Path* and *The Bhagavad Gita*.

Question B : Do you accept the doctrine of *Reincarnation* ?

Answer : I might with equal truth answer either YES or NO to that question : everything depends upon how the term Reincarnation is understood. I do not accept that man is a spiritual *entity* of a permanent, unchanging nature, which periodically assumes a human body in order to have earth experiences, and periodically relinquishes it in order to assimilate the results of those experiences. The Law of Everbecoming makes it impossible that any such permanent Being should exist. Whatever reincarnates must, logically and philosophically, be fixed and unchanging in its own essential nature, and the sole, fixed, changeless principle in man is his simple *Consciousness of Being*, namely the Free Self which he expresses when he uses the words "I AM". That *Consciousness of Being* is common to all mankind, and to all Self-conscious Life. It identifies itself with, or reflects itself in, an endless procession of forms, or limitations of Universal BEING, or LIFE, and that identification is the only "reincarnation" that is or that can possibly be. Reincarnation is simply *re-identification* of the Universal CONSCIOUSNESS, which exhibits itself as Self in man, with successive phases of *EVERBECOMING LIFE*. Man has no permanent "Ego" peculiar to himself, but he has a permanent Ego which he shares with all Self-conscious Life. Study of the doctrine of Gautama Buddha, the most elevated

Teacher to which our human race has given birth, will confirm what I say.

Question B (subsidiary) : In the absence of any permanent Being, how is it possible to have any memory of past lives ?

Answer : LIFE is infinite and eternal, and therefore no aspect of it can exist that has not pre-existed from *no-beginning* ; and no aspect exists that will not continue to exist eternally. Man in his Becoming quits consciousness of one phase or aspect of LIFE for another, but that which is left is not destroyed, but continues to exist eternally, and may be again recovered, partially or wholly, by any Self capable of freeing itself from immediate limitations. Such recovery, or partial re-identification of "I" with past phases of Being, is always being done, and constitutes ordinary memory. Between it and memory of remote phases of Being, which we call past lives, there is no essential difference, other than that the latter demands that the Self be freed from present limitation much more completely.

The common, natural, and indeed inevitable error in endeavouring to understand these matters lies in thinking that it is the present *Being* of the man—the phase of Becoming with which the Self is momentarily identified—that has had those past experiences, whereas the truth is that they have been had by the changeless SELF which is common to all men and to all higher Life.

Past phases re-embraced by the Consciousness, wholly or partially, become part of present Being, conditioning it as an instrument of experience, in one way or another.

KARMA, the doctrine which is invariably associated with that of Reincarnation, is also but another name for the Law of Everbecoming. Of all so-called "Laws", Karma, which teaches that whatever is arises from what was, and will give rise to that which is to be, is the most perfect means of instilling into ordinary human minds the reality of Everbecoming ; and for this reason, no doubt, the Buddha, the Supreme Master, made it the centre of his whole system. Unfortunately, it is generally grossly misunderstood, and understanding concerning it has been inextricably confused by pronouncements upon it made by persons quite ignorant of its real nature.

New presentations of old "laws", such as these which I

have outlined, are useful aids towards freeing the Self, but care must be taken not to allow them to lead you but from one trap into another. Realization that reincarnation, as commonly conceived, does not exist, may lead some into the error of thinking that man has no future life to consider. Man is LIFE manifest, and therefore exists eternally.

THE LEARNER'S QUESTIONS

II

Question A : How do you reconcile your teaching that one should *Desire to be Everbecoming*, and have *interest* in the work, with H. P. Blavatsky's teaching in the *Voice of the Silence*, which commands the Disciple to "Desire nothing"?

Answer : No reconciliation is required. It is only those of no intelligence, who anchor themselves to the dead letter of "H.P.B.'s" teachings, just as Puritans tie themselves to the letter of the Bible, who could see any contradiction between the *Voice of the Silence* and what I teach. To desire to be Everbecoming precludes manifestation of separative desires, and it is obviously against those that the *V.O.S.* warns. Were it possible to eliminate the Desire Principle from man's constitution it would mean absolute passivity for him—equivalent to extinction, for Desire is simply a manifestation of the universal ENERGY element of LIFE.

Question B : What is the real nature of Nirvana and Avitchi?

Answer : Any attempt by a human being to define Nirvana would be an obvious absurdity, or evidence of presumptuous ignorance, for from that state no human Self ever has or ever could return into this world ; but by consideration of the implications of the analogy furnished in the text of the lesson some relative conception of the Nirvanic consciousness may be formed. It is said :

"The more efficient a servant self is, the less does it obtrude its existence upon the attention of the Master Self, until when perfect in its task it ceases to be known at all, and though still acting individually becomes virtually identical with its creator."

Arguing from this analogy it may be conceived that a man who has become perfect in all his duties towards the world

ceases to have any individual manifestation in the world, and becomes one with Universal LIFE. He has vanished from the world, the Sphere of Action which is his ; yet all his functions relative to that Sphere continue to be performed perfectly. Are they now executed by LIFE itself? No, for LIFE is infinite and the Sphere is finite : *they are executed by an aspect of LIFE identical with the Man who is not.*

Avitchi is a condition the nature of which may also be deduced from the analogy furnished in the text. A Being that is consistently rebellious and intractable must, under the Law of Everbecoming, ultimately be ejected from the Sphere of the evolving Self of the World, and have its place filled by a new aspect of that Self, which in due time becomes educated into individual efficiency. But the Being that is ejected, is it destroyed? It cannot be, for nothing that is can ever be destroyed. It exists in some other Sphere—or rather in a *Nirvanic* state relative to a Sphere belonging to a lower round of the Great Spiral Path to the Infinite. Out of this thinking another thought may arise, namely that it is conceivable that there are Beings which would elect to “reign in Hell” rather than to “serve in Heaven”. It is not wise, however, for a Learner to speculate much along these lines.

Question C : If circumstances make it impossible to give freedom to a clamorous lower self, what course would you suggest?

Answer : What you hypothesize is an impossibility in the case of a genuine *Learner*. But assuming that one is possessed by a self such as you describe, that self is obviously the Central, or ruling, Self of the Being, and is the slave of its *Conditions*. Escape from the thrall of Conditions is secured by balancing one against another the powers of the positive and negative “Monitors”. In this case certain Monitors attract towards positive expression of a particular kind, but certain others—those that delimit the field of Natural Duty—call in the opposite direction. If the latter are not strong enough to overcome the power of the former, the result is what is called “anti-social” conduct of one kind or another, obviously impossible for a true Learner.

Let me repeat what was said, or at least suggested, in earlier

lessons, that Occultism has no panaceas for the troubles that burden the average man. The way to peace may be laid before him, but he has neither understanding to perceive it nor power to apply the rules that appertain to it. But it is also well to remember that the average good man, though he feels the lure of desires he cannot gratify, nevertheless balances their attraction by realization of duty, and this without any knowledge of occult laws. It is not the province of one like myself, who strives to teach Learners, to attempt to prescribe for the ills of non-Learners ; but the Learner himself who has gained some sound understanding of the lessons I have given may do much to help others less instructed than himself.

THE LEARNER'S QUESTIONS

III

Question A : H. P. Blavatsky and other authorities teach that it is MOTIVE, and motive alone, that makes any action beneficent or maleficent, yet you say it is true that "the road to Hell is paved with good intentions". Is there no contradiction here involved ?

Answer : There is no contradiction. Motive and Intention are not synonyms. Motive is the actual root-power behind any outward manifestation of Self—it is, in fact, but another name for the Energy aspect of a particular self whose true nature is seldom known. Intention is merely the illusionary appearance which that hidden self reflects into consciousness. H. P. Blavatsky roundly condemned the actions of certain medical researchers who experimented with hypnotism, and declared that they were unconscious Black Magicians, yet it is impossible to doubt that those men were well-intentioned in the highest degree. Other advanced teachers, notably Anna Kingsford, condemned, even positively *hated*, men who practised vivisection. Yet no one capable of truly detached observation and thinking could imagine for a moment that those "vivisectionists and hypnotizers" were animated by any intentions other than to discover cures for human ills. *If* therefore their actions were evil, savouring of Black Magic, productive of a terrible Karma, it meant that the real motive was hidden behind the "Veil of Self", and that the possessor was entirely unaware of its nature. Anna Kingsford, it is alleged by her biographer, strove to kill by magical means certain vivisectionists, and such an act is unquestionably one of Black Magic, yet none who know her life and teachings could suspect her of any but the loftiest *intentions*. Personally, I doubt the accuracy of her biographer, and have strong reasons for doubting that

he had any of the intimate knowledge concerning her that he claimed.

Question B : Do you not recognize any pledge as absolutely binding ?

Answer : It is a fundamental truth in Occultism that "each man is his own absolute Law-giver, the bestower of glory or gloom upon himself ; the creator of his life, his reward, and punishment". The Learner or Disciple cannot pledge himself to anything other than to his own Higher Self, and that Self eternally retreats into wider wisdom. The wisdom which now binds is absorbed in the wider wisdom of tomorrow, which may loose. The Occultist is not bound by human law or human oaths—but *this does not mean that he needs to break a human law or a human pledge in order to demonstrate his freedom.*

Question B (subsidiary) : But in the case of a pledge to keep occult teachings secret, which is always given to the Higher Self, would you not hold it binding ?

Answer : The foregoing answer applies here also. The Higher Self is the guide. Such pledges are not imposed by the Higher Self, but by man and man-made institutions, and have no more real meaning than any other promise unwisely given. The fact that they are imposed proves that neither "School" nor "Teacher" is truly *occult*. A true occult teacher accepts responsibility for the acts of his pupil, whom he has *selected*, because he has seen in him potentialities of wisdom. He will warn him against the unwisdom of attempting to convey to the uninstructed knowledge they are unable to grasp, and can only corrupt to their own injury and to that of the world and the Occult Work itself ; but he will not impose upon his pupil any irrevocably binding pledges. There is no need to do so, for genuine occult secrets are essentially incommunicable. The idea, encouraged by certain Esoteric Schools, that higher Disciples and Adepts are actually oath-bound, is false and absurd. *Such men know that they are always bound by the Law of Life, and that their backslidings and unwisdom will bring upon them its due results.*

Question B (subsidiary) : Are there no known esoteric schools open to Beginners, which would help them to prepare themselves for more advanced training ?

Answer : There are multitudes of so-called esoteric and occult schools and orders which accept Beginners, and many others who are not in any true sense Beginners upon the Occult Way. More than that, those organizations even *invite* and offer students *inducements* to enter them, a fact that in itself proves that they are in no real sense occult. Inasmuch as true Occultism is concerned (I do not speak about Occult Arts), none of these schools can teach more than that which is given freely in the seven lessons. Very few teach as much.

THE LEARNER'S QUESTIONS

IV

Question A : How is man related, if related at all, to those Beings commonly called fairies, or elementals, and angels or devas ?

Answer : In exactly the same way as the middle steps of a ladder are related to the lower and the higher steps. Elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal, human, angel, god—all these are but names for ascending phases of Everbecoming Life.

Question A (subsidiary) : You do not, then, accept the Theosophical doctrine that “fairies” and “devas” belong to a different—a *parallel*—stream of evolution to that which man pursues, and therefore never pass through the human phase ?

Answer : Such doctrine, if Theosophical, is certainly not that which H. P. Blavatsky teaches. She states in her *Secret Doctrine* that every Being in the Universe either once was or is now preparing to become a man. The teaching to which you refer, unless it means other than appears, is obviously unphilosophical, and not in accord with the occult doctrine, which H. P. Blavatsky taught, of the Consciousness Principle of Life becoming veiled in Substance and then rising out of it through infinite gradations of BEING into wider and wider states of Self-consciousness. If there are orders of Beings that never pass through the human phase, then it is necessary to assume that their evolution never brings them Self-awareness, for the human state simply means that state of Everbecoming wherein individual Consciousness of Being dawns. I suggest that those interested in this question should carefully study the SUMMING UP to Volume I of H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*.

Question A (subsidiary) : Your teaching would appear to deny the existence of *Archetypes*—that is to say ideal, perman-

ently existing Divine Counterparts of all phenomenally manifesting Beings ?

Answer : The question is difficult to answer because it is by no means clear what the conception is which those who subscribe to the doctrine of Archetypes really hold. As you state it (which may not be correctly), it would mean that every Being in the universe pursues its own separate line of evolution towards union with its Archetype : in other words that which is now a flower would ultimately become aware of itself as a Divinely ideal flower, and the same with man or angel. That, if it is what the doctrine implies, is merely an exaggeration of the idea of parallel lines of evolution, and is certainly not the Occult Doctrine as taught in Esoteric (or Mahayana) Buddhism, the Upanishads, the Qabalah, the Hermetic teachings, or Blavatskian Theosophy.

Question B : What are the implications of the teaching that the stream of Negative Energy bearing results from positive outgoing rises, or goes inward beyond the sphere of the human Self ?

Answer : The implications are many, but most important among them is that much more than Self is affected by any action. Beings that evolve on higher than human planes experience from human actions results which pass beyond the Sphere of Consciousness of the actor ; and so also do embryonic aspects of the human Self. Beginners on the Occult Way should strive to understand that though their struggles and apparent failures bring little or no light of real knowledge into consciousness, nevertheless highly important effects from those experiences may be arising behind the "Veil of Self"—effects which one day may emerge as a sudden illumination.

Question C : You insist that realization of duty to wife and family is a highly important balancing force, yet H. P. Blavatsky taught that even love of wife and family is a bar to real occultism : can you explain the contradiction ?

Answer : There is no contradiction, because different conditions are in question. "H.P.B." speaks of the common human love of wife and child which makes the man selfish on their behalf. I speak of *realization of duty* in the particular Sphere of Action of which wife and child are chief landmarks. But it

must also be understood that "H.P.B." spoke of *real* occultism—Discipleship, in fact—whereas I speak to the Learner just beginning to move towards Discipleship. Her intention, in the article where she gave the teaching quoted, is to bring home to ignorant students some understanding of the fact that they are wholly unprepared for a genuine occult effort. My aim in these lessons is to lead Beginners to prepare themselves for Discipleship, which may not come in this life.

THE LEARNER'S QUESTIONS

V

Question A : Should not symbolic or ritual dancing have equal place with poetry, music, and art as an instrument of Invocation ?

Answer : No. Such dances are unsafe for the Learner. Certainly they form an instrument, both of Invocation and Evocation, but more particularly of the latter. In dancing the "Lord" of Number predominates excessively, and the law is that where any single Hierarchy so predominates it tends to possess the Self and carry it *outward* into objective activity—into sensuous, if not sensual, expression, in fact. The Learner is most earnestly advised, if he attempts Invocation or Evocation, to confine himself strictly to the Instruments mentioned in the lessons.

Question A (subsidiary) : Which, if any, of the "Guardian Lords" rule in *Scent*, which is a common adjunct of ceremonial ?

Answer : Scent, flavour, touch are neither of them governed directly by the "Guardian Lords", but by lesser Hierarchies which may be regarded as *emanations* of the greater. The Ruling "Lord" of Scent has Colour for his Overlord, with Sound only slightly less dominant.

Question B : Is there any correspondence between the Guardian Lords and the so-called Elements, Earth, Water, Air, Fire ?

Answer : The influence of all four "Lords" is present in each Element : *Idea* rules Earth ; *Number* rules Water ; *Sound* rules Air ; *Colour* rules Fire.

Question C : What is the occult view of the Bible ?

Answer : I cannot answer for Occultism in general, but only for the Occult Body with which I myself am associated, which,

however, because centred in the regions whence the Bible sprang, is likely to be fairly well informed on the subject.

The Bible is made up of fragments of Occult teachings, Invocatory and Evocatory chants and poems, Mystery Stories and Dramas—all derived by the Hebrews from the Mystery schools of Egypt and Chaldea, but principally from the latter during the Babylonian captivity, when many young men became disciples of, and even Initiates of, the Mysteries—and all interwoven with Jewish tribal legends and semi-historical narrative. The New Testament is not, of course, part of the Hebrew Scriptures at all. The central figure was a great Teacher—perhaps what in India would be called an *Avatar*—who lived, and gave the distinctive teachings associated with the name of Jesus, in the Greco-Roman world of the Middle East, perhaps a century or more prior to the time in which he is popularly supposed to have lived. The Gospel narrative is in no sense historical. It is most definitely portion of a Mystery Drama illustrating the life, progress, and apotheosis of a candidate in the Greater Mysteries, with which is interwoven much of the actual teachings of the Teacher, together with many interpolations by later scribes and interpreters. Paul, the real founder of Christianity, was unquestionably an Initiate of the Mysteries. His success in Asia Minor and Greece was clearly due to the fact that he taught no new doctrine, but simply purged the ancient Mystery doctrine of the corruptions, which by that date had come upon it, and made Jesus its central figure, in place of one of the earlier deities.

Question D : Who and what is the Being of which you speak “whose nature is all-embracing and omnipresent in our world” ?

Answer : I speak of the Spiritual Being of our planet. Some would, perhaps, call it the “Planetary Logos”. It is of three aspects, Father, Mother, and Son. The “Father” aspect is composed of the Consciousness, and the Energy elements of our world, and is emanated by the Planetary Spirit, described in Lesson VII, and called the MASTER. NATURE is the “Mother”. The *evolving* Self of our planet is the “Son”. Strictly speaking, it is to this “Son” that the term “Logos” should apply ; but obviously, also, the “Son” partakes of the “Father” and the “Mother” nature besides being himself.

Here it is well to make clear that in what I say of the "Logos", or of any other metaphysical doctrine which is the subject of controversy, I am neither laying down a law nor dogmatically declaring that thus and thus only should the occult doctrine be interpreted. In all instances I give either my own intuitional interpretations or else the teachings of the school with which I am associated. Neither this school nor myself wish in any way to impose a special doctrine on the world or to challenge the truth of doctrines favoured by others.

THE LEARNER'S QUESTIONS

VI

Question A : From whence derive the various quotations which you attribute to the ancient Masters ?

Answer : All unacknowledged quotations in this book, and all attributed in a general way to "the Hermetic Masters", etc., are taken from the ancient Scripture from which the teachings translated in my book, *The Sayings of the Ancient One*,* are also taken. This Scripture is the principal study of members of the school with which I am associated.

Question B : ON PHYSICAL TRAINING.

Answer : I will consider the attention and training which the body should receive under the following headings :

(1) Exercise. (2) Food and Drink. (3) Bathing. (4) Sleep. (5) Clothing. (6) Sex.

(1) *Exercise.*

I consider exercise under the following heads : (a) For establishing BALANCE of body. (b) Correct breathing. (c) Correct walking. (d) Walking and breathing. (e) General exercises. (f) Special breathing.

(a) *Balance.*—Balance of Being is the Key to command of Being, and so also is balance of body the key to command of the bodily instrument. The method of securing it is simple in the extreme, but if the Learner suffers from any of the disabilities mentioned in Lesson VI it may be difficult if not impossible to apply.

Let the eyes look straight forward at exactly their own level, neither turned upward, as they are when the head is inclined forward, nor downward, as they are when the head is thrown back and the chin elevated ; let the thought centre

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itself in the nape of the neck, and let this point be *pressed back* as though against resistance. If these simple requirements are fully carried out the whole body will inevitably fall into an erect and balanced posture, whether one is sitting or standing. Apart from position of the eyes and nape of neck it is unnecessary to think of the body at all. There should be no bracing of the shoulders, no protrusion of the chest, and no retraction of the abdomen. On the contrary, the muscles of all those parts, especially of abdomen and waist, should be relaxed as much as possible.

With a little patient practice the position of eyes and neck will become habitual, and thereafter thought can be wholly withdrawn from the body.

It is obvious that this adjustment of balance, simple though it is, may be impossible to a person afflicted with any disease or deformity of the spine, or to a middle-aged person whose muscles have become stiffened in bad postures. Nevertheless persons so afflicted cannot injure themselves, and indeed may benefit themselves very considerably, by patient attempts to act as directed.

(b) *Breathing*.—To be able to breathe fully, deeply, and regularly, without effort, is a necessity to true health. No attempt at deep breathing should ever be made until habitual balance of body has been established.

To breathe correctly, sit or stand in the *Balanced Posture*. Let the breath *flow* into the body without effort or strain. Let the relaxed waist and abdomen expand first, then the diaphragm and ribs, and lastly the upper chest. The moment you become conscious that an effort is required, if more air is to be inhaled, exhale in the same effortless way, letting the upper chest sink down, the ribs fall inward, and the abdomen retract.

If you are a woman the diaphragm and ribs will be the first to expand, and the expansion of the upper chest will be greater than in a man.

Practise this breathing systematically for five or ten minutes every morning and for the same period at night. Practise it also whenever opportunity permits.

(c) *Walking*.—Walking is the commonest of human actions, yet rarely is it performed efficiently by civilized man, mainly

because his body is unbalanced. If the rules of Balance are observed when walking as well as when sitting or standing it will not be difficult to walk correctly. Pay attention, also, to the following points :

Remember that walking is a forward motion of the *whole* body. Propulsion is received from the *rearmost* leg and foot, which thrusts the body forward. The other leg should swing forward with the moving body, and the foot should come to the ground with the body still balanced over it. Reaching forward with the moving leg beyond the centre of gravity of the body induces fatigue and unbalance, for the body is transformed into a dead weight which has to be *dragged* forward by a secondary muscular effort of the leading leg.

Do not try to walk at a pace greater than is natural to you. Length of stride depends on length of limb, and upon the power of the thrust given by the rear leg and foot. Utilization of the calf muscles to raise the heel and bring the weight on to the ball of the foot and toes will lengthen the stride more effectively and with less fatigue than will reaching forward with the moving limb. The degree of rapidity with which the limbs are moved depends upon the character of the nervous, not upon that of the muscular, system.

(d) *Walking and Breathing Exercise*.—The following exercise is the most important *sensitizer* and *purifier* within reach of the Learner. Correct balance, mode of breathing, and mode of walking must be established before its practice is begun.

Find your most comfortable walking pace—probably between two and four miles per hour : over four miles per hour would imply an unusually athletic physique, and under two some defect or abnormality. Now inhale fully and deeply in the manner outlined while taking a certain number of steps, and exhale again fully while taking an equal number of steps. Be careful not to strain in any way, either by attempting to inhale an excessive amount of air or by taking too many steps to each breath. For a man of good physique four steps to each inhalation, and the same to each exhalation, in early attempts at this exercise, rising to six or eight when well practised, may be regarded as the standard ; but each individual must make his or her own rule.

When the practice is first attempted, rest, when you have covered half a mile, by changing the pace to a gentle stroll, and breathing normally. As you become habituated to the practice the rhythmic breathing can be continued throughout the whole of your walking exercise for an hour, or two hours, or more. In addition to that you should aim at establishing a habit of breathing in this manner whenever you walk abroad. Aim also at filling the lungs more and more completely at each inhalation, and emptying them more and more thoroughly at each exhalation ; but always take care that the work is done without strain.

This exercise burns up and expels impurities from the body more effectively than any other known practice. For this reason it not only ensures against disease but it may be the means of eradicating chronic, constitutional complaints of many kinds. Here I teach it simply as a means of purifying and sensitizing the body, and mention its other benefits only for the possible helping of many who suffer from ill health. It has but one disadvantage, namely that it requires pure air and a place not frequented by crowds for its practice, and is therefore not so readily available to those who live in large cities.

(e) *General Exercises*.—If it were possible for the Learner to devote two to four hours per day to the foregoing practice he would not, if he lived also in the manner to be described later, need any additional exercise. But the vast majority of Learners have no such time at their disposal as is needed, and must therefore find other means of giving their bodies the exercise it requires.

Of systems of physical culture for daily use in the home the number is legion, but of that number few, if any, fill the needs of the Aspirant to Discipleship. The Neophyte seeks a pure, sensitive, poised physical instrument, not large muscles and great strength. Whatever system he follows must to a considerable extent be artificial, but one modelled as nearly as possible upon the activities of the untutored child is the ideal.

I cannot here undertake the task of formulating an ideal system of home exercises, for that could not be done effectively except by the aid of numerous photographic illustrations ; and

I must therefore content myself with suggesting a reasonably efficient substitute, as follows :

Get yourself a manual of Free Gymnastics—the manual of Physical Training as used in the Army is the most useful. From among the exercises given select two simple neck exercises, two leg exercises, one arm exercise, two hip exercises, one shoulder exercise, two waist exercises, two abdominal exercises, two back exercises. Let your selections all be simple natural movements—bending and stretching of the trunk, bending, stretching, extending, and lowering of the limbs. On rising each morning go through these fourteen exercises in the order set forth : (1, neck ; 2, legs ; 3, arms ; 4, hips ; 5, shoulders ; 6, waist ; 7, abdomen ; 8, back).

There is an importance—not understood, as far as I am aware, by any of the exponents of physical culture methods—in exercising, as described, from the extremities of the body inward to the centre.

Perform each exercise until the first suspicion of fatigue in the parts affected becomes perceptible. Endeavour to breathe rhythmically while exercising, inhaling with the raising or stretching movement and exhaling with the reverse.

It is best to exercise unclothed, or at least clad only in night attire. Wear thick woollen socks, or warm bedroom slippers.

Having finished the exercises, remove clothing (if worn). Dip palms of hands in cold water and rub quickly over the entire body, from extremities to centre, omitting no part whatsoever. Dry rapidly with towel.

This work should not occupy more than twenty to thirty minutes.

Before retiring at night perform the special “Body-rubbing” exercises to be found in the little book entitled *My System*, by Lieutenant Muller ; but instead of doing the rubbing with dry palms, dip the palms very lightly in water (which may be warm in very cold weather) at the beginning of each exercise, and continue the exercise until the moisture has completely evaporated. Then at once get into bed. This will occupy from five to ten minutes.

These systematic exercises, done in addition to half an hour’s Walking and Breathing exercise, carried out whenever

circumstances will permit, supply all that the body needs in the way of exercise. If the Walking-Breathing exercise cannot be done, the Special Breathing exercise described below may be added, but not until you are well confirmed in the general mode of living described in this section.

(f) *Special Breathing Exercise*.—Having done your “Body-rubbing” exercises, lie flat on the back, head unsupported by pillow, on the bed, if it is quite level ; if not, on a rug spread on the floor. Cover the body with some light but warm covering. Let all the muscles relax to the utmost, picturing in imagination the body as a great weight sinking into the floor.

When relaxation is complete, gently draw up the heels, inward towards the buttocks, crossing the legs and letting the knees fall outward, so that, if elasticity of muscle permits, they may lie on floor or bed. Rest the hands on the groins. Close the eyes and strive to put the body out of your thoughts, by picturing a featureless space into which you look. Now inhale very slowly, in the manner already learned, until no more air can enter the body. Then without pause exhale, giving exactly the same time to the act as you gave to the inhalation, until as much air as possible has been expelled from the lungs. At each successive breath extend the time devoted to it until it is *double* that given to the first—thus supposing the first inhalation, and exhalation occupy ten seconds each, allow a second longer to each succeeding inhalation and exhalation, until twenty seconds to each is reached. Continue to breathe at that rate for a time, but never for more than ten minutes. Then at once compose yourself to sleep.

Beginners in the practice may find five seconds for the first breath and ten for the longest as much as they can manage without strain ; but well-practised persons of pure body may easily extend the longest breath to thirty or forty seconds, or even to one minute.

This exercise is somewhat akin in nature to the Hatha Yoga breathing exercises, of which most students have heard or read something, but of which few have any true understanding. Unlike those exercises, this that I describe is perfectly safe to use, and immensely beneficial, always providing that it is not attempted until the body has first been prepared by some

months of careful observance of all the rules of living which I give.

In its practice observe the following precautions. Let the Self be active in its contemplation of whatever it has chosen to concentrate on—an image of open sea or of sky is best. By *activity* I mean be definitely an observer, and do not let what you contemplate absorb you, for to do that will quickly bring transfer of consciousness into the dreaming state. If any strong tendency towards that is perceived, stop the exercise.

Lastly, lie always with head to the north.

(2). *Food and Drink.*

Extreme moderation as to quantity, and extreme simplicity as to quality, in regard to food and drink are the ideals towards which the Learner should aspire. No drastic change of or reduction in the diet to which one is habituated should ever be made, for nothing can result from so doing but disturbance, not merely of body but of emotions and thoughts. Much harm has been done by those ignorant of the law of these matters by preaching uncompromising vegetarianism, total abstinence from alcohol, condiments, tobacco, and even tea and coffee, to persons wholly unprepared for such radical changes.

Ultimately, when we become high Adepts, we shall live on uncooked fruits and milk, or perhaps only water, but while we are but Learners a moderate allowance of meat, and an occasional indulgence in alcohol, will not halt our progress. To seek to eliminate these articles from our dietary is right, and must be done, but it must be done gradually, taking care that there is no violent outraging of the desire of the body for such pabulum. All that is needed to effect dietary adjustments is to apply the rules of Self-examination and Self-questioning taught in other lessons. Desire of certain articles of food and drink differs only in mode of manifestation from any other desire, and can be dealt with as that is dealt with.

The mere Learner should aim at substituting eggs, cheese, and perhaps fish, for butcher's meat ; at eliminating strong condiments and alcoholic drinks ; and at replacing white with wholemeal bread. In addition, if circumstances permit, he should strive to reduce the quantity of starchy food consumed,

and fill its place with fruit and vegetables. If with this he very gradually reduces quantity eaten to half the usual amount he will have done as much as it is possible and useful to do.

Use of Water. Drink as much water as you conveniently can. Before morning exercise drink a glass of cold water, and another glass, or two, in small quantities at a time during the course of the exercises. Drink at least one glass of water between each meal, and at bedtime. Should you wake during the night, drink another glass.

The relation of diet to the particular grade or phase of Becoming occupied by the Aspirant is a matter of high importance, but one of which only a few know anything. Little can be said of it here, except to draw attention to certain rules governing the mode of living of Candidates in the Ancient Mystery schools :

There were four grades or circles in the Mystery Schools.

Candidates in the first or outer circle, which in the Greek schools appertained to the Mysteries of Dionysos, were permitted the use of flesh foods of certain specified kinds, and of wine.

In the next circle—that of candidates in the Mysteries of Aphrodite—of flesh foods fish only was eaten, but wine was permitted.

In the third circle—that of the devotees of Hermes—no flesh foods were permitted ; nothing but uncooked fruits, cooked vegetables, milk, cheese, and eggs. Wine “lightly fermented” might be drunk.

In the Circle of Apollo, the highest grade of the Mysteries, no cooked food ; nothing but sun-ripened fruits, green vegetables, unfermented wine, milk, and water might be used.

The intelligent Learner may recognize that to be privileged to eat the food of Apollo one must have entered the Circle of Apollo. For the ignorant man, not yet “accepted” even into the Circle of Dionysos, to attempt to live on the “food of the gods” would be an act which instead of lifting him into Hierophantship would bring certain punishment upon him for his sacrilege.

(3). *Bathing.*

Extreme cleanliness of body is necessary if one would make it an efficient instrument ; but cleanliness should be secured, if it is at all possible to do so, without the excessive

use of hot water and soap so common in modern civilized life. Those who live a natural, abstemious life in unpolluted country air need never have recourse to hot water and soap, but those who live in cities must do so, unfortunately. Nevertheless, if the exercises already described, including the nightly rubbing of the entire body with wet palms, is consistently followed, the number of hot baths with the use of soap may with great advantage be reduced to one a week for women and one a fortnight for men. To the many who make almost a fetish of the hot bath this advice may doubtless seem peculiar, but it has a reason. The normal, active skin secretes a certain oily substance rich in a particular "vitamin", which latter is absorbed into the blood-stream to the great advantage of the individual concerned. But if over-frequent hot baths with use of soap are taken the oil is washed away, and the "vitamin" lost before it can be absorbed.

The feet should have careful attention. The toe-nails should be kept in good order. Before dressing and before retiring dip the soles very lightly in water and dry by vigorous rubbing with the palms of the hands. Better still is it to walk barefoot in wet grass.

(4). *Sleep.*

Natural man should go to sleep six hours after the highest point of vitality of the day has been reached—in other words about 9 to 10 p.m. He should rise about three hours after the lowest point of the vital tide has been passed—at about 5.30 a.m. to 6 a.m. Obviously it is impossible to observe such hours in our civilized existence, but the Learner should strive to have at least one hour of sleep before midnight, and also to be actively astir three hours before midday. If it is impossible to get to bed before midnight, try to obtain one to two hours of sleep at any time between 4 p.m. and midnight, even in a chair.

Let the bed be low, and level, and the pillow low.

Comfortable warmth is essential, but avoid heavy bedclothes.

Sleep with head to the north or east.

In the country, where the air is pure, and population sparse, it is best to sleep at ground level, but in the city an upper chamber is best.

(5). *Clothing.*

Avoid wearing clothing of wool, or of any animal product except silk, next the skin. It is best to wear no underclothing of any kind. In a climate like that of the British Isles a heavier overcoat in winter should suffice to preserve warmth. The idea that woollen underclothing must be donned with the first frosts of winter is a most harmful delusion. I, who give these lessons, though I passed the greater part of my life in hot climates, never wear undergarments, and suffer less from cold than the majority of persons who have lived at home all their lives.

But be careful not to make sudden drastic changes in your mode of clothing yourself, any more than you do in adjusting your diet. To do anything of the kind is to fall into the old trap of changing conditions without having first changed your own nature.

(6). *Sex.*

It has already been stated in Lesson VI that diseases and abnormalities of the sex nature are obstacles to the serious practice of Evocation. The same remarks apply to an unnatural sex life of any kind. The subject is one of the highest importance to the Aspirant to the PATH, but it would need a book to itself to expound it satisfactorily. A few brief remarks upon it must, however, be made, in order to dispel certain erroneous ideas which afflict many would-be Occultists, to a greater extent, even, than they afflict the average man.

(1). A completely celibate life, except for a few exceptional persons, is a definite bar to advance beyond the scope of Lesson IV. Particularly is this so in a woman, who, far more often than a man, is celibate through force of circumstances rather than from natural choice.

(2). Chastity is traditionally regarded as essential in an Occultist, but the real meaning of the virtue is wholly misunderstood. Chastity does not mean total abstinence from sex relations any more than true asceticism means total abstinence from food.* Like all other Virtues, it means taking what in the

* It should be remembered that here, as elsewhere, I speak to the Learner of the life of the Learner, and am not declaring what is or what is not true of the life of the high Adept.—P. G. B.

way of experience is strictly demanded by existing conditions, and nothing more. It is a state of the Inner Being—a state wherein there is detachment of Self from the Powers of Being (Lesson IV), together with recognition of the nature of the Field of Experience into which those Powers would lead, or towards which they point : in other words *a state of knowledge of the needs of the Being*.

It is, or it should be, perfectly obvious that the course of the Neophyte is onward towards the True Virtue of Chastity (study Lesson III), but that he has by no means yet attained it. His ignorant attempts to practise that which he imagines it to be can lead to nothing but unbalance of Being.

The "Sex Problem" is a problem only to disordered and unbalanced civilized man, in our civilized conditions. Pseudo-occultism makes matters worse by its ignorant attempts to enforce "rules" which apply to grades of progress far beyond the reach of the average Learner, and which are not in any way understood. The ancient *Ordinances of Manu* were written by wiser men—men who knew that the phase of Householder and Father must precede that of Sage.

Far more harmful than celibacy are any artificial substitutes for normal sexual relationships, although such practices have been openly advocated by certain teachers of Occultism. If such teachers had any genuine occult knowledge, their motives cannot possibly have been those which alone should animate the True Occultist—attainment of conscious union with the SPIRIT which is LIFE.

What sexual abnormalities or unnatural sex habits may be made to do, when accompanied by certain subjective activities not wise to mention, is to rouse psychic powers and faculties into action, or induce mediumistic conditions. Even without any conscious accessory subjective activity, celibacy, and unnatural practices often conduce to mediumship and other undesirable psychic states.

Let the Learner strive diligently to apply the Laws of Life as taught in these lessons, and follow the Path outlined step by step, and he will find his problems losing their power, while peace and harmony arise in their places.

THE LEARNER'S QUESTIONS

VII

Question A : Are there any records, or other authorities, that may be consulted concerning Druidism and the Ancient Mysteries ?

Answer : I do not know. For anything I have said concerning the Druids or the Mysteries I give no authority, for I have none of value to any but to those whose Thought moves on the same Path as my own. Whether what I aver concerning the Druids and the Mysteries be regarded as intuitions of actual truths or as mere empty imaginings matters nothing to the Learner.

Question B : What is the actual difference between Macrocosmic and Microcosmic Consciousness ?

Answer : Were man able to exercise the Macrocosmic Consciousness, all life that is now objective to him would become subjective. He would be the essential MAN, and of his Consciousness the Selves of all men would be but aspects.

Question C : Does not Theosophy teach that primeval Man created the Animal kingdom ?

Answer : As far as I am aware H. P. Blavatsky taught that Man *preceded* the Animal in the present "round", or world cycle. Her doctrine, occultly understood, is identical with that which I state in the text of the lesson. It should be obvious to any really intelligent student that Madame Blavatsky's teaching as actually set forth is *exoteric*, not occult. She expressed it in fact in symbolic forms which if taken at their face value, as they would have to be by the enormous majority of her readers, would nevertheless be true analogies of LIFE, as far as those readers could understand LIFE. But she also proved herself a genuine Occultist by choosing a symbolism capable of revealing the real or inner doctrine without a flaw, to those capable of comprehending it. In this lies the difference between her

teachings and those of other persons who declare themselves her successors. One of the latter recently declared that early man gave birth to the animals by dropping "spores and debris" from his body over the face of the primordial earth.

Question D : How is it possible to have "*Action without results*" ?

Answer : I can but point out that LIFE exists in a state of incessant activity, and yet remains changeless. Result implies change. Within the Sphere which the Adept has completely transcended and transmuted into a Body of Knowledge he has become consciously one with LIFE, and his actions have become identical with LIFE'S activities ; these activities constitute his Being, and cannot therefore bring him results or changes.

It is possible to express the conception otherwise by saying that KNOWLEDGE cannot be other than a state of activity, yet the activity does not change KNOWLEDGE into something else. The result of KNOWLEDGE is KNOWLEDGE to him who possesses it.

THE LEARNER'S QUESTIONS

MISCELLANEOUS

Question : Is there anything to be gained by a Learner through study of ASTROLOGY ?

Answer : Exoteric Astrology, by which I mean divination, character-reading, and the like by means of the stars and other heavenly bodies, cannot advantage a genuine Learner. He has progressed beyond the stage where dabbling in semi-occult arts, one of which astrology is, as a form of experience can have any attraction for him, and he has not yet reached the point whence study with knowledge of the true occult ASTROLOGY becomes possible for him.

Question : Is it possible to read the future from the stars, or in any other way ?

Answer : One of Earth's Great Ones when asked a similar question replied : "ALL THAT WAS IS, AND ALL IS THAT IS TO BE." In LIFE infinite and eternal, its infinite phases, each and all, exist eternally, but they do not so exist in the limited consciousness of man. It is therefore possible to any man who can free his Consciousness from the limitations we call TIME to see past, future, and present as one. Not merely may real study of the stars thus set Self free, but study of the earth, of man himself, of any form or phase of LIFE, may do so also. But if it is meant, do certain stellar and planetary configurations relative to any individual reveal his destiny definitely, the answer, equally definitely, must be that they do not.

The common idea that man is ruled or has his destiny determined by the stars is wrong and obstructive of genuine occult progress. Man rules himself and makes his own destiny. It may be said that the stars (and innumerable other indicatory aspects of life) *reflect* aspects of his Being that condition his Becoming, but that is all. He is not of necessity bound by any of his conditions.

Knowledge of much more than the objective stars and planets is needed to "cast" a true "Horoscope".

Knowledge of the dates and places of *re-births* is needed even more than is knowledge of those of physical birth. For example, the natal Horoscope becomes null and void in the case of a Learner who passes on into accepted Discipleship.

True Astrology, like true Magic, depends upon knowledge of Macrocosmic and Microcosmic correspondences.

Question : If, as I understand from the lessons, only an embryonic Self functions in the Dream-world, in what way do you account for definitely prophetic dreams, which would seem to be messages from an almost omniscient consciousness ?

Answer : Numberless impressions come over from sleeping states into the waking consciousness, but by no means all come from true dreams. The subject is immensely complex and difficult, and to discuss it here would, even if possible, not be useful. Of the genuine prophetic "dream" this may be said, that it does not come from the true dreaming state, but from quite another state. You have learned in the lessons that with the completion of any cycle of experience the Self achieves freedom : before it becomes again involved in another set of conditions there is a *moment*—an interval *not in time*, when it is reunited with the ONE LIFE, and there is relatively omniscient, beholding past and future, cause and effect, all as one. It is from out of those *free states*, of which, it is possible, there may be more than one between going to sleep and waking, that any genuine fore-vision comes.

Question : What is your explanation of National Devas, and similar Beings of which psychics and others give such circumstantial accounts ?

Answer : It is obviously impossible to pronounce upon the vision which others may have had. The psychic, even the adept seer, objectifies a phase of the **EVERBECOMING**, gives it form and name, but that he interprets its nature correctly is a matter of grave doubt. A nation, a race, a country, a locality is an aspect of Everbecoming Life, and therefore a Being, but is it to be thought that its inner, essential Being—the radiator of the Energies which, associating with the Consciousness of man, cause man to recognize its existence—is a highly evolved entity

capable of planning wisely on its behalf, as many writers will have it happens? Where do we find a race or a nation acting as a genuine Self-directing unit, as does the least developed man? The nearest thing to a united consciousness exhibited by a body of human beings is the Mob Consciousness, and to what evolutionary level does that belong?

The key to understanding of this matter has already been given in the answer to your question concerning the "Spiritual Being" of the Planet. "Father, Mother, and Son" exist everywhere, in every phase of LIFE, yet equally are illusions of limited Consciousness to the Eye of the ONE LIFE.

Question : When you speak of "Hermetic Schools", or "Hermetic Wisdom", do you refer to the medieval Alchemists, Qabalists, Rosicrucians, and others, followers of the so-called "Western Tradition", which often call themselves Hermetic?

Answer : I refer to none of these, but to the much older, now lost or buried, Mystery Schools of the ancient Mediterranean world, of which Chaldea and Egypt are fragments. The "schools" to which you refer are all offshoots of this older school, though perhaps with little knowledge of their origin.

Question : Can you say what the true meaning of the "Black Path", and of the existence of the Black Magician, may be?

Answer : The truth about these matters are occult secrets which are beyond the scope of these lessons, and outside the sphere of my own knowledge. It is well for the Learner to recognize this, and not to concern himself with speculations that can bring him no profit. Let it be said that the ordinary man, or the Neophyte, cannot become a Black Magician any more than he can become a White Adept. Not until he is a fully accepted Disciple can he choose his Path. When he does choose, his choice is made by a Spiritual Consciousness fully awakened.

The Neophyte may stray into various blind-alleys, which may with a certain justice be called offshoots of the Black Path, but from out of these the Law compels him to turn, and with heavy labour climb back to the Threshold, for not until he has crossed it can he choose his way.

Question : Concentration and Meditation, which are leading features of all occult systems, are not discussed in your lessons. Do you disapprove of their practice?

Answer : The outstanding error of Learners, in whom it is excusable, and of many teachers, who teach without wisdom, is that they associate Occultism with *practices* rather than with PRACTICE. They imagine that the performance of certain exercises and the pursuance of certain studies constitute the Occult Way, instead of recognizing it as the *Art of Living*. Concentration and Meditation are not exercises forming features of the Occult Way ; *the Occult Way is the Way of Concentration and Meditation*. That Way is the WAY OF LIFE itself. CONSCIOUSNESS becomes *concentrated*—wholly absorbed in SUBSTANCE, only to withdraw again from it into ever-expanding KNOWLEDGE bringing ever-widening FREEDOM ; and it is this Freedom-bringing Knowledge which is sought in true Meditation.

I teach no exercises in Concentration and Meditation, but in every lesson I teach the Life of Concentration and Meditation.

It was the hope of the great man whose life and whose will inspired and compelled the writing of these lessons that they would open the eyes of at least a few to the truth that the secret of life is discovered by LIVING with LIFE, and that they would turn those few from their fruitless chase after the many phantom *reflections* of the LIGHT, which gleam clear, and apparently near, in this book and in that, in one teacher and in another. Often, warningly and approvingly, he would quote the sonorous words in which a fellow poet and fellow sage of the Orient contrasted his own Way with the Way of his pupil. Consider them and *meditate* upon them, for they reveal the Way of Concentration and Meditation :

“He saw the lightning in the East, and longed for the East ; had he seen it in the West he would have longed for the West ; but I, seeking only the Lightning and its Glory, care nothing for the Quarters of the Earth.”

LAST WORDS

THERE now remains to be said only that which it is more usual to say in a Preface, but which, for reasons that all true Learners will, I think, appreciate, I deem it wisest to say at the end rather than at the beginning of this book.

The writing of the Seven Lessons was a task laid upon me by the Great Soul, to whose memory I have dedicated this work—a task which he himself would have executed had the activities of his amazingly full life left him the necessary time. What he projected was a definite attempt—the first really definite attempt of the kind made in these modern times—to teach the Occult, or Inner Way of Life, as it was taught in the ancient, and as it is still taught in the secret modern, Hermetic Schools, but in such a manner that, without *exotericizing* the doctrine, it might yet be made comprehensible to the intelligent though uninstructed student. He designed to show that upon the Ancient Wisdom—upon the ageless, hidden, yet universal Doctrine of the SPIRIT, the ONE LIFE, the ONE BEING—alone depends the true *Art of Living*; and that, equally, upon *Living the Life* depends certainty that *Knowledge of the Doctrine* will ultimately be found.

That a pioneer attempt of this kind could be made with entirely successful results, even by one possessed of the wide vision and great gifts of him who conceived it, is, at least, improbable, and of the weakness and imperfection of my own effort I am most deeply conscious. I have failed, I think, because in striving to reveal overmuch I have succeeded in sketching a broken outline only, not a clear pattern. For what I have done the best I can hope is that it be recognized as a disarticulated skeleton, and that as time goes on it may be reassembled by some more skilful workman, and by him, or by others yet more skilled, at last be reclothed with living flesh.

I have worked, as I have already declared in the first lesson

which this book contains, for the *Learner*, and for him only ; yet he, if he will but summon to his aid the Power of True Self, the SELF of ALL, though now he be but one of the FEW, may become one day the instrument whereby the FEW are transmuted into the MANY.

To that LEARNER let the ANCIENT ONE speak :

“Look, O my son, for the STAR ! The STAR, O Child who would be a Man, will gleam upon you as the Night wanes, and the Storms of the Dark Hours die away into a Peace that is Herald of the Dawn. That STAR does not rise nor does it set : IT holds a fixed place beyond the clouds in the depths of a speckless sky ; but not until the Thunders are hushed and the Storm Fog shreds apart can its Golden Light descend to earth and dispel the Gloom of your Night.

“Know, O son, that this Nature in which you live and labour is, like the mid-air about high mountains, the Playground and the Battleground of the Gods of Storm. Not until you dominate those Angels of Strife, and marshal them in legions obedient to your word, will the Clouds of their Breath of Fury lift and the DAWN STAR illumine the Sleeping Earth. Then, and then only, while the STAR FIRE flames upon the WAY, may you rest with PEACE, and raise the veil from her face.”

THE END