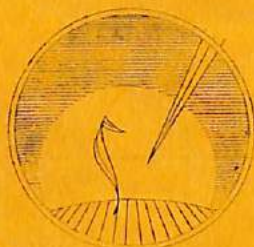


THE GOLDEN BLADE

An Annual of Anthroposophy



THE THRESHOLD IN NATURE AND IN MAN	<i>Rudolf Steiner</i>
TENDENCIES TO A THREEFOLD SOCIAL ORDER IN ENGLISH HISTORY	<i>A. C. Harwood</i>
ARE THERE TOO MANY PEOPLE IN THE WORLD ?	<i>E. Pfeiffer</i>
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Edited by
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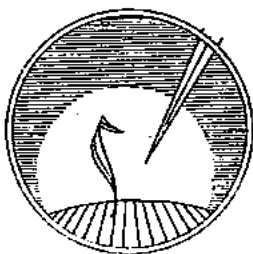
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Anthroposophy, a way of thought rather than a body of dogma, springs from the work and teaching of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). He spoke of it as "a path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe."

The purpose of this Annual is to publish writings which bring the outlook of Anthroposophy to bear on questions and activities of the present time.

The title derives from a reference by Rudolf Steiner to an old Persian legend. "Djemjdid was a king who led his people from the north towards Iran, and who received from the god whom he called Ahura Mazdao, a golden dagger, by means of which he was to fulfil his mission on earth. . . . It represents a force given to man whereby he can act upon and transform external nature."

THE THRESHOLD IN NATURE AND IN MAN

RUDOLF STEINER

A Lecture given at Basle on February 1, 1921.¹

IT will be clear, I think, from what has been said on earlier occasions that the Spiritual Science cultivated at the Goetheanum has nothing sectarian about it, nor does it set out to found a new religion. It gives full recognition to the progress of natural science in modern times, drawing indeed, in a certain sense, the ultimate necessary consequences of the whole trend and spirit of modern science. This will be particularly evident when we come to consider questions concerning our inner life and our knowledge of the world; and to-day I will ask your attention for one such specific question. It embraces a very wide realm, and all I can do here is to give a few indications towards its solution. I shall try to give these in such a way as to throw light on what we consider to be the tasks of the Goetheanum in Dornach.

The subject before us is concerned with two ideas that man can never contemplate without on the one hand feeling an intense longing awaken within him, and on the other being brought face to face with deep doubts and riddles. These two ideas are: the inner being of Nature and the inner being of the human soul.

In his knowledge man feels himself outside Nature. What would induce him to undertake the labour of cognition, were it not the hope of penetrating beyond the immediate region within which he stands in ordinary life, of entering more deeply into the Nature that presents herself in her external aspect to his senses and his intellect? It is, after all, a fact of the life of soul, and one that becomes more and more apparent the more seriously we occupy ourselves with questions of knowledge, that man feels *separated*

¹ From a shorthand report, unrevised by the lecturer. Published by kind permission of Marie Steiner, and in agreement with the Rudolf Steiner Publishing Company.

from the inner being of Nature. And there remains always the question—to which one or another will have a different answer according to his outlook on the world—whether it be possible for man to enter sufficiently deeply into the being of Nature to allow him to gain some degree of satisfaction from his search. We have at the same time the feeling that whatever in the last resort can be known concerning the being of Nature is somehow also connected with what we may call the being of man's soul.

Now this question of the being of the human soul has presented itself to human cognition since very early times. We have only to recall the Apollonian saying: "Know thyself." This saying sets forth a demand which the conscientious seeker after knowledge will feel is by no means easy of fulfilment.

We shall perhaps be able to come to a clearer idea of the tasks of the present day in this connection if we go back to earlier ages and remind ourselves of conceptions that were intimately bound up, for the men of olden times, on the one hand with the knowledge of the inner being of Nature, on the other with the self-knowledge of man. Let us then look for a little at some of these conceptions, even though they will take us into fields somewhat remote from the ordinary consciousness of to-day.

In olden times, these two aims—knowledge of Nature and knowledge of self—were associated in the mind of man with quite strange, not to say terrifying, conceptions. It was indeed not thought possible for man to continue in his ordinary way of life if he wanted to set out on the path to knowledge; for on that path he would inevitably find himself in the presence of deep uncertainties before he could come to any satisfying conviction. In our day we are not accustomed to think of the path of knowledge as something that leads us away from the natural order of our life; it leaves us free to go forward in everyday life as before. And one must admit that the knowledge offered to us in our laboratories and observatories and clinics is not such as to throw us "right off the rails," in the way attributed to the path of knowledge that the pupils of wisdom in early times had to tread.

They beheld a kind of abyss between what man is and can experience in ordinary life, and what he becomes and is confronted with when he penetrates into the depths of world-existence, or into the knowledge of his own being. They described how man feels the ground sink away from under his feet, so that only if he be

strong enough not to succumb to giddiness of soul can he go forward at all into the field of ultimate knowledge. To tread this path of knowledge unprepared would involve man in a harder test than he is able to meet. Serious and conscientious preparation was necessary before he dare bridge the abyss. In ordinary life man is unaware of the abyss; he simply does not see it. And that, they said, is for him a blessing. Man is enveloped in a kind of blindness that protects him from being overcome by giddiness and falling headlong into the abyss. They spoke too of how man had to cross a "Threshold" in order to come into the fields of higher knowledge, and of how he must have become able to face without fear the revelations that await him at the Threshold. Again, in ordinary life man is protected from crossing the Threshold. Call it personification or what you will, in those ancient schools of wisdom they were relating real experiences when they spoke of man being protected by the "Guardian of the Threshold," and of undergoing beyond it a time of darkness and uncertainty before ultimately attaining to a vision of reality, a "standing within" spirit-filled reality.

It is inevitable that in our day all manner of confused and hazy notions should connect themselves with such expressions as "Threshold," "Guardian of the Threshold." Let me say at once that mankind is undergoing evolution; nor is it only the outer cultural conditions that change and develop, but man's life of soul is changing all the time, moving onward from state to state; consequently the expressions which in olden times could be used to describe intimate processes in the life of soul, cannot bear the same meaning for present-day mankind. What man meant in olden times when he spoke of the Threshold and the Guardian of the Threshold was something different from the processes that take place in man to-day, when he resolves to go forward from ordinary knowledge to supersensible knowledge; and it is only with a view to making more comprehensible what I shall have to say regarding these latter that I bring in a comparison with ancient conceptions.

What was it of which the men of olden times were afraid? What was it for which the pupil in the School of Wisdom had to be prepared by means of an exact and thoroughgoing discipline of the will—a discipline that should make the will strong and vigorous, able to stand firm in extremely difficult and perplexing situations in life? Strange though it may sound, it becomes clear to us if we

are able to survey the course of human evolution, that what men feared in those times was actually none other than the condition of soul which mankind in general has reached to-day. They wanted to protect the pupil from coming all unprepared to the condition of mind and soul to which we have been brought by the scientific education of the last three or four centuries. Let me illustrate this for you in a particular case.

We all accept to-day the so-called Copernican view of the universe. This view places the sun in the centre of our planetary system; the planets revolve round the sun, with the earth as a planet among the other planets. Ever since the time of Copernicus, this is the picture men have had. In earlier times, quite another picture of the world lived in the general consciousness of mankind. The earth was seen in the centre, and the sun and stars revolving round the earth. Man had, that is to say, a geocentric picture of the world. Copernicus replaced it with a heliocentric picture of the world. Man has now no longer the feeling of standing on firm ground; he sees himself being hurled through space, together with the earth, at a terrific speed. As for how it all looks to the eye, that, we are told, is a mere illusion, induced by relations of perspective and the like, to which human vision is subject.

Now, this heliocentric picture of the world already existed in earlier ages. Plutarch is a writer from whom we can learn a great deal concerning the men of olden times, and how they thought about the world. Let me read you a passage translated from his writings. Plutarch is speaking of Aristarchus of Samos, and he describes the way in which Aristarchus conceived the world. We are therefore taken back into early Greek times, into an epoch many centuries before the Middle Ages, and before Copernicus. In the opinion of Aristarchus, says Plutarch, the universe is much bigger than it looks; for Aristarchus makes the assumption that the stars and the sun do not move, but that the earth revolves round the sun as centre, while the sphere of the fixed stars, whose centre is also in the sun, is so immense that the circumference of the circle described by the earth is to the distance of the fixed stars as is the centre of a sphere to its entire surface.

We find thus in Greek times the heliocentric conception of the world; we find the very same picture as we have to-day of man's place in the planetary system and his relation to the heaven of the fixed stars. In olden times, however, this heliocentric conception of the world was a secret known only to a few, who had undergone

a strict training of the will before such knowledge could be imparted to them.

It is important to grasp the significance of this fact. What is common knowledge to-day, freely spoken of by everyone, was in earlier times a wisdom known to a select few. What such a wisdom-pupil knew, for example, concerning the sun and its relation to the earth was considered a knowledge that lay "beyond the Threshold"; man must needs first cross the Threshold before he can come into those fields where the soul discovers this new relationship to the universe. The very same knowledge that our whole education renders familiar and natural to us to-day, was for them on the other side of a Threshold that must not be crossed without due preparation.

What we have shown with regard to the astronomical conception of the world could quite well be worked out for other spheres of knowledge. We should again and again find evidence of how the whole of mankind has in the course of evolution been pushed across what was for olden times a Threshold on the path to higher knowledge. The apprehension that was felt in those times about the condition of soul evoked by such knowledge, has shown itself frequently in later centuries in the attitude of the churches, which preserve and tend to perpetuate the traditions of the past. Again and again the churches have rejected knowledge that has been attained in the progress of civilisation; and when, for example, the Roman Church refused to acknowledge the teaching of Copernicus (as it did until the year 1827), the reason was the same as in ancient times prevented the priests from giving out Mystery knowledge to the masses—namely, that the knowledge would bring man into uncertainty if he were not duly prepared beforehand.

Now it is well-known that no power on earth can withstand for long the march of progress; and we in these days have to think in an entirely new way about what one may call the "Threshold of the Spiritual World." Spiritual Science is no "warming up" of Gnostic or other ancient teaching, but works absolutely on the principles of modern natural science, as I think will have been evident from the example we have been considering.

How was it that men of olden times feared knowledge which to-day is the common property of all mankind? In my book *Die Ratsel der Philosophie*³, I have described the changes that have

³ *The Riddles of Philosophy*. English translation in preparation.

come about in man's mind and soul since early Greek times. The Greek had not a self-consciousness that was fully detached from the external world. When he thought about the world, he felt himself, so to speak, "grown together" with it; he was as closely united with it as we are to-day in the act of sense-perception. For him thought was also, in a manner speaking, sense-perception. Red, blue, G, C sharp—these are for us sense-perceptions; but thought we ourselves produce by inner activity. For the Greek this kind of inner activity did not yet exist. Just as we get red, green, G, C sharp from sense-perception, so did he get the thoughts too from the external world. He had not yet the independence that comes from the comprehension of self. Only quite gradually has the perception and understanding of the self developed to what it is to-day. Self-consciousness has grown steadily stronger in the course of time, and man has thereby detached himself from surrounding Nature. He has learned to look into himself, inwardly to comprehend himself as something that acts independently. In doing so he has placed himself over against Nature; he stands outside her, that he may then contemplate her inner being from without. And with this detachment of thought from external objective life is connected also the birth of the feeling of freedom, that sense of freedom which is in reality a product only of the last few centuries.

We have come to regard history more and more in its purely external aspect; but if we were to consider it, as we try to do in spiritual science, in a more inward way, we should discover that the experience we have to-day when we speak of "freedom" was not there for the Greek. Although we translate the corresponding word in their writings with our word "freedom," the feeling we associate with the word was quite unknown to the Stoic, for example, and other philosophers. A careful and unbiassed study of Greek times will not fail to make this clear.

I laid stress in my *Philosophie der Freiheit*⁵ which was written in the early nineties, on the connection of the experience of freedom with what I called "pure thinking"—that thinking which is completely detached from the inner organic life, and which (if the expression be not misunderstood) becomes, even in ordinary life, cognition on a higher level. For when we permeate pure thinking with moral ideas and impulses—that is, with ideas and impulses that

⁵ English title, *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*.

are not associated with desires, or with sympathies and antipathies, but solely with pure, loving devotion to the deed that is to be done—when we do this and allow the impulse to quicken in our soul to action, then the action we perform is truly free.

One cannot really put the question concerning freedom in the way that is frequently done, when it is asked: Is man free or unfree? All one can say is that man is on the way to freedom. By cultivating self-evolution and self-knowledge, by achieving inner liberation from his accustomed attitude of mind and soul, man is treading a path that will enable him to rise to pure thinking; and on this path he becomes increasingly free. It is thus not a matter of "either—or," but rather of gradual approach, or, shall we say, of both. For we are at once free and unfree; unfree where we are still governed by our desires, by what rises up out of our organism, out of the life of instinct; free, on the other hand, where we have grown independent of the instinctive life, where we are able to awaken within us pure love for the deed that has been envisaged in pure thinking.

The condition of mind that leads to the experience of freedom—the condition, namely, of pure thinking, to which man is able to surrender himself—must necessarily, for present-day man, remain an ideal; an ideal, however, that is indissolubly bound up with his worth and dignity as man.

We are on the way to such an ideal, and it is natural science that has set us upon the path. In all the development of natural science in modern times—and the results of this natural science carry authority in the widest circles and tend more and more to become the groundwork of our whole education and culture—one thing stands out clearly. Study the development of natural science and you will be struck with the growing recognition of the value and importance of the *thought*—the thought that is elaborated by man himself inwardly. This is true in the realm of the inorganic, from physics up to astronomy, as well as in the realm of the organic, and in spite of the fact that scientists base their results everywhere on observation and experiment. And through the work he does in thinking, man develops an enhanced self-consciousness; which means, that his detachment from the inner being of Nature grows.

We can here take once more the example of Astronomy. What Copernicus did, fundamentally speaking, was to reduce to calculation the results of observation. In this way one arrives at a world system that is completely detached from man. The world systems

of ancient times were not so; they were always intimately connected with the human being. Man felt himself within the world; he was part of it. In our time man is, so to speak, incidental. He sees himself hurled through universal space together with the planet Earth, and his picture of the whole structure of the world is completely divorced from himself; that which lives in his own inner being must on no account be allowed to play a part in his conception of the universe. Man becomes filled, that is to say, with a thought-content that is the means of detaching him from himself. True, *he thinks* his thoughts, and in thinking remains always united with his thoughts; but he thinks them in such a way that they have no sort of connection with what rises up out of his organism, out of his life of instinct. He is under necessity so to think that, although the thought remains united with him, it nevertheless wrests itself free from the human-personal in him, so that in his thoughts he becomes, in effect, completely objective.

And this experience brings man to greater consciousness of self. The strenuous efforts required for finding one's way to clear conceptions in the field of astronomy or physics or chemistry to-day, or even only for following in thought the results of others' work, are bound to lead to a strengthening of the consciousness of self.

In the ancient civilisations—and herein lies the great difference between them and our own—education was not directed to the strengthening of self-consciousness. Rather had it the tendency to make man's thinking correspond with what he saw with his eyes. So arose the Ptolemaic conception of the world, which in all essentials is a reproduction of what we perceive with the external senses. Man was not thrust so far out of himself as he is by the modern scientific outlook; hence his self-consciousness did not grow. He remained more within his body—held there, as it were, by enchantment. Consciousness of self he derived from his instincts, and from the feeling of life and vitality within him. Although in our age we have drifted into materialism, this living in the body has been overcome by the development of thinking; and the consciousness of self has grown correspondingly. The very fact that we have become materialists, and lost our awareness of the spiritual in the objects perceived by the senses, has contributed to the achievements of thought. In olden times it was feared that if a man were brought unprepared to the kind of thinking such as is necessary, for example, to grasp the heliocentric system, he would "faint" in his soul; his

consciousness of self would not be strong enough to sustain him.

This accounts for the emphasis on the training of the will; for a strong and vigorous will strengthens also the consciousness of self. The preparation of the pupil in the Wisdom School was therefore directed primarily to the will, in order that he might grow strong enough to endure, beyond the Threshold, that picture of the world for which a highly-developed consciousness of self is required.

We see, then, what it was men feared in olden times for the pupil who was to be guided into the inner being of the things of the world, into the inner being of Nature. They were afraid lest he be hurt in his soul, through falling into a condition of uncertainty and darkness, a condition comparable, in the realm of soul, with physical faintness. This danger they hoped to avoid by a thoroughgoing discipline of the will. In ordinary life, they said, man must remain on this side of the realm where the dangerous knowledge is to be found; a Guardian holds him back from the region for which he is unfit, thus protecting him from being overcome by faintness of soul. And their description of the experiences the pupil had to undergo if he wanted to cross the Threshold and pass the Guardian correspond exactly to inner experiences of the soul.

It was told how, when the pupil draws near the Threshold, he immediately has a feeling of uncertainty. If he has been sufficiently prepared, he is able to stand upright in the realm which would otherwise make him giddy; he passes the Guardian of the Threshold and, by virtue of the powers of his soul, enters into the spiritual world—which the Guardian would otherwise not allow him even to behold. But he must be able also to stay in the spiritual world with full consciousness. For the tremendous experiences that await him there call for strength and not for weakness, and if he were to let go, these experiences would have a shattering effect on his whole organisation; he would suffer grievous harm.

And now the strange thing is that in course of evolution a knowledge that could be attained by pupils of the ancient Wisdom Schools only after most careful preparation has become the common property of all mankind. We stand to-day in our ordinary knowledge beyond what the men of old felt to be a Threshold. The purpose they had in view in the ancient Wisdom Schools was that the pupil, when he looked into his own inner being, should feel himself united there with the inner being of Nature. And believing that if he did so unprepared, he would sink into a kind of spiritual faintness, they

would not allow him to attempt this exploration until he had received the right discipline and training. And yet in our age everyone penetrates into this region utterly unprepared!

As a matter of fact man is experiencing to-day precisely what the ancients took such care to avoid. He acquires his knowledge of Nature; and he acquires also a strong consciousness of self that enables him to stand upright amid all the knowledge that is current to-day in astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, etc. He imbibes this knowledge and can remain steadfast without losing his balance. Nevertheless there is a quality in his life of soul that the men of old would deeply deplore. Because in the course of evolution we have acquired thought and the feeling of freedom and a stronger self-consciousness, therefore we do not lose ourselves when we study the results of natural science; but we do lose something, and the loss is only too manifest to-day in the soul-life of mankind everywhere.

In this matter we labour under great illusion; we dream, and we cling to our dreams, and will not let them go. I have often spoken of how natural science brings conscientious students to a recognition of the boundaries of knowledge, boundaries man cannot pass without taking his power of cognition into forbidden—nay, into impossible—regions. A very distinguished scientist of modern times has spoken of the "Ignorabimus," reading into the word a confession that however far we go in the knowledge we acquire from sense-observation and the intellect, we never penetrate to the inner being of Nature. I here touch on a subject that at once lands us in conflict, as was felt even at a time when natural science was far less advanced than it is to-day. It was Albrecht von Haller who expressed the "Ignorabimus" in the well-known lines:

To Nature's heart
No living soul can reach.
Thrice happy he
To whom she shows
Even her outer shell.

Goethe, who used constantly to hear these words on the lips of those who shared Haller's attitude towards Nature, labelled such thinkers "Philistine." For him they are men who do not want to rouse themselves to inner activity of soul; for by dint of inner activity the soul of man can kindle a light within—a light which, shining upon the heart of Nature, shall carry the soul into her

innermost being. Goethe proclaims this in forcible and trenchant manner in his poem "Allerdings," quoting to begin with the words of Haller:

'To Nature's heart
No living soul can reach.'
O Philistine,
To me and mine
What use in such a speech?
We think, through every part
We enter into her heart.

Still the cry goes,
'Thrice happy he
To whom she shows
Even her outer shell.'
For sixty years I have heard that cry;
I curse it, but secretly, silently,
Say to myself a thousand times,
Gladly she gives and she gives us all!
Nature is neither kernel nor shell,
She is both in one; she is one and all.
Look in your own heart, man, and tell
If you yourself are kernel or shell!⁴

Out of an instinctive feeling that was conscious and yet at the same time unconscious, Goethe rejected utterly the separation of the being of man's soul from the innermost being of Nature. He saw clearly that if the soul becomes conscious, in a healthy manner, of its own real being, then that consciousness brings with it the experience of standing within the innermost heart of Nature.

This conviction it was that kept Goethe from accepting Kant's philosophy. They make a great mistake who assert that at one time of his life Goethe came very near to the philosophy of Kant. In contradistinction to what Kant recognised as the human faculty of cognition, Goethe postulated what he called "perceptive judgment." This means that in order to form a judgment we do not merely pass in abstract reasoning from concept to concept; rather do we use inwardly for thought the kind of beholding we use outwardly in sense perception. Goethe says he never thought about

⁴ English translation from *Goethe and Faust; an Interpretation*, by F. M. Stawell and G. L. Dickinson. G. Bell & Sons, 1928.

thinking ; what he set himself continually to do was to behold the living element in the thought. And in this beholding of the thoughts he saw a way to unite the human soul with the very being of Nature.

Anthroposophical Spiritual Science would go further on the same path. This perceptive judgment—which, as presented by Goethe, was still in its beginnings—it sets out to develop in the direction indicated in my book "How to attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds." Faculties of cognition, which in ordinary life, and in the pursuit also of ordinary science, remain latent in man, are led up to "vision," to a new "beholding." Just as man perceives around him with the physical eye colours, or light and darkness, so with the eye of the spirit does he now behold the spiritual. By the practice of certain intimate exercises of the soul, he calls forth and develops within him powers that usually remain hidden, and so lifts himself up to a higher kind of knowledge which is able to plunge into the very heart of external Nature. You have frequently heard me speak of the successive stages of this higher knowledge, and I would like here to say a little about their evolution from a particular point of view.

We are accustomed to think of the course of our life as divided between waking and sleeping. These two conditions must, we know, alternate for us if we are to remain healthy in mind and body. How is it with us from the time of awakening to the time of falling asleep ? The experiences of the soul are permeated with thoughts ; the thoughts receive a certain colouring from the life of feeling ; and there is also the life of will, which wells up from dim depths of our being under the guidance of the thoughts, and accomplishes deeds. In the other condition, that of sleep, we lie still ; our thoughts sink into darkness ; our feelings vanish and our will is inactive. The ordinary normal life of man shows these two alternating conditions. The picture is, however, incomplete ; and we shall not arrive at any satisfactory idea of the nature of man if we are content to see the course of his life in this simple manner.

We take it for granted that between waking up and falling asleep we are awake. But the fact is, we are not awake in our whole being. This is overlooked, and consequently we have no true psychology ; we come to no right understanding of the soul. If, ridding ourselves of all prejudice, we try to observe inwardly what we experience when we *feel*, we discover that our feeling life is by no means so illumined with the light of consciousness as is the life of thought

and ideation. It is dim, by comparison. For a sense of self, for an experience of self, the life of feeling is undoubtedly every bit as real as—even perhaps in some ways more real than—the life of thought ; but clarity, light-filled clarity, is enjoyed by thought alone. There is always something undefined about the life of feeling. Indeed, if we examine the matter carefully, comparing different conditions of soul one with another, we are led finally to the conclusion that the life which pulsates in feeling may be compared with dream life. Study the dream life of man ; consider how it surges up from unknown depths of his being ; how it manifests in pictures, but in pictures that are vague and indeterminate, so that one does not see all at once exactly how they are connected with external reality. Has not the life of feeling the same quality and character ?

Feelings are, of course, something altogether different from dream pictures, but when we compare the degree of consciousness in both, we find it to be very much the same. The life of feeling is a kind of waking dream ; the pictures that appear in the dream are here pressed down into the whole organic life. The experience is different in each case, and yet the experience is present in the soul in the same manner in both. So that in reality we are awake only in the life of ideation ; in the feeling life we dream even while we are awake.

With the life of the will it is again different. We do not as a rule give much thought to the matter, but is it not so that the impulse of will arises within us without our having any clear consciousness of its origin ? We have a thought ; and out of the thought springs an impulse of will. Then again we see ourselves acting ; and then again we have a thought about the action. But we cannot follow with consciousness what comes between. How a thought becomes an impulse for the will and shoots into my muscle-power ; how the nerve registers the movement of the muscles ; how, in other words, that which has been sent down into the depths of my being as thought, comes to be carried out in action, afterwards to emerge again when I perceive myself performing the action—all this lives in me in no other way than do the experiences of sleep.

In deep sleep we have in a sense lost our own being ; we pass through the experiences of sleep without being aware of them ; and it is the same with what comes about through the activity of the will-impulse in man. We dream in our life of feeling, and we are asleep in our willing ; dreaming and sleeping are thus perpetually present in waking life. And in these unknown depths of being

where the will has its origin, arises also that which we eventually gather up—focus, as it were—in consciousness of self. Man comes to a recognition of his full humanity only when he knows himself as a being that thinks and feels and wills.

Ordinary life, therefore, embraces unconscious conditions. And it is just through the life of ideation becoming separated from the rest of the soul life and lifted up into consciousness, that a way is made for the development of the experience of freedom. Here, in a sense, we divide ourselves up. We are awake in a part of ourselves, in the life of ideation, whilst in relation to another part of us we are as unconscious as we are in relation to the inner being of Nature.

It is at this point that Anthroposophical Spiritual Science steps in with its methods for attaining higher knowledge. This spiritual science is very far removed from any dreamy, obscure mysticism, nor does it support itself, like spiritualism, on external experiment. The foundation for the whole method of spiritual scientific research lies in the inner being of man himself; it can be evolved in full consciousness and will manifest the same clarity as the most exact material conceptions. The world of feeling, which generally, as we have seen, leads a kind of dream life, can become flooded with the same light that permeates thoughts and ideas—which, according to some schools of philosophy, themselves originate in the feelings. By means of exercises described in my book, "How to Attain Knowledge of Higher Worlds," this lighting up of the world of feeling is brought about, with the result that the region which is usually dreamlike in character now lives in the soul as "imaginative" consciousness. The moment man gives himself up to this imaginative consciousness, something is present for him in consciousness that remains generally beneath the Threshold. He thinks pictures, knowing, however, quite well that he is not dreaming them, but that they correspond to realities.

Spiritual Science then leads on further, to "inspired" consciousness, and here we are taken into the realm of the will. Little by little, we are brought to the point of being able to behold clairvoyantly—please do not misunderstand the expression—how the whole human organisation functions when the will pulsates in it. We see what actually takes place in the muscle when the will is active. Such a knowledge is "inspired" knowledge. Man dives down into his own inner being and acquires a self-knowledge which

is generally veiled from him. We come to know more of man than stands before us as "given" between birth and death. Feeling and willing being now also flooded with the light of consciousness, we can know man not only as a created being, perceiving in him that which wakes up every morning and enters again into a body ready-made; we can recognise in him also the creative power which comes down from spiritual worlds at the time of birth or conception, and itself forms and organises the body. In effect, at this further stage man comes to know his own eternal being which lives beyond birth and death; he attains to a direct beholding of the eternal and spiritual in his soul.

As man learns in this way to know himself, not merely as natural man, but as spirit, he finds that he is also now within the inner being of Nature; in the spirit of his own nature he recognises the spirit of the Nature that is all around him. And at this point a fact of deep significance is revealed—namely, that with our modern knowledge of Nature we are already standing on the other side of the Threshold, in the old sense of the word. The men of olden times believed they would lose their self-consciousness if they entered this region unprepared. We do not lose our self-consciousness, but we do lose the world.

The full clarity of thought and idea, to which man owes his consciousness of self, has been achieved by him only in modern times; and now this consciousness of self needs to be carried a step further. The men of old paid particular heed to the training of the will; we have now to press forward, as I emphasised in my "Philosophy of Spiritual Activity," to pure thinking. We must develop our thinking; it must grow into Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. And this will bring us once again to a Threshold, a new Threshold into the spiritual world. We must not remain in the world that offers itself for sense-perception and leaves the inner being of Nature beyond the boundaries of knowledge. We must cross another Threshold, the Threshold that lies before our own inner being.

At this Threshold we shall no longer let our imagination run away with us and conjure up all manner of atoms and molecules to account for the impressions of colour and sound and heat; for when we come consciously to recognise, and be within, our own spirit, then we shall find we are also within the spirit of Nature. We shall learn to know Nature herself as spirit. In the region where to-day

we talk of an atomistic world (we are really only postulating behind Nature a second equally material Nature), in the very region where to-day we are losing the world, we shall find the spirit. And then we shall have the right fundamental feeling towards the inner being of Nature and, also, the being of the human soul.

It is, as you see, a different attitude we have to attain from that of olden times. We must be conscious that we are living in conditions the men of old wanted to avoid. This does not mean, however, that we are in danger of losing ourselves; our world of thought has been too strongly developed for that. And if we develop the world of thought still further, then we shall also not lose what we are in danger of losing. The men of olden times were threatened with the loss of self, with a kind of faintness of the soul. We are faced with the danger of losing the world for our ego-consciousness; of being so surrounded and overborne by purely mathematical pictures of the world, purely atomistic conceptions, that we lose all sense of the "whole" world in its infinite variety and richness. In order that we may find the world again—in order, that is, that we may find the spirit in the world—we must cross what constitutes for modern man the Threshold.

We may even put it this way: if the men of olden times feared the Guardian of the Threshold, and needed to be fully prepared before they might pass him, we in our day must desire earnestly to pass the Guardian. We must long to carry knowledge of the spirit into those regions where hitherto we have relied only on external sense-perception in combination with the results of intellectual reasoning and experiment. Knowledge of the spirit must be taken into the laboratory, into the observatory and into the clinic. Wherever research is carried on, knowledge of the spirit must have place.

Otherwise, since all the results that are arrived at in such institutions come from beyond the Threshold, man is thereby cut off from the world in a manner that is dangerous for him. He feels himself in the presence of an inner being of Nature which he can never approach on an external path, which he can approach only by becoming awake in his soul and pressing forward to the immortal part of his own being. As soon, however, as he does this, he is at that moment also within the spirit of Nature. He has stepped across the Threshold that lies in his own being, and finds himself in the presence of the spiritual in Nature.

To point out to man this path is the task of Anthroposophical

Spiritual Science. It has to give what the other sciences cannot give. And it may rightly claim to be Goethean, for to those who say:

To Nature's heart

No living soul can reach.

Goethe replies:

Nature is neither kernel nor shell,

She is both in one, she is one and all.

Look in your own heart, man, and tell

If you yourself are kernel or shell!

We are "shell" as long as we remain in the life of ideas alone. We sever ourselves from Nature, and all we can do is to talk about her. But the man who penetrates to his own inner "kernel," and experiences himself in the very centre of his soul—he discovers that he is at the same time in the very innermost of Nature; he is experiencing her inner being.

Such, then, is the kind of impulse that Anthroposophical Spiritual Science is ready to give to the whole of human life, and in particular to the several sciences. These several sciences need not remain the highly specialised fields that they have been hitherto; rather shall each be a contribution to that quest which man must ever follow if he would rise to a consciousness of his true dignity—the quest for the eternal in the human being. All that the individual sciences can teach to-day is still only a knowledge that looks on Nature from without. But if those who are working in them tread, as well as the outer, also the inner path of knowledge, then the knowledge acquired in the different fields can grow into a knowledge of man, a comprehensive knowledge of mankind. We need such a knowledge in our time if we are to guide the social problems of the future into paths where right and healthy solutions can be found—as I have explained in my book, "The Threefold Commonwealth."

One who carries deeply enough in his heart the development of spiritual science will find himself continually face to face with this question of the connection between the being of man and the inner being of Nature. The specialised sciences cannot help us here; they only spread darkness over the world. The darkness is to be feared, even as the men of olden times feared the region beyond the Threshold. But it is possible for man to kindle a light that shall light up the darkness; and this light is the light that shines in the soul of man when he attains to spiritual knowledge.

Translated by Mary Adams.

TENDENCIES TO A THREEFOLD SOCIAL ORDER IN ENGLISH HISTORY

A. C. HARWOOD

THE threefold order of society envisaged by Rudolf Steiner is based on a division of function, not on a division of classes.

It therefore represents something new in history, and, like all new things, is born out of a change of human consciousness. Plato's Republic had its divisions, but they were class divisions of much strictness; in this they merely reflected contemporary society which made an absolute distinction, for instance, between freeman and slave. A similar absolute distinction between the serf and the various classes of freemen (themselves fairly rigidly distinguished) survived into the Middle Ages, and was reinforced by the great distinction between secular and clerical society. It is only in recent times that the same man has had the ability to think of himself as belonging to the various spheres of society, and acting differently in a variety of capacities.

It is easy to recognise and acclaim the great discoveries and inventions that belong to the modern age. It is far more difficult to characterise the change in consciousness which has made these discoveries possible. Since the Renaissance a new type of mind has been born, or has been undergoing a slow process of birth, to which Rudolf Steiner—the first person fully to recognise and describe it—has given the name of "consciousness soul." One characteristic of this consciousness soul is that it moves freely and easily among material things and the forces of the physical world; another is that it can live outside time and so develop a historical sense; a third—which in reality underlies the other two—is that it endows a man with the capacity to see himself from outside, even in the engrossing moment of action. It has been called the spectator consciousness; it could be called the Hamlet consciousness—for who has not sometimes felt that the very play in which Hamlet

is the principal actor takes place in his mind, that the play is in him no less than he in the play?

This new consciousness belongs to all Western Europe since the Renaissance, but it is most deeply implanted, penetrating to their very blood and bone, in the Anglo-Saxon races. It crops up in the earliest stories of English history. There is something of it in the attitude of Thomas-a-Becket, who served the King when he was Chancellor, but the Pope when he was Archbishop. It was there when Drake played out his game of bowls. It shines brilliantly by reflection in the story that Napoleon, after Waterloo, said to one of his captors: "What will Wellington do now? I suppose he will make himself King of England"—unaware that the Duke put on his civilian clothes as fast as he could, and that when he had them on, he put on also a civilian mind which could never even have conceived such a thought. Chesterton has put this attitude (perhaps a little early) into the behaviour of Alfred the Great, when his first thoughts, on being slapped by the woman whose cakes he had burnt, are of torture

and the evil things

That are in the childish hearts of kings

—but in a moment his mood changes, he goes out and the woman looks

On a stranger sight than sylph or elf,

On one man laughing at himself

Under the greenwood tree.

This ability to put oneself outside oneself—which includes, of course, the ability to laugh at oneself—is, I repeat, something new in human history. The Romans had a touch of it in some outstanding personalities, but it did not become a common possession of mankind until the Renaissance, and then only gradually, and principally in this country. Historians are sometimes puzzled by the fact that former civilisations did not invent the idea of representative government. But to be a representative you must be prepared and able at the right time to forget yourself and act as a representative—and you are not likely to be chosen unless other people believe that you will do so. Your representative may announce that he represents your interests and not your opinions, but they are at least *your* interests and not his. You do not expect he will use his position to make himself King of England. He must see himself from outside acting as a representative. Without this

ability, and general confidence that it will be exercised, representative government is impossible.

It is this ability which has made representative government possible in England during the past few hundred years; it is lack of this ability which has made it impossible in other ages and other countries. Rudolf Steiner relied on it when he proposed the three-fold social order for Central Europe after the first world war. Hitler (and before Hitler, Woodrow Wilson) denied it. If you cannot separate yourself as economic man from yourself as spiritual man or man of rights, you will be a German or an Italian or a Russian in all three spheres. This is the final conclusion of nationalism which Wilson preached and the Dictators materialised.

The consciousness soul was not born even in this country in a year, a decade, or even a century. The Englishman, whom we regard as typical (he belongs perhaps more to the last century than to this), with his inexcitability and detachment, his dislike of extremes and of display, his toleration and spirit of compromise, his Roman solidity and Greek love of understatement, was simply not to be found in the sixteenth, seventeenth, or eighteenth centuries. The Elizabethan gentleman would sell an estate to provide himself with a suit of clothes; he was personally dirty and covered up the smell with a plentiful use of civet; he was indifferent to cruelty; he delighted in the affected and extravagant in art; he paid outrageous and sycophantic compliments unblushingly; he was religious, and wept aloud at long sermons by great preachers; his immediate descendants were often religious fanatics. In other words, he exhibited most of the traits that we would to-day think characteristic of the Spanish or Italian peoples.

Similarly, his followers of the eighteenth century, with their wit, their satire, their love of reason and proportion, their elegance and their rhetoric, were more akin to the French than to the modern Englishman. Yet through all this exotic vegetation there is always springing up the new native growth of the consciousness soul, destined to destroy alike the good and the bad in the earlier character. With this growth comes an instinctive feeling towards the threefold social order; the man of the consciousness soul wants to see himself as a different being acting under different principles, when he is a producer or consumer, when he is obeying the laws, when he is engaged in public controversy at Hyde Park Corner, or writing a book, or founding a university.

It is always hard to know where to begin in tracing a new move-

ment. Critics who seek the origins of the Romantic Movement are apt suddenly to find themselves way back in the spacious days of Beowulf. So with the consciousness soul you can point to such a change in the law as Elizabeth introduced, when the Papists were no longer persecuted for their beliefs but fined for not attending church—the law no longer enquiring into your opinions but concerning itself only with your practices—a distinction of very great importance for a country which was to introduce the new scientific views of the world against a background of traditional religion. You could no doubt go back earlier still; but, for the present purpose at any rate, perhaps the best beginning is the time of the Civil Wars of the Seventeenth Century, so closely parallel and yet in such contrast to the Thirty Years' War in Central Europe.

The Thirty Years' War began as a religious struggle; it ended as a purely secular fight for the dominance of Europe. At first Catholic troops fought Protestant—both sides almost in the spirit of a crusade; but Wallenstein found that all he needed were soldiers—of whatever religion; and Richelieu, though a Cardinal of the Roman Church, was prepared to back either side if it were profitable to France. The incidents of the war are of great complexity; the political development simple and uniform.

The English Civil Wars, on the other hand, present from the very beginning a much more complicated picture. From the first the quarrel takes place on three levels, and in three spheres. There is the trade and economic quarrel. It does not matter whether the interference of the early Stuarts with trade by means of monopolies and imports and controls was a good or a bad thing; the new trading and manufacturing communities believed that it was not the function of the King to interfere with trade and manufacture. Then there is the legal quarrel. It does not matter whether Ship-Money was morally right or wrong; the legal community believed it represented one more act of the King against the law—and they believed (unlike the Stuarts themselves) that the King was under the law no less than the humblest of his subjects. Finally, there was the religious question, not altogether accidentally bound up with the other two. For the trading communities were naturally Puritan. The practice of trade produced the puritan virtues of thrift and economy rather than the older ideal of giving your coat to the beggar or your estate to the church. And these virtues again worked back on commercial ability and astuteness.

The Stuart Kings stood for the divine right of kings, which was

really a renaissance of ancient Egypt, where the Pharaoh was high priest and judge and economic administrator in one. Like Kepler, they "stole the golden vessels of the Egyptians," but not to the same satisfactory end. For, by their policy of the unified State, they had the misfortune to unite against them all the elements of a threefold state struggling to be born. They were not fighting against men alone, but against those impersonal forces in history which achieve so quickly such unforeseeable results.

What was the position when the struggle was over? How different was the social England to which Charles II returned from that which he left? It would be idle to pretend that spiritual freedom had been obtained. Books and newspapers had still to be licensed; religious toleration was of the most fitful kind, and then granted for political rather than spiritual reasons; but monopolies had gone and, in spite of some forced loans, the trading community had achieved a far greater measure of independence than it enjoyed under Elizabeth. It was in the sphere of rights, however, that the position appeared most consolidated. Probably as much through the experience of military government under Cromwell as through the old resistance to the Stuarts, a temper was abroad apt to resist any infringement of the law except by full constitutional procedure. It was this temper which made it impossible for James II's nominee President to find a blacksmith in Oxford willing to open the doors of Magdalen for him. It was this temper which drove James himself from London almost without a blow. This temper—reaching the remote islands of Scotland and undermining the very party of divine right—caused the Highland fisherman guarding bonny Prince Charlie in the island of Rasay to call through the door: "You are the King, but we are the parliament—and you must do as we say!"

After the bitter experiences of the seventeenth century the law was especially regarded in the eighteenth as the guardian of individual rights and liberties. The extent to which it protected privilege is in our days almost incredible. Landlords who pulled down whole villages because their roofs offended the eye that viewed them from the Great House; parcels of uninhabited land which sent a member or two to parliament; professors who never taught, lectured or studied; vicars who never saw the parishes which gave them their comfortable incomes—all these were supported and maintained by the law. This very support of the freedom of the individual to enjoy his own had, however, one unexpected result

The great individuals whom this system encouraged were certainly not going to have their mouths muzzled. Wherever they were, they spoke out their minds—and it is not a far step from speaking to writing. Thus it came about, that, whereas Gibbon thought it advisable to veil his attack on Christianity under the elaborate irony which he so much enjoyed, by the end of the century the licensing of books and newspapers was a thing of the past. The reaction against the French Revolution was to produce some fierce pieces of intolerance, but virtually freedom of speech and thought and religion was established during the eighteenth century.

The nineteenth-century historians, brought up in this freedom, appreciated to the full its virtues, but not perhaps its difficulties. Seen from the other side of the Thirty Years' War, liberty of speech and religion must have appeared almost incompatible with a coherent society. To go to a ruler of the sixteenth century and propose to him to take away his controls over the spiritual life was much the same as to go to a modern ruler and propose the removal of all controls over the economic life. The one would have replied, as the other does reply, that Society would go to pieces without such controls. It took much experience to discover that a nation could cohere even though the individual spoke and wrote as he liked. This possibility had become plain to the nineteenth century. What the twentieth century is discovering is that this spiritual freedom is untenable unless it is supported by a pervasive and absolute belief in equality before the law. You cannot grant freedom of speech to people who believe that they are the only ones who should enjoy it. No single part of the Threefold State can stand for long alone.

For it was just at the end of the eighteenth century, when the new industries in England were beginning to call for a new and more conscious organisation of society, when England was first fully realising the Consciousness Soul, that the French Revolution by a characteristic flash of genius produced the three watchwords, *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*. The crowds who shouted them probably never reflected that the three ideals were incompatible with each other; that equality denies liberty, and fraternity equality. Because they never sorted them out and applied them in their different spheres, because they did not produce a balanced organic society, within a few years they were to suffer a rigid military dictatorship. The experience of Europe at large has been slower but not less sure.

The beginning of the nineteenth century—after the Napoleonic Wars—found England, for the first time since it became a nation,

without any effective enemy on the Continent. The political situation coincided with the swift development of industry on a mechanised basis, which gave England power abroad, but, at home, presented her with problems of social organisation new in the history of the world. If mechanised industry had come in the days of slavery, the right organisation for it would have been at once apparent. Gangs of slaves would have worked the machines as they worked the plantations and the ergestula and the galleys. But the very consciousness soul, which brought mankind into such close touch with the physical world that he could explore its latent forces, had also produced a sense of the ego in man which precluded slavery. The great question for England, and for the world which was to follow in England's footsteps, was, under what sign will the new industries be established? Was it inevitable for them to be built up under the sign of laissez-faire, with its corollaries of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, and of equating labour and raw materials?

Laissez-faire is really nothing more than an extension of the eighteenth-century individualism into the factories of the nineteenth, without the aristocratic sense of social responsibility which had so often kept the great house in friendly connection with the cottages clustered outside its gates. It is therefore interesting to see from what side opposition to it arose.

Take, for instance, the Machine Wrecking Bill, which was to make machine-wrecking a capital offence. Through the pressure of the new industrialists it passed the House of Commons; but largely under the influence of a speech by Byron—who contrasted the industrial North highly unfavourably with the Turkish East—it was thrown out by the more aristocratic Lords. Then there is the strange case of Robert Owen and his "villages of co-operation." Owen is perhaps the first case of an industrialist with a conscience who hated the doctrine of "buying cheap and selling dear." His idea was to establish the new industries on a co-operative basis in communities to be financed indifferently by rich individuals, by corporations, by townships or by the Government. Profits were to be limited, the workers were to have access to the land, living was to be partly communal, and the general lay-out of the buildings somewhat like a College—without the chapel.

The great practical success of his mills at New Lanark attracted an immense interest to Owen's plans. The Royal Dukes, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Ambassadors and visiting Royalties, all

admired and patronised his schemes. At one time it looked as though "villages of co-operation" might have been generally established over industrial England. Indeed, the sudden dropping of Owen's schemes by his influential supporters was not due to anything inherent in the schemes themselves. Like many self-made men, Owen fancied he had discovered the secret of the universe—in the fact that man is the product of his environment. This led to the corollary that religion is inherently untrue and the root of all evil. Owen carefully staged a public declaration of this startling truth at a mass meeting in London. It was too much for the Archbishop, for the Royal Dukes—and for "The Times." Owen's schemes were dropped, and he turned his attention to founding an ideal community in America.

But the very name he wished to give to his industrial communities, "villages of co-operation," showed that Owen was conscious of a most important fact about the new industries. Intrinsically the old craftsman had not been co-operative—he had done the whole job himself; the old serf or peasant had not been co-operative—he had ploughed *his* strip of the great field and kept *his* geese and *his* swine on the common pasture. There was social organisation for a variety of reasons, but the organisation did not arise from the actual act of production. Under the new machine industries the common work of many men was necessary to produce a single piece of cloth, a single pair of boots. The work of the world was calling for co-operation in a sense it had never done before. The new industries were asking to be started under the sign of fraternity.

Unhappily, eighteenth-century individualism proved too strong. The fraternity which afterwards arose in the industrial world—represented by the trade unions—was not directed to economic production but to the securing of rights. Industry begot battle-fields rather than villages of co-operation.

Yet never had the power of free association and the forming of societies been so strong as in the nineteenth century. It had never, in fact, existed in the same way in the history of the world. No free association was allowed under the Roman Empire, and governments had hitherto regarded it as no less incompatible with social existence than freedom of speech. Association had always been regulated by charter. But now, quite suddenly, labour combinations and societies of all kinds became legal and flourished. If the eighteenth century is the great age of the individual, the nineteenth is that of the Society. Scientific, Literary and Antiquarian

Societies, Old Boys' Clubs and Ancient Orders of Buffaloes, missionary and philanthropic societies, Trade Unions and Freemasons—all of them had, if not their actual foundation, at any rate their flowering time in this century of association. With this came two other things—the full realisation of free trade and the urge towards universal education. Everyone was to have access to the best books, and the result was to be something like an earthly Paradise. It seemed as though the ideal of a Threefold State was about to be realised.

Here again, however, the canker of the century was at work and the buds were blighted. Free trade was not in reality free trade. It was based on the temporary and artificial conditions of a monopoly. England was, for practical purposes, the only manufacturing country. All countries that wished to be in the swim were compelled to buy from her. There was no freedom about it. With individualism rampant at home, and monopoly entrenched abroad, it was no wonder that the economic system grew up askew. We have now reached the polarity of nationalisation at home and State bargaining abroad. When Byron was a small boy a quack doctor applied an apparatus to his twisted foot which bent it an equal amount in the opposite direction. The theory was plausible, but the foot did not improve.

With the advent of the nineteenth century we enter the stage of the awakening of the working classes. They not only organise themselves in Trade Unions, but they assert their existence—for the first time—in the political and spiritual spheres, represented chiefly by the Vote and by Universal Education. The experience of education for all is a very recent one and can hardly yet be said to have succeeded. But it is interesting to observe that one at least of its earliest advocates would regard our present school system as entirely on the wrong lines. John Stuart Mill was wholeheartedly convinced that the State should pay for the education of all children whose parents could not afford to pay themselves. But he was equally convinced that the State should not provide the schools. It would be a sad day for England, he said, when individuals did not rise up to create schools, provided the necessary funds were available.

This was the ancient tradition of the independence of the spiritual sphere from the political. We still instinctively apply it to those educational institutions whose origin lies before the nineteenth century—the Universities and the Public Schools. Particularly

with regard to the Universities we plume ourselves on their independence of the State, and deprecate the central control of the German Universities from Berlin. But in many quarters it would be regarded as heresy to give a similar independence to our elementary or secondary schools. In fact, the grammar schools are rapidly losing their old independence, and the turn of the Public Schools may soon come.

Those who complain that universal education, so far from producing an age of sturdy independent thought, has led to an epoch of mass suggestion, should remember that the schools have not thought for themselves. Freedom and independence are guaranteed by free institutions, not less than by free individuals.

A hundred years ago Cobbett was touring Europe and preaching Free Trade. He was able to do so because there was a general admiration for English institutions, social and economic. That admiration vanished with the first World War, and no amount of advertising the "British Way of Life" will bring it back. But a genuine step forward in social organisation could recover it. More and more people are asking themselves if there is a way between Scylla and Charybdis. It would be a magnificent fulfilment of the tendencies of English history for England to realise it in a balanced Threefold Commonwealth.

ARE THERE TOO MANY PEOPLE IN THE WORLD?

EHRENFRIED PFEIFFER, M.D. (Hon.)

STATISTICIANS point to the fact of the increasing world population. In spite of the losses through recent wars and subsequent starvation in certain areas, there are far more people living now than at any other period of human history. During the 'thirties it was predicted that the population of the United States would increase up to 1967, then decrease. Now the belief is that the rise may continue. The question is therefore asked whether agricultural production will cope with this increase of peoples.

In other words, there are doubts whether the earth will be able to maintain an adequate food standard in face of such a future.

In "World Population Estimates" (Report O.I.R. 4192, 1947), the U.S. State Department reported: "In spite of recent natural and man-made catastrophes, about 17,000,000 additional inhabitants were added each year during the past decade." The United Nations Food and Agricultural Survey even speaks of a world increase of 20 million human beings per year. The world has some 2,500 million people now and in 25 years from now may have 3,000 million. The reasons given for these estimates are rising birth rates, and improvements in sanitation which will lead to a decline of the death rate, particularly in over-populated areas such as India, China, Java, Japan, and even in parts of Europe.

It is estimated that in the whole world there are 4,000 million acres of arable land. 1.77 acres per person, therefore, are now available for the production of food and other agricultural supplies. Agricultural authorities say that $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land are needed, at the present production level, to feed and clothe one person. Evidently, there is already a deficiency of supplies and this deficiency will become increasingly severe. The world is facing slow starvation—this seems to be the outlook.

What is the remedy? One school of thought favours an increase of agricultural production—that is, the yield per acre. A second stands for increasing the arable surface. A third view is less often mentioned—namely, that after all the population may not increase above a certain level. We are not thinking here so much of the frequently advised need for birth control as of the fact that during and after wars, in the past, there were abnormal increases which balanced themselves again later on. The picture presented by statistical predictions may seem open to revision if we realize that the period from 1918 to 1939 cannot be considered as "peace," but that the unrest of the peoples still created a "war" atmosphere—as is the case at present (1948).

Over-population existed in the past, too. During the reign of the Roman Emperors there were densely populated areas in Asia Minor, Egypt, North Africa, and Italy, which are now deserted. Metropolises, teeming with inhabitants, are also known now to have existed in long-past centuries. A consideration of history shows that population masses are ever changing, fluctuating, shifting from one area to another, rising and falling.

At present, only 12 per cent. of the earth's surface is under

cultivation, and this is the most liberal estimate. The intensive agricultural use of the land in relatively densely populated parts of the world, in the mountain areas of Switzerland and Norway—yes, even in primitively cultivated regions of Central America and India—shows the possibility of a more efficient use of the soil than is the rule, for instance, in the United States. There, many acres lie idle, not because of infertility, but because it does not pay to cultivate them, or else because the labour is lacking. Through the fullest application of technology, much land could be brought into cultivation. Rivers and artificial lakes could be used for irrigation; even deserts can be made fertile again, for desert soils are not inherently sterile. The studies of Killian¹ show that even Sahara soils would be productive were it not for the absence of water. Another example of the possibilities in this direction is given by Switzerland and the Tyrol, where people live on steep mountain slopes—areas which, in other countries, are already eroded and depleted.

You may ask if it is possible to intensify the cultivation of the arable surface of the earth with conservative methods. We believe that it is, and that world starvation could therefore be overcome, even with an increased population. A certain amount of good will is needed too, however, since it would be necessary to eliminate such factors as judging the profitability of the land according to present industrial standards of return. As long as the farmer has to compete with industrial production methods and wages, he will have difficulty in surviving.

Food production is a necessity which should be maintained under all circumstances, no matter whether there is an economic boom or a crisis in industrial production, whether money is cheap or dear. Profit measured by industrial standards—for instance, by the rule that invested capital is to be returned within one, three, or five years—is impossible in farming. However, this industrialized point of view has existed for a mere 100 to 150 years, while food production has gone on for thousands of years and will continue even when other raw materials such as coal, oil, iron and copper, have been completely used up. Humanity could very well go

¹ Cf. *Un cas très particulier d'humification au désert, due à l'activité des micro-organismes dans le sol des "Nebka,"* by Charles Killian. Publications du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. Alger, 1944. Also by Charles Killian: *Sols et plantes indicatrices dans les parties non irriguées des oasis de Figuig et de Beni-Oumif.* Alger, 1941, Imprimerie Minerva.

on, if need be, without iron, steel, oil, even without money, but it cannot go on without food and clothing. Our economic authorities should at all times realize that the basic necessities require a different treatment from that applied to the industrial upswing during the last 50 years. In the neglect of this truth we can see one of the factors which have led to the world food crisis. Since we have industrialization, we have to cope with it. Nothing would be worse or more reactionary than to say—let us go back to the primitive conditions of the old-fashioned rural way of life. But technology and engineering could be applied to increasing the agricultural surface of the earth.

Industrialization has brought about centralization, and a massing of people in limited areas. This brings with it, as a consequence, the problem of distribution. A frequent symptom is the decline of the land in the neighbourhood of big cities and manufacturing centres—not because of a decline in fertility, but because of real estate speculation, of labour problems, or because, as we say, the land has become too expensive for agricultural use. Then, too, the drawing away of man-power from the farm to urban and suburban areas has weakened rural production in the regions near cities. Among the firms dealing in farm supplies, feeding-stuffs and agricultural machinery, those located at a distance from the cities are better equipped than those near the big centres to fill typical rural needs. Whoever has farmed 120 miles away from New York City, and then moved to within 50 miles, has experienced this difference. He has suffered also from the increasing difficulty of obtaining good steady labour, getting carpenters and masons for repair work, and finding a good blacksmith.

The number of people employed in farming has decreased rapidly in the last decades. The figures for the United States are particularly alarming. In 1910, 33% of the entire population was connected with agriculture. By 1920 this had fallen to 28%; to 23% in 1930, to 18% in 1940, to 15% in 1945; and now, in 1948, the figure stands at a mere 12%. Some people look upon this development with pride, pointing out that technology has so improved the mechanization of farming that an increased production has been achieved in spite of dwindling manpower. But if we look at this process through the farmer's eyes, and take account of the tired bodies of those who have to toil 12 hours a day, we are obliged to change our point of view. Then we see the failing fields, the clogged drainage ditches, the unkempt hedgerows, the broken

fences, the neglected buildings. In the United States, which leads the world in productivity to-day, much land lies idle which could be brought back into production were it not for the expense and the lack of manpower. As it is, a skeleton army is all that is left to hold the fort.

War-torn countries might be excluded from this picture, temporarily at least. But even there more manpower could be used on the land. In spite of starvation, we still see people clinging too much to the devastated cities. Then we see the farm population eager to profit from the "city slicker," but loath to let him in on the farm itself.

From all we have considered so far, it appears that we must formulate our initial question somewhat differently. Instead of asking ourselves whether there are too many people in the world, we are really forced to ask: Are there not too many people massed in some spots and not enough left in others? The world food problem has become one of uneven and insufficient distribution. Industrialization and urbanization, if they continue in this direction, cannot but end in absurdity.

Decentralization—not only for social reasons—but for the sake of the land, is the urgent demand of the time. The last war, with its climax in destruction from the air and the atomic bomb, has become a teacher, involuntarily. For security reasons, statesmen and military authorities are urging decentralization. If rural and industrial interests can be so blended that smaller towns and even villages take part in this process, which has now begun, then there will be hope for more and better food production, as well as for a more equal distribution of the basic necessities. Over-industrialization can then be avoided.

Such an organic process of decentralization could be applied throughout the world to such over-populated areas as India, China, Java, Japan, and to the industrial centres of the Old World. Some countries, notably Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, and the State of Pennsylvania in the U.S.A., show already an exemplary balance between the rural and the industrial.

The problem of the distribution of fresh vegetables and fruit can be eased, in some degree, by assigning home gardens to the dwellings of industrial workers in decentralized villages and small communities. Each family could have its own garden in which to raise some vegetables or fruit. Years ago, the writer demonstrated that with intensive organic methods one can produce 400 to 500 lbs. of vege-

tables on a 30 by 36-foot plot, enough for two to three people.² A 100 by 100-foot garden will yield enough to supply an entire family for a year. Much of the unused land in the neighbourhood of large cities could thus be reclaimed.

Decentralized home-gardens would enable a large part of the population to grow their own vegetables. Farms and market gardens will still be needed to provide the larger share of food and clothing. It is estimated that about half the world's population lives in tropical and sub-tropical regions. Much can be done to develop these lands for vegetable and other food production. Since only 7 to 10% of the total world land area is under cultivation, not only can this cultivation be intensified, but means can be found to extend the range of small subsistence gardening. It is easier to bring a small piece of land back into production than to improve a larger area. The "garden" style of development should, therefore, be in the foreground.

The Swiss have set an example in this regard. There, except for mountain peaks and barren rocks, every piece of land is used. Every farm has a home garden, and many factory workers live on the edges of farmland and grow vegetables, fruit and potatoes in their own grounds. Sometimes these garden operations are worked into the programme of a larger farm owned by the employing industry. A well-known shoe manufacturer has built up his industry in such a rural setting. The workers live on small homesteads. The company owns a large farm and rents them garden plots. One large field is devoted to these gardens for a period of several years. Then it is taken back into the farm in order to restore its fertility with manure and the routine farm-crop rotation. Finally, it is seeded down to grass and clover. In the meantime another field is used for the gardens. The gardeners are required to use all garbage and plant refuse for compost, which in turn is restored to the land. An incentive programme with prizes for the best garden and best products, and demonstrations in a model garden, help to make the whole project a success.

At a recent scientific meeting, representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimated that crop damage caused by insects "has reached an all-time peak of four billion dollars a year" in the

² Cf. "Grow a Garden, And Be Self-Sufficient," by E. Pfeiffer and E. Riese. Anthroposophic Press, Inc.: New York, Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co.: London, 1942.

United States.³ Improved soils could reduce this figure considerably, for the crop grown on soil deficient in trace elements and humus content is more often attacked than are plants grown on rich organic soils.⁴

A vital part of this whole picture is the problem of wastes. Thorough, nation-wide compost programmes, utilizing all available wastes instead of burning them or otherwise disposing of them, would add considerable amounts of organic fertilizer. The biodynamic method has developed a process by means of which kitchen garbage and weeds can be transformed into good humus earth in a few weeks. In this way it becomes practical to "stretch" and enrich the available supplies of manure. These compost and manure mixtures are 50% richer in potassium, up to 100% richer in phosphates, and with proper care up to 10 times richer in nitrates, than is fresh cow manure. Since only about 20 to 30% of the entire mixture needs to be manure, important additional sources of organic matter can be made available to help solve the fertilizer problem.

Agriculture can cope with the increase of world population. For once the preservation of organic matter has been added to soil conservation and erosion and flood control, we shall see how much hitherto neglected land will be usable, and how much more food can be produced. It will, however, be necessary to change the present distribution of labour. More people need to be employed again in farming. Unless humanity decides to provide in a better way for its basic necessities it will reduce the productivity of the earth, and then the pessimistic outlook of our food experts might come true. This, however, need not happen. Only the concept of agriculture which has led to the present situation needs to be changed.

³ Dr. H. L. Haller and Ruth L. Busbey, of the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Beltsville, Maryland, addressing the 1948 autumn meeting of the American Chemical Society at Washington, D.C.

⁴ See "Soil Fertility as a Pattern of Possible Deficiencies," by William A. Albrecht, M.S., Ph.D. Journal of The American Academy of Applied Nutrition, Spring, 1947, Vol. 1, No. 1.

TWO POEMS

HAROLD EDWIN BRADING

THE SHIRE-HORSES

Once, Shires aplough we led.
Hoofs shocked; before their tread
fire-break and furrow-bed
shook at the thunder.
They were God's thews and thighs
through whom fordome earth dies,
and kingdoms arcane rise
resurgent under.

Oh! how we groomed them well;
currycombed; buffed each bell;
led them a ploughing-spell
in brave apparels.

Neighs like magnificats,
manes tossing ribboned plats,
huge chests like polished vats,
bellies like barrels.

Jingled the bits, and rare
jargoned the songbirds there;
chimed on the Hampshire air
bells from old churches.
Rooks would their elms forsake,
and in the furrows' wake
with delving beaks would make
their deft researches.

How, in the autumn beam
sun-burnished glowed each team,
rippled their coats agleam,
silkenly lusted!

Lordly they pawed and spurned;
silver the mouldboard burned,
smote earth and overturned
stands of tall mustard.

Ha! those triumphant days
when our great trampling greys,
chestnuts and blacks and bays,
skewbalds and sorrels,
stamped with their splendid stir:
they were earth's conquerors:
... now only silence slurs:
Time's reaped their laurels.

Yet Time, sweets in its sour
holds, nor can take those hours
when eyes like liquid flowers
looked Trust's repose;
when the great Shires would oft
lean from their stance aloft,
nuzzling our hands with soft
satiny noses.

CENTENARIAN

A black frost makes the hour forlorn.
Leafless the land; the earth's a-cold.
Behind the wain, walk I, a mourner,
and even the windless air seems old.
Only the wheels rasp: on the iron
roadway the iron horseshoe rings.
Else all is hushed as nations noiseless
before the catafalques of kings.

This was no dust that knew disasters.
This man was sovereign as are seers.
The latest of the old earth-masters,
and ageless in his hundred years.
A living bestial, he; a herbal.
... They come no more now to the land,
the wise ones with their ways of slowness:
with all of healing in their hand.

He set a hedge: the hedge grew quicker
than other hedges others set.
The orchard-trees he pricked thronged thicker
with goldener fruit than they could get.

He'd tier a tall rick on a down-top ;
 others would choose the low ; they strained :
 theirs, half as high, a storm wrenched sideways ;
 but his stood foursquare : his remained.

He had not set foot in a city ;
 nor knew when Time's great acts occurred ;
 nor what had writ the rare and witty
 since Caxton killed the spoken word.
 But in the library of Nature
 he read (who could not read or write),
 in their bedarkened earth-bound bindings,
 the talismanic texts of light.

If armies marched by night with noises ;
 if men weighed moons, or trafficked through
 the ether with their earthly voices,
 such idle haps he never knew.
 But what the timber-span in spinneys ;
 on what far hillsides grew what herbs,
 he knew ; he knew the dumb beasts' grammar
 of silence : and the Spring's first verbs. . . .

Now, what was borrowed, back we render :
 this shape, to the redeeming dark ;
 of itself, naught now : once a splendour
 through which the spirit poured its mark.
 Lower this seal : this dusty impress,
 into the jewel-house whence its worth
 was drawn : put back this Great King's signet :
 this old intaglio of earth.

GOETHE AND THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

OWEN BARFIELD

FEW English people know much of Goethe, and of that few most rather dislike him. I make this observation with some confidence because it is based on a sort of private Gallup poll which I have been desultorily conducting over the last twenty years. The dislike is not violent, but its roots are deep and it will yield neither to sincere admiration of his greatness, nor to a fond love of his best lyrics. Admiration, even reverence, for a genius is one thing : the taste for a man is another. A taste for Goethe you will certainly find here and there in England, but you will find it in small circles wedded to the study of German language and literature rather than among the general reading public.

From the point of view of literary criticism this would not matter so much. What makes it important is the fact that Goethe is rarely presented to us as a writer pure and simple. We are to look on him, we are told, first and foremost as a teacher ; and the lesson he teaches is the way to live. It is not a First Folio we are invited to admire, but a man. It was so that he himself wished to be regarded, and he has had his way ; for it is so that he is in fact regarded by all to whom he is most dear. *Voilà un homme !* said Napoleon after meeting him. So say all true "Goetheanists." So also said Rudolf Steiner. For it was by no means *only* the scientific work,¹ and the all-important way of knowledge and attitude to Nature associated with it, to which Steiner attached importance. Indeed there can have been few men more deeply steeped in loving knowledge of Goethe's whole work and personality ; and it is a man—not indeed a perfect, but a reverend, but emphatically an *imitable* man—who purports to be disclosed, when the author of the *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*

¹ This is, however, the only part of Goethe's work which has any fundamental connection with Anthroposophy. As it is being dealt with elsewhere in this Annual I omit all further reference to it.

points (how often in his lectures!) to the author of the *Römische Elegien*.

The reasons for the distaste I have mentioned are fairly clear to me, and I shall begin by trying to state them as clearly and forcibly as I can. What then are the obstacles in the way of some twentieth-century neophyte who seeks in all humility to enter the temple of Goethe and worship at the shrine? First, we are living in very bad times. In general there are none more propitious for attaching us to the great teachers of humanity:—

Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days my mind? . . .
But it must be confessed that, if it is for comfort in tribulation that we turn to the Weimar of a hundred and fifty years ago, we meet with a rather chilling reception. I do not know what sort of reading *Wilhelm Meister* may make in 1949 in a cellar in Berlin; but both the precept and the example of Goethe for the proper conduct of human life do seem to presuppose, almost as a *sine qua non*, at least three good meals a day, an adequate domestic staff to make them appear and disappear, and a comfortable sum coming in, preferably quarterly, of its own accord.

Given these together with unbroken physical health, the doctrine is plain to read and not unacceptable. If a man feels very badly indeed that he wants to go to Italy, let him go! We are to warm both hands before the fire of life, to reject no experience it offers and to profit by all. We are to have *life*—not some pale and prelatinal *Ersatz* of the spirit, raised from the seed of renunciation or suffering, but good, rich, fruity human life in the ordinary sense—and we are to have it more abundantly. And then—we are to be at peace with ourselves—*beruhigt*. If that is impossible for a time, we are, it is true, to acquire strength from dispeace—*doch starker in der Unruhe sein*. But the last is only *obiter*. The essence of the doctrine, and all the emphasis of it, is the obligation to live a full, happy, peaceful, active life, transmuting experience—and, above all, joyful experience—gradually into wisdom. Ripeness is all.

I need not labour the obvious. The cry of one of Goethe's English admirers, Matthew Arnold, from the middle (as it seems to us) of the blue lagoon of Victorian security:—

*Strong was he, with a spirit free
From mists, and sane, and clear;
Clearer, how much! than ours—yet we
Have a worse course to steer. . . .*

*But we, brought forth and rear'd in hours
Of change, alarm, surprise—
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?
What leisure to grow wise?*

—has, to say the least of it, lost nothing of its force three years after the second World War.

Disappointed, we will suppose, with the teacher, our imagined neophyte turns now to the poet. I mean the poet as a poet, the lyric poet pure and simple. And here he is on surer ground. "The creator of German literature"—we are no judges of that. What we do know is, that this man sings, sings, sings. Mignon's Song, the Chorus in Heaven, and the opening scene of the second part of *Faust*, a score of *Lieder*, whose settings may well have been almost from childhood a part of the very stuff of his soul—till he learnt German and hardly knew which was the more precious, the melodies of Schubert or the words of Goethe! But let him now, in an attempt to measure the man's true stature as a poet, advance beyond an anthology acquaintance and seek to come to grips with the whole corpus of Goethe lyric. He is likely to be bothered by the overwhelming preponderance of the erotic motive. The proportion of love-songs—adolescent in mood, though not in their intellectual and imaginal overtones—is, for a great poet, so enormous. "There is," said Coleridge once, "a *nimiety*, a too-muchness about the Germans." One may—and none of these exceptionally favourable conditions is particularly common to-day—one may be not easily tired by regular rhymed verse, lucidly expressed; one may take a special delight in the feminine endings in which German poetry abounds; one's darling Muse may even be Erato; and *still . . .* it was Max Beerbohm, parodying George Moore, who observed: "There are times, are there not, dear reader, when one is *not* thinking about girls?"

From the love-lyrics he passes—perforce, for it is a life that he has been directed to admire—to the love-affairs. Excellent stuff here for the meticulous or the gossipy biographer, and fine, cosy reading for those who find poetry itself a little boring—if only it were Kit Marlowe or Robbie Burns they were talking of! If only it were not for the painful embarrassment of that *ecce homo*! And then, somehow or other he—or she—will have to come to terms with the whole tone of Goethe's attitude to women:

"Pah!" said Goethe, laughing, "as if love had anything to do with the understanding! The things we love in a

young woman (*Frauenzimmer*) are something quite different from understanding. We love in her beauty, youthfulness, playfulness, trustfulness, her character, her faults, her caprices, and God knows what all that is indescribable; but we do not love her understanding."²

I do not stop to enquire how an educated young woman of to-day will relish these observations of the Master. I only observe that at the point where understanding is ruled out they seem to prefer the frank appetite of Donne to the blend of cool patronage and passionate adoration, with a mild flavouring of zenana, which they will find if they apply themselves to the study of Goethe's life and writings. So, at all events, they say; and I believe they believe what they say.

Lastly, running through the whole succession of Goethe's entanglements, and indeed through his whole life, is that "x" which it is so difficult to name without begging the question—non-attachment, egotism, the will to self-development, the Renaissance or Faustian appetite for all experience, "self-culture." And this brings us to the gravamen of the charge against him. It is not new. It was urged, in this country, both by Carlyle's friend John Sterling and by Tennyson. It is, that at the deep heart's core there lay nothing but that refined yet ruthless egotism, that cool objectification of personal relationships as "experiences," for which lesser men are called bounders. George Santayana, describing Faust (and therefore Goethe³) in his *Three Philosophical Poets*, put it clearly enough:—

He had regretted in the same way the unhappiness of Gretchen. . . . He would continue, if life could last, doing things that, in some respects, he would be obliged to regret; but he would banish that regret easily, in the pursuit of some new interest, and, on the whole, he would not regret having been obliged to regret them. Otherwise, he would not have shared the whole experience of mankind, but missed the important experience of self-accusation and self-recovery.

This is a crucial passage. There are those, not overburdened with moral sense or humour, who agree that it is what Goethe

practised and preached and fully approve it. I am not addressing them. We others respond rather differently. We are, for instance, willing to believe that, if we had the time and inclination to research into the break with Lili (for these are matters on which we prefer to form our own opinions), we should easily agree that Goethe was not to blame, or at least that his behaviour was neither mean nor unworthy. What is much harder to stomach is the sound of his voice, at Weimar later, explaining to Eckermann how important it had been for him to have the experience of being betrothed. We can swallow all the entanglements at a gulp without so much as winking. But the old man's voice, his biography festooned about with Charlottes, Kätchens, Minnas, Frederikas, Mariannes and goodness knows whom all, solemnly telling Eckermann how he had been working all his life at his own "ennoblement" (*an meiner Veredelung*)—this is a somewhat tougher morsel. It is not so much moral comments that spring to our lips as explosions—of the pithy sort which Sir Toby Belch hurled from behind his hedge at the unchecked complacencies of Malvolio.

No authentic Anglo-Saxon with the right twinkle in his eye should have much difficulty in disposing of "self-culture"—if this is all it is. It was no Bloomsbury witling, it was not even an Englishman, it was the sedulous disciple who introduced Goethe to the world of English letters, called him hero and made his reputation here, it was, in fact, Thomas Carlyle who wrote of him in a letter: "Goethe is the greatest genius that has lived for a century, and the greatest ass that has lived for three."

We ought, however, to reflect that, whatever else "self-culture" may have been, it was Goethe's way of dealing with a problem which faces humanity as a whole. I mean the awkward phenomenon of increasing self-consciousness. It is our problem too, this curious *malaise* of humanity; and it has grown rather worse than better since Goethe's day. It was perhaps about the 18th century that men first began to take more serious notice of that queer intruder on the life of the soul, the detached Onlooker present in each one of us, and half instinctively to make provision for him in their ideas and their conventions. It was then that the word *psychology* was used for the first time in its modern sense. Alongside, and a little apart from, the impulses, passions and thoughts which are the true stuff of the soul, there has come into being this nothingness, this mere awareness, which looks on and says of each: "Yes, I wish it, I feel

² *Conversations with Eckermann*, 1824, Jan. 2nd.

³ I am no friend to the loose practice of identifying fictitious characters with the authors who created them; but in Goethe's case it is inevitable. He himself always insisted on it, and even went so far as to tell Eckermann that poets only invent when inspiration fails. Also Santayana makes his own intention quite clear in the passage now quoted.

it—and yet this wisher and this feeler are not quite me. *I am here, looking on all the time.*”

It was not always so. Formerly, if there were conflicting impulses, yet the one which prevailed was felt as the whole self in action. The whole Augustine sinned, and afterwards the whole Augustine repented. The whole Dante loved, lapsed, and loved again after a different fashion. But for us, in varying degrees, there is the sinner and the one who observes the sinner, the lover and the one who observes the lover. It is not a question of whether it is a good thing or not; it is simply a fact. The only question is, what is the right way for men to deal with it, now that it has come to stay.

Naturally it is nowhere more marked than in the sphere of the relation between men and women, for it is there that the experiencing soul behaves in the most surprising and fluctuant way. The device which the 18th century evolved for according recognition to the experiencing and to the observing soul in the same moment was the whole apparatus of archness and gallantry. Mark their significant use of the word “conscious.” In contemplating Goethe’s attitude to women we should always remember this. It is not simply that he accepted the conventions of his age (though we should not, either, forget that he does in fact belong to a quite remote one, having passed half his life before the French Revolution); he would instinctively feel the reason for, and the fitness of them.

Outmoded as all that apparatus is to-day, before we dismiss it utterly, we might just ask ourselves whether our own way of meeting the problem is so very much more satisfactory; *we* detach ourselves from the little gambols of our souls by calling them “fixations” and “transfers”; they spoke of “pleasing pain” and eyes that “deal delicious death.” Which is better? You pays your money and you takes your choice! But there is no doubt what Goethe’s choice would have been. He looked on the soul as he looked on Nature, as an inexhaustibly rich gift to be accepted with joy and treated with reverence and delicacy. And as with Nature, so with the soul, the problem was to grow more and more fully conscious of it without destroying it in the process. Both our scientists and our men of letters are for the most part indifferent to the destruction, provided they can get on with the consciousness. Witness the popularity of James Joyce.

We must also take into account the *Germanity*, if I may so call it, of Goethe’s own soul—that subtle distinction of colouring and

emphasis which is best felt as untranslatableableness. Goethe’s mother-tongue was one which can *still*, even to-day, employ the ineffable neuter gender, known also to the Greeks, in speaking of young females (feel the difference between “I saw her on a Sunday” and “Ich sah *es* an einem Sonntag”) and which at the same time trails about it the faint aroma of a mystical reverence for woman that is as old as Tacitus.

He found these things, he did not make them; just as he found the social conventions of an age, in which educated young women were appalled at the idea of going out unaccompanied in society (at all events when he reached Weimar) in which adulterous *liaisons* were nevertheless as common as they are to-day. They were part of the air he breathed as he grew up. The only thing for which he can be accountable to praise or blame is the use he made of them. And in his hands they became that wholly untranslatable *ewig-weibliche*. Our “eternal feminine” has acquired a facetious overtone which puts it out of court; and yet Bayard Taylor’s rendering of the closing words of *Faust*:

*The Woman-Soul leadeth us
Upward and on*

is even more misleading, for it suggests the “ennobling” influence of one of Thackeray’s heroines, and I do not think that was at all what Goethe had in mind. Woman as a symbol on the one hand of Nature and on the other of the human soul, would be much nearer the mark. Thus Santayana, in relating the words specifically to Nature, says that the *ewig-weibliche* was, for Goethe, “the ideal of something infinitely attractive and essentially inexhaustible.”

I find this a little superficial, for I think there was also the underlying sense of something more than an allegorical relation, indeed of a real connection, in the foundations of the world, between Eva and the goddess Natura. Moreover, Woman (which in this kind of context always means young and attractive woman, though in the statistical nature of things there will always be one or two about who are not managing to combine both attributes) has long been apprehended by the poets and myth-makers of Christian civilisation as a symbol of the soul, and of qualities of soul. I think that the *ewig-weibliche* stood, in Goethe’s imagination and feeling, first for some real woman, secondly for Nature, and thirdly for the human soul.

About Goethe’s relations with women, as recorded and as a whole, there was, underlying the poetic lightness of touch, a note

of earnestness and reverence that is unmistakable. It is doubtful whether any of the young ladies suffered any lasting harm, and most of them seem to have finished up by getting happily married. The passing pain was something which Goethe at least shared with them. I fancy if I had been a *Frauenzimmer* living at about that time, I would not have run very fast to avoid a love-affair with Goethe, even if I could have known in advance how it would end. "Never," wrote Karl Julius Schröder,⁴ who was at one time Steiner's teacher, "was the relationship a frivolous one." And he pointed out that in nearly every case, after the passion had waned, it gave place to a lifelong friendship or mutual regard. Symbols they might be to his imagination, but there was always also a true personal "meeting" and much sincere idealism. Thackeray himself could barely have improved in this last respect on some passages from the letters to Charlotte von Stein.

And then, if, as I said, the quantity of lyrics all of the same kind is at first a little overwhelming, it is the quality after all that really counts, and the only *reasonable* reflection on the matter is, that you cannot have too much of a good thing. After all, we are not obliged to read them all, however good they are. Meanwhile, one of the reasons why it would be worth while growing old and acquiring some leisure is that one would possibly have time to read the whole of the *West-Ostliche Divan*, instead of merely dipping into it here and there.

We should rather look on Goethe's poetry (and I speak now of the whole of it) as one of the arsenals of the fortress of the human soul, now under attack from many different sides, and be thankful for any bit of ammunition or armoury we may find there. For the soul is the Cinderella of 20th century civilisation. She lives on sentiment: of which we are mortally afraid, preferring to rush out of it either to the physical extreme of violence or of appetite on the one side, or on the other to a rarefied and contentless spirituality; or perhaps to try both in turn, like Aldous Huxley. But the old man at Weimar grew wiser and wiser about all this. He knew well enough that the "nostalgia" of which our young politico-intellectuals spend most of their time accusing each other—and which *he* would have called *Sehnsucht*—so far from being a weakness, is the most precious sacramental wine of the soul, to be used by the spirit sparingly and with reverence for the purpose of making a man.

It is Goethe's distinction, and his message to us, that he retained throughout his life *both* this reverence for the soul, which allowed him to surrender to its *varium et mutabile* without feeling an ass, and a deep and abiding sense of man's responsibility of self-consciousness. Only, instead of allowing the consciousness to destroy the soul, he strove to maintain it as a golden thread of self-awareness and self-control passing through all its vicissitudes and growing stronger with the lapse of time and the accumulation of experience. He was in this respect a pioneer, and it is rather our weakness than his if we allow to a few fatuities any substantial weight in the scales on which we weigh the value of "self-culture". No doubt he specialised somewhat in one particular brand of sentiment. What is infinitely more important is, that the mind which contained as formidable a detached Onlooker as is portrayed in Mephistopheles yet never lost its faculty for simple and reverent feeling, or its sense of the greatness of man. For it is precisely this that we are to-day in such great danger of losing.

But is it a danger? Might it not be rather a good thing? Do we not owe most of our miseries to this idea, promulgated at the Renaissance and confirmed with acclamation by the Romantics, that man is great? What signs precisely is he showing of it? *Si monumentum requiris circumspice*—at Guernica, at Warsaw, at Hiroshima, or, for that matter, at almost any bookstall. Is not all this because we have forgotten that man is *not* great; that only God is great? Has man in fact any such responsibility to be fully conscious as has been suggested, or indeed any responsibility at all except to be good and obedient?

Questions of this sort are being asked with some force in the 20th century by the sincerest and most devout Christians; they are being asked with uncompromising sincerity and often with great intellectual force; and they are being listened to. I think that any substantial revival of Christianity which may occur in the near future is likely to be one which implies this interpretation of history; one, that is to say, which rejects *in toto* as error that Renaissance affirmation of the spiritual value of experience which has been called Faustian, and as blasphemous the Romantic conception of man as a creative being. And I shall be surprised if we do not see, in the forthcoming bi-centenary year, some swingeing attacks on Goethe as the high priest of the twin heresies of pantheism and humanism.

"God," says Carlyle in one of his Essays, "or the godlike in man,"

⁴ *Goethe und Marianne Willemer*. 1878. Reprinted in *Goethe und die Liebe*. (Der Kommende Tag A.-G. Verlag, Stuttgart, 1922).

he adds casually, as if the two were very much the same thing. And I doubt if Goethe would have been much more cautious. The theological writers of the 20th century have certain advantages which he lacked. They have seen for themselves whither the postulate that God is to be found only in man may lead in art, literature and society; and in politics how easily individual self-culture degenerates into its national counterpart. And they are pretty sure that man is not the place to look for Him.

The subject is clearly not one which can be pursued here at the length it deserves. Two things, however, may be observed. First, that if it be blasphemy to conceive of God as "in" man, in the sense of being a part of his nature—some vague aspiration or higher Self—yet to conceive of Him as "outside" man, in the same mode as objects perceived through the senses are "outside," is idolatry. Second, that such words as "in" and "outside," "pantheism" and "humanism" are in such a context war-cries rather than instruments of thought. Through Rudolf Steiner there was revealed the process of that gradual entrusting of the Cosmic Intelligence to man, of which the Incarnation of the Word was the central event, and which is the meaning of history. At least either this was so or he was under a very strange and ingenious delusion.

The revelation must speak for itself to those who will be at pains to acquaint themselves with it. It is as remote from the vague evolutionary humanism of the Victorian intellectuals and their poet-manufactured God as it is from the precise, changeless Augustinian thearchy which is more often imagined to-day by the like combination of moral earnestness with intellectual integrity. None who have once been made aware of that revelation can be in any doubt about the reality of the responsibility of which I spoke earlier in this article or the sense in which it is correct to speak of man as great. Great he is, and greater he must become, for good or evil, and the only effect of his voluntarily denying his own greatness must be to make him permissively and involuntarily great for evil—as in the case of the Hindu stationmaster who, preferring humility to responsibility and looking always for immediate guidance, once telegraphed to his Terminus: *Man-eating tiger on up-platform stop what do?*

But to return to Goethe and our imaginary neophyte. Let him lay aside all such considerations as I have been advancing and merely proceed, undeterred by the obstacles, to a closer acquaintance with the man. At a certain point he is likely to meet with a startling

experience. Those obstacles which I began by stressing do not indeed disappear. But they suddenly dwindle in size; so much so as to seem quite irrelevant. The sheer *size* of Goethe's soul is suddenly impressed on him. If the water is a little brown, it is rather with sheer velocity and force and quantity than with mud. Aloof, self-contained, whole at any moment and seeming at rest in itself, on closer inspection what we were investigating under the impression that it was a brook turns out to be a roaring wall of water, a veritable Niagara.

Nor would it be easy to point to any particular source from which the impression is derived. There is no single production of Goethe's pen—not even *Faust*—which overwhelms us with an unquestioned sublimity, as do the *Divine Comedy*, *King Lear* or *Paradise Lost*. It is the whole man, the life, character and works taken together, which weigh upon us, the even-balanced soul weathering its own storms, the deep earnestness and reverence apparent beneath whatsoever *Leichtfertigkeiten* ("an habitual reference to interior truth" Emerson called it), the wisdom of the head untired and untiring wielded by the ever-youthful heart.

No, this is not the kind of strength which would have failed to grapple with a tragic destiny had it been called upon to do so. And, in the eye of God, may that not be perhaps the easier task? Comfort, success, prosperity and adulation need some handling. Moreover, if Goethe's external life was an easy one by our standards, we may reflect that we have no right to assume that the good life will *always* consist of that drab sacrifice punctuated by spasmodic heroism which we have learnt to accept and approve. As a teacher even of a practical way of life, he may yet speak very pertinently, if not to our children, at least to our children's children. For us, meanwhile, the lesson is, that such a man has in fact existed at all. There is strength to be drawn from the mere contact with his strength. We are reminded that the human soul has indeed the latent power and breadth and universality which are already beginning to be required of her in the discharge of responsibilities now dimly seen to be "global" and in fact cosmic; and that, as the light of art is put out, so neither is democracy well served nor God well praised by denying her greatness.

Aloof? There is some conflict on the point. They say his friends did not find him so in the end, and his servant, according to Eckermann, adored him. Moreover he stood well with children. Schiller, after their first meeting, wrote:—

"I believe, indeed, he is an egoist in an unusual degree. He has the talent of conquering men, and of binding them by small as well as great attentions: but he always knows how to hold himself free. He makes his existence benevolently felt but only like a god, without giving himself: this seems to me a consequent and well-planned conduct which is calculated to ensure the highest enjoyment of self-love. . . ."

Yet Schiller, a year or two later, loved the man this side idolatry and wrote of him as being "still more loved as a man than admired as an author." Lewes, in his *Life*, in seeking to answer the charge, admits its wide currency. "Men might," he says, "learn so much from his works had not the notion of his coldness and indifference disturbed their judgment."

It cannot be denied that, whatever it may have signified to meet Goethe in the flesh, the impression made by the record on posterity (and that is really all that the 20th century can be concerned with) is very commonly one of aloofness, and of a certain chill, repelling rather than repellent. Waterfalls make all sorts of chuckling and endearing noises, but if you listen attentively to Niagara the predominant refrain of its thunder is *Noli me tangere!* "Goethe," said Emerson, in an essay not exactly conspicuous for lack of enthusiasm, "can never be dear to men. His is not even the devotion to pure truth; but to truth for the sake of culture. He has no aims less large than the conquest of universal nature, of universal truth, to be his portion: a man not to be bribed, nor deceived, nor overawed: of a stoical self-command and self-denial, and having one test for all men—*What can you teach me?*"

How unobtrusively judicious is that "to be his portion"! For the third time we touch this question of "self-culture." *Mein Geist . . . Mein Geist . . .* it is as easy to keep on saying as *Lord! Lord!* And yet the spirit that roared down the Niagara of Goethe's soul never did become quite "his" spirit. For that, by virtue of the paradox at the heart of creation, only befalls those who are most vividly aware that it is not theirs—that the Lord hath chosen Sion to be an habitation for himself. Then indeed it becomes theirs and, in the mysterious chemistry of the paradox, turns sweet in all the majesty of its strength. This was a consummation which Goethe never achieved. "The old Eternal Genius" (it is Emerson speaking again) "who built the world has confided himself more to this man

than to any other." And yet the colossal soul was somehow not quite a sublime spirit.

That Goethe was not doctrinally a Christian is obvious enough, though his early phase of pietism was taken, as he took all else, seriously, and its influence was lifelong; though he attained to that deep respect for the Christian religion, which he expressed towards the end of *Wilhelm Meister*. What is more important for literature is a certain Christianising element in the soul, which is only partly and perhaps not necessarily dependent on doctrine at all, and which, as Clutton Brock once pointed out in a brief essay, is detectable in a man's writings more as a kind of subtle *flavour* than anything else. Perhaps it is something to do with the soul's most secret attitude to suffering and death. Whatever it is, it is (to give an example) conspicuously absent from Milton's writings. It is lacking also from Goethe's. And this lack makes itself felt here and there in the numberless little touches which have combined to build up that impression of coldness. It would have made impossible, for instance, or must at least have modified the tone of, those unpleasing expressions of contempt for large numbers of his fellow creatures, including practically all Germans; just as, in his life, it would have ruled out the morganatic connection—domestically "aloof"—with Christiane Vulpius.

There is one aspect of experience which the creator of Faust never really succeeded in expressing and that is what has been well called its "costingness." The recoveries are too complete; the regrets banished too easily—so that if, in a fairly deep sense, he learned everything, we are sometimes affected with an uneasy suspicion that, in the deepest sense of all, he learned nothing. So, in the love-poems, matchless treasury as they are of pure and tender passion, there is one stop that is never opened. Nowhere has Goethe expressed that blend of earthly passion with the last selfless love of spirit for spirit which has moved not only Shakespeare, but a score of meaner talents, to music.

*Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it, for I love you so
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot
If thinking on me then should make you woe!*

is an infinity beyond his reach. When he did once move away from his true *métier* as a singer of love-songs, namely, the expression of passion in what I have tentatively called the adolescent mood, he

moved not in this direction, but into the delighting, but far from venerable, pagan amorism of the *Römische Elegien*.

The two things in Goethe to which Rudolf Steiner continually drew attention were, first by a long way, his method of knowledge. Goethe's view of the limited value of purely abstract theorising about Nature was part of a conception of man's whole relation to Nature which is of religious as well as of scientific importance. Steiner himself taught that the Incarnation was an historical event which reached to the foundations not of human nature alone but of the whole earth; and that since that time, the mind which, in cognition, approaches Nature with imagination and reverence, will find, not the amorphous deity of the Pantheists, but the Christ Himself in His cosmic aspect. In Goethe's attitude he found just such an approach, and it was on the positive value of this that he was concerned to dwell. For, however it may have been for Goethe himself, the importance for humanity as a whole of precisely this rare and new thing must far outweigh the question whether he had a right understanding of historical Christianity, of Christian doctrine, or of the Christ Himself in His personal aspect. For these we can look elsewhere.

The second thing was that transmutation of experience into wisdom and strength, which has been both admired and criticised as "self-culture." It is, I believe, true that there were no more passionate students of the mass of observations accumulated by the Ptolemaic astronomers than those who had themselves come to accept the Copernican system. The geocentric, but faithful and accurate, data spoke to the heliocentrically thinking reader a language unknown to those who had originally collected them. The outstanding impression which Steiner's work and personality make on those acquainted with them is his deep sense of *responsibility*, of his own responsibility to mankind and, still more, of man's responsibility to the Universe. I believe that the pain he suffered from his knowledge of the latter, combined with his actual observation of our feebleness and inadequacy, was something which it is impossible for most of us to imagine. Consequently, when he saw in Goethe the rare spectacle of a human soul at least struggling towards something like the fullness of stature which will one day be required of it, if, Christ-filled, it is to carry the burden of cosmic tensions, his thankfulness far outweighed any questions about the egocentricity of this particular soul. We must remember that he also taught reincarnation. There are remarks scattered here and there which

suggest that he felt Goethe's limitations sharply enough, but they are so few and far between as to show that he also never considered it was these that mattered.

This positive attitude is clearly the only wise one; but since, if you hope to extricate people from error, you must first do justice to their truth, I have thought fit to dwell at some length on the limitations both real and supposed. Rudolf Steiner's life was neither sheltered nor leisured. It was one in which poverty played no inconsiderable part, in which selflessness was at all times paramount, which must have been, at all events in his later years, one of almost uninterrupted suffering. Yet the finger points tranquilly to that other life in Frankfurt, in Strassburg, in Rome, in Weimar. These are bad times for a philosophy of joyous experience; yet it would be surprising indeed if we looked carefully where that finger points and found no elixir.

GOETHE AND BIOLOGY: AN UNPAID DEBT

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THE re-publication of Goethe's scientific writings, which is bound to happen as the world prepares for the bicentenary of his birth, will create a precarious situation for all those who read them carefully. Some will say that it is only for the sake of completeness that they have to be re-published; but others may feel that this can never be a sufficient reason.

There are still those who maintain the attitude taken in the second half of the nineteenth century by looking down on the "scientific dabbings" of the poet whose creative capacities were so great that they invaded fields which, to put it crudely, were none of his business. They are apt to look upon his excursions into science as we do upon the fishing trips of a statesman. But there are now many others who see more than a personal whim in his persistent efforts to develop scientific ideas, and they are alarmed at the prospect of seeing these belittled when Goethe himself attri-

buted so much value to them. They simply cannot believe that an individuality of his stature should have misjudged his own achievements to such an embarrassing degree.

Refusing therefore to admit that there was something wrong with Goethe, they must conclude that there is something wrong with the current ideas about his scientific efforts. They begin to long for a competent introduction to Goethe's actual achievements in science instead of an apology for his whims. For these seekers, the existence of Rudolf Steiner's commentaries on Goethe's scientific writings is a most welcome discovery. Studying them, they learn to see in Goethe's efforts not only an integral part of his full human stature, but also an impulse of which our scientific age is in great need. The duty to do justice to Goethe then develops into the duty to help convey his legacy to mankind of to-day.

The impressive series of Rudolf Steiner's publications on Goethe as a scientist began with a small book called *The Theory of Knowledge implicit in Goethe's World Conception*, which appeared in 1886,¹ and it culminated in the work at the Goetheanum in Dornach, whose very name is a challenge to those who belittle Goethe as a scientist. The following essay proposes to give some results of a study of Goethe's scientific writings, pursued through decades with the help of Rudolf Steiner's commentaries.

Needless to say that as scientists of our age we can never foster the idea of a "back to Goethe" movement in science. And yet there is infinitely much to learn from his attitude towards knowledge in general, and knowledge of nature in particular. We can learn to look at definite scientific problems through the eyes of Goethe, as it were; or rather approach the problems posed by science in our age as he approached those of his time. It then appears how large a debt we still owe to Goethe, a debt which is not yet acknowledged, much less paid.

One basic experience we owe to Goethe, in whatever field he touches. It is his almost miraculous *sense for reality* in observation and thought, his unerring feeling for fair procedure in experimenting, his permanent awareness against the intrusion of prejudice in the "assertion" of an idea. In all these respects he would still be an outstanding model for to-day's science, even if all of his results had to be abandoned as erroneous. Rudolf Steiner accordingly

¹ English Edition, transl. by Olin D. Wannamaker, New York, 1940.

has put the *method* of Goethe above all else, and has shown that even the controversial theory of Colour is methodically sound and a prototype of a fair scientific exposition.

This sense for reality allowed Goethe to ascend from the phenomena observed in the inorganic world to the "primary phenomena", to be seen only with the eyes of the spirit, of which they are the transient and variable expression. To establish a primary phenomenon (for instance in the realm of colour) the student needs to train his own sense for reality to protect him against wanton theorizing. The phenomena are mutually self-explaining; they do not need to be explained in terms of phenomena belonging to a different level. Colours, for instance, must explain each other by the manner and conditions in which they appear. It is vain to try to trace them to vibrations which are supposed to "underlie" them. The far-reaching consequences of such an attitude for a re-formulation of all laws in physics were anticipated in Rudolf Steiner's first book, mentioned above (see ch. xv).²

As we pass from the phenomena of physics to the manifestations of life, it becomes still more important to acquire a *capacity for tracing continuity* without falling into abstractions. This is very seldom recognized to-day. In botany and zoology we still speak of "laws" which "govern" plants and animals, as if this were the same kind of "lawfulness" that obtains in physics and chemistry. Here, Goethe can again be our guide, by guarding us against becoming entranced in speculations and generalisations instead of carefully "following up" related manifestations.

In the realms of life, things which belong closely to one another may be found far apart. A species of plant, for instance, may belong to another one growing in another country in an altogether different climate. An organ of one animal may be closely akin to another organ in another animal, although this looks quite different and is endowed with a different function. The ground on which organic knowledge can grow must first be rescued from the grip of abstraction. Instead of recognizing abstract laws, we have to trace concrete *forms* (types) which create a natural hierarchic system. Ascending from specific shapes to ever more comprehensive ones, we arrive at the "archetypal form" (*Urgestalt*), which includes all empirical plant forms and even many potential forms never found to exist "and yet able to exist."

² To-day, sixty years later, the "anti-reductionist" conception gains ground in philosophy. See Krikorian, *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*, New York, 1946.

Thus, while inorganic phenomena can be *gathered up* in and reduced to "primal phenomena," living individuals and groups can be *traced to* and *evolved from* the "archetype," which is the fountain head of their variety and the guarantor of their common characteristics at the same time. If we speak, as is often done to-day, of a "common pattern," we miss the essential meaning of the *Urgestalt*, because we still refer to a fact of mere consciousness; while Goethe spoke of an actual treasury of potential forms which is manipulated by Nature as a sculptor handles his clay.

Rudolf Steiner, when formulating this difference in precise terms, emphasized how momentous a change is involved when science turns from man-made collective ideas about Nature, which are employed for gathering up facts for intellectual mastery, to the formative storehouse which Nature herself handles when shaping plants and animals. (The philosopher will certainly say that this difference is known as that between realism and nominalism, and that the two medieval schools of philosophers fought a hard battle over it until finally the nominalists prevailed. But Goethe's archetype requires a realistic interpretation, not a nominalistic one. The *Urpflanze* is not a conceptual scheme devised by man's intelligence, but a tool of Nature, handled by her!)

It rests with the intelligent student of Goethe's writings to be on guard against nominalism, and to make an effort to seize with the power of imagination the reality which Nature employs when moulding living forms out of invisible archetypal shapes. He can do so, as Goethe did, by following up the appearance and disappearance of characteristic form-qualities while a plant is running its course from seed to seedling, from the leafy to the flowering state, into the fructiferous phase and then to the seed again while the body withers away—a most impressive lesson in continuity! The archetypal plant remains, in a sense, while the phases replace each other; it is the continuity underlying the change. So it is never perceived in fullness unless the student begins to "see" it extending through space and time.

The "space-time-continuum" which the physicist to-day constructs in a laborious effort of abstraction to make his imperceptible "physical world" intelligible, *embodies itself visibly* in every living being on earth, offering itself to immediate perception by man, if only he strives for "concretion" instead of abstraction.

The effort to grasp this reality must be ever-renewed. The statement of the result in words may vary considerably. Those

who like generalities may speak paradoxically of a conceptual entity which is active in the circulation of juices, or, conversely, of a succession of shapes which spring from a conceptual matrix. The main thing is to keep in mind that it is only in human knowledge that the conceptual ingredient of reality can be regarded separately from, and set over against, the perceptual; in Nature the two aspects of reality are indissolubly integrated.³

Goethe was not so naive as to assume that he could convey his realistic conception of the archetype to his contemporaries without running into a conflict with the Kantians. If he had fostered such a naivete, then his short skirmish with the Kantian in Schiller would have certainly cured him. He saw quite clearly where he had to deviate from Kant—namely, where he claimed the *status of a real entity* for his *Urpflanze*, no matter what an educated Kantian might dogmatically hold against him. Goethe could, with a smile, claim that he "saw the idea with his own eyes"—with his spirit-eyes obviously; but the smiling implication here is that the human spirit has eyes!

These spirit eyes and their training for actual research are the crux of every effort to understand Goethe's contribution to biology. This point must never be slurred over. It is not fair to him if we try to water down his words about the spiritual visibility of the archetypal plant by calling his language exaggerated, or by attributing his definite words to his special gift of visualization or symbolization. Rudolf Steiner spent a considerable part of his life-work in showing that Goethe had the capacity of supersensible perception, a capacity which is destined to become the general equipment necessary for future biological research. It is not to be taken as symbolical when Goethe calls the archetypal plant a "proteus which must not be allowed to escape," or when he speaks of the archetype as uniting "a generic tenacity with a felicitous pliability," or when he says in another place that some species "let themselves be lured into producing variations." The more we take these descriptions as literal and real, the better it is for our understanding of what is meant.

In our age, we cannot imitate Goethe's pictorial language when we refer to the spiritually visible form which penetrates the material organism of living beings. We may, as Rudolf Steiner did, speak of the "body of formative forces" which *belongs* as a necessary

³ Rudolf Steiner, *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*, Ch. V.

supplement to each kind of living being and can be separated—in knowledge, not in fact—from the matter which is in its reach. And yet we can again and again refresh our grip on the reality which Goethe caught in the magnificently simple words with which he begins his little book on the *Metamorphosis of Plants*:

“Anyone who pays but a little attention to the growth of plants, will soon observe that some of their outer parts sometimes alter and—either wholly or more or less—pass over into the shape of the neighbouring parts. . . .”

Is it not as if the plant world itself spoke of its secret in these lines and in those which follow them, and as if Goethe had merely lent his voice to it? We might even learn how the archetypal plant lives and breathes in the pulsating form, as it expands and contracts, from feeling how the secret of its breathing reverberates through Goethe's sentences! For words can become tools of science just as are scalpels and microscopes, with the important difference that words can restore the reality which other instruments have taken apart.

Here is another contribution of Goethe towards a really scientific procedure; we need not only adequate methods of research, but also ways of adequate exposition. Of this he has given a shining example in the *Metamorphosis of Plants*. One day, perhaps, this little book will become a standard text for all students of life's subtler secrets.

There is another debt we owe to Goethe. He was the first to steer clear, when developing the image of the archetypal plant, of the danger of a teleological element entering into it. He did not want to interpret the types as the result of divine purposes or as “thoughts of the creator.” To-day, however, we have the neo-Thomist school of philosophy of nature which does exactly what Goethe wanted to avoid; it speaks of the types as thoughts of God, Whose ideas have become manifest in them. Here a distinction which Goethe was careful enough to make is dropped, and morphology is thrown back upon a pre-Goethean phase of its development.

Goethe attempted to do with the living types what he had done with the colours. He arranged them so that they could speak their secret by *mutual self-explanation*. Their language became so clear and audible that it needed no translation into terms of causes or ends. The type is active within the plant, so it does not need to make it grow and change by an outside impact or cause. The type

lives also in expansion and contraction, and by its varied interplay with the outside conditions produces form upon form, without any guiding purpose. In the realm of living forms, Nature is *too free* to be pushed by causes, and she is *too abundant* to let herself be tied down by purpose. So the archetypal plant is alive in a realm which teems with interrelated shapes, but where the human-all-too-human ideas of causes and purpose are strangers.

If the knowledge of the archetype as initiated by Goethe is to act as a seed which might grow in the biology of the future (he spoke himself of the tree of botany which may freely and cheerfully unfold, but it is true for the whole of biology) it must be kept pure.

In order to show what difference it makes for research whether one applies Goethe's view of the reality of the archetype and its derivative types and sub-types, or whether one disregards it, we need refer only to two fields of modern biology which still occupy central positions in research. We mean *evolutionism* (or history of living shapes), and *genetics* (or science of heredity). It becomes obvious at once what an important mission could be fulfilled by a further development of Goethe's contributions to biology in our time.

The intense interest in the mutual relations of organic forms as forms leads to the construction of “natural systems” for plants and animals to illustrate their morphological kinship. Goethe took great delight in these studies because they showed him how his concept of metamorphosis did not apply to the individual organism only, but also to larger and smaller groups of forms (the systematic categories), which suggested that they themselves were organisms of a higher order. The whole kingdom of plants behaved as if it were one great individual, growing in regular pulsations, expanding and contracting, and coming to a culmination in the most perfect types of flowering plants. Likewise, the animal orders, classes and phyla, duly arranged according to their morphological kinship, gave the picture of a tree which blossoms in the warm-blooded vertebrates. Yet this arrangement does *not*, if we apply Goethe's view, represent an historical succession in which the later forms sprang materially from the earlier ones. All forms, the simpler and the more elaborate types, are equally manifestations of the archetype which lives in them all. We are victims of a fallacy if we credit an early and simple form of the past with being the originator of the later and more complicated forms.

Post-Goethean evolutionism has abandoned Goethe's conception and has proceeded with the construction of lines of descent in which the simpler forms play the part of the *ancestors* of the more elaborate ones. Rudolf Steiner pointed out (1886) the momentous change entailed in this abandoning of Goethe's original view. "All forms," he wrote, "result from the type, the first and the last of them are its manifestations. The type we must use as the foundation of a real science of organics, and not try to deduce the particular animal and plant genera *from* each other."

The advent of Darwin's book, *The Origin of Species* (1859) distracted attention even more from the reality of the types by attributing all transformations to the power of the struggle for existence which he supposed to end with the survival of the fittest, leaving nothing to the influence of the inherent differences of the types. All interest became concentrated on the mode of transformation, as if there were no object which was being transformed. If Goethe's impulse had been more alive than it was at the time of Darwin, it would have been seen that the struggle for existence, with the resulting "adaptations," could account—if for anything at all—for the change of the actual forms, but never for the characteristic forms themselves. But by a curious fallacy (the so-called "infinite regress"), it was assumed that the structure with which the individual entered the struggle for existence was in turn already the result of the ancestor's struggle for existence, and so on backward to the beginnings of life. In other words, the question, What is it that adapts itself? was answered somewhat facetiously: What adapts itself is the product of previous adaptations. . . . It was as if the existence of the concrete organism, which *has* its characteristics and *bears* them, had fallen into complete oblivion and been replaced by the picture of the cumulative effects of bygone battles for life.

During this drift into abstraction Rudolf Steiner raised his warning voice, much as he appreciated the work of Darwin. He wrote (1886): "How does biology nowadays employ the principle of adaptation and struggle for existence, none of which we want to deny as facts? People believe that they can deduce the characteristics of a certain species from the exterior conditions in which it has lived, just as they can deduce for example the increase in temperature of a body from the sun's rays which strike upon it. They forget completely that the specific characteristics in their definite content can never be proved to result from outer conditions. These

conditions may have a modifying influence, but a *creative* cause they are surely not."

The specific pattern of a type (phylum, class or order), thus constitutes a reality in its own right. It should not be "explained" by reference to another sphere of hypothetical causes, but ought to be followed up by relating it to other types and sub-types until they all explain each other reciprocally. The tracing of the basic characteristics of a type to the supposed influence of outer conditions (or rather to events which impinged on the ancestors of its present representatives) is a *loss on the explanatory level* comparable to that which occurs when we try to "explain" a colour from "underlying vibrations." Here is the "reductionist fallacy" again, to use a modern term. Goethe created the tool for warding it off, long before the situation became as urgent as it is to-day.

It is perfectly legitimate, of course, to study the way in which the type becomes modified by a variety of outer circumstances. In this field most valuable research work has been done in our time. Geographical and climatic variations have been studied all over the globe. Modifications and even mutations (sudden hereditary variations) have been experimentally produced by the most varied forms of impact. But all these studies revealed only the tenacity of the type of plant or animal used; the responses to outer conditions, striking though they were, never modified the essential plan of organisation; they were always the responses of the type to certain influences, never direct effects of mere causes. Between the outer impact and the result, the type has always vigorously asserted its existence.

The great changes which the phyla and classes of animals and plants have passed through in the course of the earth's history cannot be "explained" by changes of the surroundings alone. They bear witness to the metamorphoses through which the archetype has passed. They are, therefore, of a rhythmic character, just as is the metamorphosis of the individual. The appearance and disappearance of certain sub-types, their sudden emergence and their radical extinction, their "announcement" by forerunners and their occasional "lingering" in a few late survivors, give a dramatically vivid picture of the changing destinies of the plant and animal types.¹ "The book of Nature becomes legible," Goethe once

¹E. Dacqué, *Urwelt, Sage und Menschheit* (1924); *Organische Morphologie u. Paläontologie* (1935). G. Grohmann, *Entwicklungsgesetze in der fossilen Pflanzenwelt* (1932). H. Poppelbaum, *Mensch und Tier* (1927). O. H. Schindewolf, *Paläontologie, Entwicklungslehre und Genetik* (1936).

wrote. Indeed, it does. But only if we read it with the realisation that it is the story of the invisible archetypes of which its text speaks.

The other field of biology to which a Goethean re-casting would be of great importance is *genetics* (science of heredity). At first sight, there seems to be no point where such work could begin, as genetics has become so much a matter of statistics and mathematics that the facts of observation almost disappear in a welter of abstract formulations. But if this be true, then the first task of a Goethean approach is to restore the plain facts about heredity and to free them from distracting hypotheses.

The most striking and yet also the most common of these facts is the reappearance of the parental shape in the progeny—one could also say, the temporary disappearance of the parental shape in the young until they grow up. For it is growth which brings out again the vanished likeness to the parentage. In this general form the phenomenon is the same in plants, animals and man. But the general formulation also makes it evident how closely akin the secret of heredity is to that of the rhythms of growth. It really belongs to the larger scope of riddles in which the “invisible type” manifests itself. So there should be no doubt as to the possibility of applying here the lessons learnt from Goethe.

As they reappear in the next generation, the bodily characteristics emerge in their previous, closely interwoven arrangement, each in its proper place. Wherever they may have been in the meantime, and whatever the manner of their “preservation,” they never appear jumbled once they *do* come to appearance. The physical materials out of which the visible shape is being built is compelled to fit into the form which “embodies” itself. The physical matter sprouts forth to fit the shape; the shape descends to dispose the matter. Yet there is no point of rest, for soon the production of germs (spores, eggs and sperms, buds and bulbs, etc.) begins, and the visible shape withdraws and becomes a mere potentiality until the time for a new generation arrives.

This attempt at a Goethean formulation of heredity, imperfect though it may be felt to be, has at least one good point. It brings out the degree to which traditional genetics has lost sight of the overt facts. For it passes them by and plunges at once into a discussion of the transfer of *isolated* characteristics and of how they can be *traced* individually through the progeny. The whole wonder-

web of the observable shape, in which the individual characteristic is nothing but a mesh, is forgotten.

Gregor Mendel's idea of focussing the interest on single characteristics, as they are passed on to another generation, was certainly a stroke of genius and opened the way to systematic experimentation. But this methodical simplification has had the serious consequence of estranging genetics from its original problem and made it into an art of calculation, with figures and symbols very remote from the biological setting in which heredity happens as a process of life.

Moreover, the conception of material particles (genes) as “carriers” of hereditary characteristics, and of their localisation in the chromosomes, has further distracted our view from the region to which the phenomenon of heredity belongs. The well-known details of cell-division, and especially the behaviour of the chromatin, went far towards corroborating the gene-idea, and so it could seem as if the essentials of heredity were understood.

Although it is impossible to give here the whole story of this amazing development of a highly abstract theory, we may venture to say that for a Goethean view one thing is obvious. We have here to do with a large-scale substitution of a complicated atomistic system as a causal explanation for facts which have been torn from their natural setting. It is *sliding down to a lower explanatory level*, quite similar to that which has occurred in the case of the “explanation” of colour from vibrations in physics, and also (as we said above) in the case of interpreting organic shapes in terms of environmental influences in Darwinism.

Goethe wanted colour phenomena to explain each other. He also made possible an organic science in which the types were so arranged as to illumine each other and become deducible from the archetype by mere comparison. In both fields Rudolf Steiner has shown the way far beyond the point which Goethe reached. Why should not we take up the facts of heredity, too, and illumine them by relating them to other problems which fall into the same orbit? That is why we advocate here a treatment of the heredity problem by linking it up with the other riddles of living shapes, their appearance and disappearance, their unfoldment and simplification, their variation, their rhythmic behaviour, etc.

Such an approach would also make it evident how the estrangement of genetics from the factual has had to be paid for by auxiliary assumptions, designed to remove embarrassing discrepancies with

the factual. We mean the hypotheses of gene-linkage, of multiple factors, lethal factors and the like. The discrepancies, however, came really from the artificial first assumption of Mendel, namely, that characteristics are isolated units and find their way into the progeny irrespective of others.

It also becomes clear that the much-admired chromosome charts, with the genes plotted on them in linear arrangement, cannot shed any light on the essential riddle of the transfer of the shape; for, even if we knew the position of all genes in all chromosomes, their arrangement is such that it bears no resemblance to the mutual relation of the overt characteristics in the living individual. A glance at a chromosome chart can easily show this. The gene which is thought to determine the shape of the eye may lie in a different chromosome from that which is supposed to cause the colour of the eye; the shape of the head into which the eyes must fit may be traced to a gene located in a third chromosome, etc.

The genes are arranged much as are the building blocks in a boy's toy box—they are quite orderly—but in a quite different pattern from the position they will occupy in the house to be built. The boy must break the first order, to fit the blocks into the second. Thus, even if the genes are what geneticists believe them to be, we still need the active intervention of the living shape (the type, or body of formative forces) to bring the material into due position. For only the total form makes the characteristic into what it is and gives it sense and functional scope.

Whichever way we turn it, the archetype, together with the types and sub-types, occupies a role of paramount importance in the scheme of living things. It also proves to be quite active in the experiments with hybrids which have become so famous through Mendel. Two varieties of peas, when cross-bred, produce a uniform progeny in the first generation. In the second, there is a "segregation" in which both grand-parental forms reappear and also the hybrid form is continued, each of them at a certain constant percentage. The new combinations which a breeder can choose to produce from these various categories bring about similar segregations in definite proportions. We are taught how to figure out the percentages in terms of genes distributed.

But one can also try to view the process as a whole, as Goethe would have done had he known it. Then it appears that the original two types, after a transient interpenetration in the first filial gener-

ation, tend to separate again, elastically rebounding from another, as it were, until the bulk of the ever-increasing progeny has reverted to either one or the other. Only a minority continues to waver between the two alternatives, but even their descendants lose half their numbers in each generation because of the continuing tendency to "revert to type." In actual, non-experimental conditions the number of lingering hybrids would soon become negligible. In the end, there would be two true-breeding types again, clearly separated. Each type would have thrown off the other like a foreign body.

Besides this impressive self-assertion of the types, the rhythmic character of the segregation is the most striking feature in this process. Both observations, however, bring us nearer to seeing how the types really possess that *elasticity* which they show also when responding to a variety of surroundings. Goethe was certainly right when he credited them with "a generic tenacity as well as a felicitous pliability." The more we keep our eyes on the actual happenings of the realm of life, the more we become convinced that Goethe, by his discovery of the type as Nature's tool, has rendered a tremendous service to biology.

There are many other problems, including some which deal with man himself, which do not only allow of, but urgently need, a similar re-casting in the light of Goethe's intentions. We owe it, indeed, to him, to pursue the paths which he has opened. If we do this, we may look forward to much of his scientific legacy which will no doubt be reprinted before long. For we may then read his words without embarrassment, and with a little better conscience.

GOETHE'S CONCEPT OF "LIGHT AND DARKNESS"

AND THE SCIENCE OF THE FUTURE.

GEORGE ADAMS

AN eminent physicist of our time, Werner Heisenberg, has pointed out that Goethe in his polemics with Newton was in reality opposing not only Newton's theory of colour or of the spectral analysis of white light, but the whole trend of modern Physics. This was an historic conflict on a grand scale and will be remembered more in times to come than it is to-day. If we appreciate the hitherto unfathomed value of Goethe's scientific outlook, we shall also not begrudge the accepted school of thought its continued triumphs. The underlying problem begins now to emerge in a wider and more human setting.

Present-day Physics, the one-sidedness of which has been so candidly described by Eddington and other writers, is threatening mankind not only by the political misuse of its inventions, but by its influence on the whole balance of our life and thought. Until about a century ago, the youthful urge of Science was sustained by Western man's deep and unconscious belief in his own faculties of knowledge. This was a faith that had its roots in the religious inheritance of Europe, and it sustained the rationalists and agnostics no less than the avowed believers. In our time it has largely faded. Thought grows abstrusely formal; cold and impersonal technicalities become predominant.

If the robust materialism of 18th and 19th century Science has been transcended, along with it we have also lost the self-confident security of thought, which in the classical tradition was accepted, one might say, as an unconscious heritage from Divine sources. A 20th century philosopher would not enunciate with the same assurance, "I think, therefore I am." Nor is there any new discovery or theory, however epoch-making, which by itself would

restore what has been lost. One thing alone will renew the original and absolute enthusiasm. Man as a scientist must bring his own powers of cognition into the scope of his researches—not in the sense of mystical introspection or of an abstract epistemology, but by an all-round human science, which the developments of recent time have rendered possible. This is the way which Rudolf Steiner, who took his start from a more penetrative study of Goethe's scientific writings, was able then to open out in the later, anthroposophical phase of his own life-work.

Let us consider for example the mathematical faculties with which we apprehend the idea of three-dimensional space. We owe them to the upright carriage and the clear three-dimensionality of our body. The creative forces of the great universe of space have so fashioned the human body that the indwelling spirit is able to behold the space-creating Ideas and understand all those things in the universe which belong to the crystal-mineral domain. That this is so, emerges from many details: from the comparative anatomy and dynamics of animal and man, from human embryo-development and the gradual attainment of upright posture in early childhood, from the structure and function of the organ of balance in the inner ear, and from our knowledge of the inner bodily senses—the sense of balance and the sense of movement. These scientific evidences, together with a *modern* understanding of the geometry of Euclid, reveal how man by his whole bodily and spiritual constitution lives in such harmony with the creative Ideas which form the universe of space that he is able consciously to perceive them.

In like manner we should find that all our faculties of knowledge spring from the detailed relationship between the universe and man. The mathematical approach to Nature is not the only one; we get beyond this limitation of scientific method. In the texture of the universe many realms of wisdom interweave, nor is there reason to suppose that man has access to only one of these.

Even the growth of mathematics itself in the last century or two bears witness to this manifoldness of the world; the inner logic of the universe is not a one-way road. We will here deal a little further with one outstanding example—the modern, "projective" school of geometry and the new light it throws on the structure of space as such. For we believe that along this way Goethe's intuitive perception, both in the Theory of Colour and in the Metamorphosis of Plants, will not only be vindicated but will provide a starting-point for far-reaching scientific developments of the near future.

For normal consciousness it goes without saying that the *point* is the ultimate and indivisible element of space. Thus in geometry all other forms—lines, planes, surfaces and so on—are defined, to begin with, as assemblages of points. Our atomistic approach to Nature is a more outward and realistic version of this geometrical idea of space, which is indeed embodied in the axioms of Euclid. Modern geometry has, however, taken a big step forward in this respect, and though this modern geometry has not yet found its way into our understanding of external Nature, it promises to do so in the near future, notably in the fields of research which have been opened out through Rudolf Steiner's work.

In effect, Projective Geometry has discovered that the ideal structure of three-dimensional space does not proceed one-sidedly from the point alone but from two opposite entities—*point* and *plane*—which play a fully equivalent part in the fundamental structure. A simple illustration will serve to show the spatial significance and mutual polarity of point and plane. Imagine a spherical surface expanding and contracting. At one extreme, it contracts into the central point; at the other, it expands into a plane that disappears into the infinite distances of space. We say, a "plane" rather than "infinite sphere," because as it expands the sphere grows ever flatter, and of necessity when the radius is infinite the curvature will vanish altogether; the sphere is then transformed into a plane. Space is thus bounded, as it were, by an infinitely distant plane; however, as the measures there prevailing are still spherical in character, we may also refer to this unique "plane at infinity" as the "infinite sphere" or ultimate "periphery" of space.

The process can also be modified so that the finite sphere from which we start, expanding *excentrically*, is transformed into any desired plane, passing through finite space. Thus the polarity of point and plane is really one of expansion and contraction, not only quantitative but qualitative. In this polarity the straight *line* plays the part of mediator, its formal relations to point and plane being equivalent on either hand. This polar equivalence of point and plane is the well-known "Principle of Duality" in projective geometry; it might perhaps better have been called a *Principle of Polarity*. The fundamental entities are in fact not two but three—point, line and plane.

I have written elsewhere of the interesting history of this new

school.¹ Discovered and developed mainly in the 19th century, it made no little impression on those who learned of its existence. I mention for example Wordsworth and Herbert Spencer. Rudolf Steiner, too, in his student days was overjoyed by what he felt to be a kind of spiritual liberation in this way of thinking about space. In later years he frequently insisted on its importance as a new beginning, also, for the science of external Nature.

Notably our ideas of "part" and "whole" are profoundly changed by the new geometry. Ordinarily we think of a plane, for example, as made up of infinitely many points; but we now learn, vice-versa, to think of a point as made up of infinitely many planes. Though in the text-books it is not generally put so radically, the thought-processes of the new geometry signify no less than this. Two polar aspects interweave. For the one—to physical consciousness self-evident—the points that lie in a given plane are the infinitely many parts or members of the plane; the plane is whole, greater than any of its parts. For the other—paradoxical as it may seem to begin with—the point is the whole, and the planes that pass through it are parts or members of the point. We are here learning to do what Dr. Steiner once expressed in the words "to conceive the extensive intensively and the intensive extensively." Science will take a great step forward when we learn this not only in abstract mathematics but in our vision of external Nature.

The late G. H. Hardy, in his "Mathematician's Apology,"² mentions Projective Geometry among the truly significant branches of mathematics which are not outwardly useful. While sympathizing with Professor Hardy's idealistic non-utilitarian outlook, we rather look for the saving of outer Science in its growing more akin to the pure mathematician's ideal, than for the essence of pure mathematics in its remoteness from outward use. Of the true character of mathematics and its relation to natural science as a whole, Goethe, though a confessed non-mathematician, had a very clear idea. The reason why so beautiful and illuminating a discipline as the new geometry has had comparatively little application lies in another direction. Namely, the realm of Nature where it applies has scarcely yet been recognized by science. It is the realm of the "etheric," the realm from which all living entities—plant, animal and man—

¹ "Space and the Light of Creation" (London, 1933); *Strahlende Weltgestaltung*, published by the Mathematical and Astronomical Section of the Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland, 1934; also the Essay referred to in footnote 4.

² Cambridge University Press, 1940.

derive their etheric body or formative forces body. (I use the terminology of modern Spiritual Science, partly derived from old traditions but renewed in a scientific form by Dr. Steiner.)

If once we learn from his many detailed explanations what the great founder of modern Spiritual Science was referring to as the etheric, and if we undergo the training—in morphological thinking above all—which an imaginative study of the new geometry affords, we shall begin to see the kingdoms of Nature with newly opened eyes. Even in her material and sense-perceptible aspect, Nature is not only atomistic in structure. The atomistic, pointwise texture is shot-through by quite another kind, which is to the atom as in pure Geometry the plane is to the point. In this we have an essential key to the morphology of life. The atomistic structure pertains above all to the inorganic world, though even here it does not exclusively prevail. It is the dual, physical-and-etheric structure of living things—analogue, as we shall find, to the duality of point and plane in geometry—which lifts and lightens the heavy weight and impervious texture of mere earthly matter. The inter-penetration of the two is life; their sundering is death. We gain a fundamental concept of the essence of living matter, and by this means penetrate ever more deeply into its morphological varieties. This is no vague philosophic vitalism.

The atomistic aspect of matter is above all expressed in the forces which are so clearly described in the gravitational and other “field-theories” of Physics. These forces, typically physical, can always be conceived as issuing from point-centres—centres of gravity, electric and magnetic poles and so on. We may accordingly describe them as “centric forces.” The etheric forces, on the other hand, belonging as we here contend to the planar aspect of ideal space, may be described as “peripheral” or “cosmic.” Their manifestation in the realm of life is pregnantly described in the introductory chapters of the medical work, written by Rudolf Steiner towards the end of his life in collaboration with Dr. Ita Wegman:

“Observation shews, after all, that the phenomena of life have an altogether different orientation from those that run their course within the lifeless realm. Of the latter we shall be able to say, they reveal that they are subject to forces radiating outward from the essence of material substance, . . . from the relative centre to the periphery. But in the phenomena of life, the material substance appears subject to forces working from without inward—towards the relative centre. . . . Now it is to the Earth that every earthly

substance of process owes its outward-radiating forces. . . . When it comes to life, it must cease to be a mere portion of the Earth; it leaves its community with the Earth and is gathered up into the forces that ray inward to the Earth from all sides—from beyond the earthly realm. Whenever we see a substance or process unfold in forms of life, we must conceive it to be withdrawing from the forces that work upon it as from the centre of the Earth, and entering the domain of others, which have, not a centre, but a periphery.”⁸

Bearing in mind that the universal periphery has the character of a *plane* at infinity, we are therefore to conceive forces issuing not from point-centres but from the very opposite—from entities of a planar character. Among the many points acting as centres of gravity on Earth there is a unique and archetypal one—the centre of the Earth. So too among the many planes of space there is an archetypal one—the “plane at infinity.” Such is the structure of the spatial universe to which the Earth belongs. If there be planar entities, sensitive to forces issuing from the celestial periphery, we shall expect them to tend up and outward, even as physical centres of gravity are drawn down towards the centre of the Earth.

To derive from projective geometry the precise idea of the type of space in which the etheric or peripheral forces have their field of action, however, a further step is necessary. Projective geometry leads not immediately to the space of Euclid with its rigid measures of length and angle, but to a freer and more mobile space, known scientifically as “projective three-dimensional space,” for the projective space still has dimensionality. From this projective or “archetypal space,” as we may call it, the rigid three-dimensional space of Euclid is derived precisely by assuming that there is one unique plane—the infinitely distant plane already mentioned. (Within this plane we also have to assume the presence of an imaginary circle—as it were an echo of the pure form of the sphere, cf. p. 66 above. It is due to this imaginary circle that spherical trigonometry plays so great a part in mathematical astronomy. The measures that prevail in the infinitely distant plane are spherical, as we said before.)

The unique, “infinitely distant” plane is in the last resort an archetypal phenomenon or *Ur-phenomenon*—to use the Goethean expression—of the space of our normal experience. When we derive Euclidean Geometry from the projective point of view, we

⁸ “Fundamentals of Therapy” (London, 1925). Ch. III, p. 27.

must in other words assume this plane among our Axioms. Now, as in "archetypal space" there is the perfect polarity with respect to point and plane, the question will suggest itself: "Why is there not a type of space, specialized in the polar opposite way to that of Euclid—a space defined, that is to say, by a unique point, functioning as "infinitely distant," instead of a unique plane?" Our answer is: "There is indeed, but its relation to ourselves is such that with our normal consciousness we fail to apprehend it." Let us propound this, to begin with at any rate, as a working hypothesis; it will apply to a wide field of research. Space with an infinitely distant point (not infinitely far away in the physical sense, but *functioning* as infinitely distant) will in effect be the type of space in which "etheric forces" work, and we shall look for its formative tendencies above all in the field of life.⁴

In such a space the relations of "inner and outer" will tend to be the very reverse of what they are in Euclid. The infinite will be within and not without. Physical forces, released in ordinary space, tend to lose themselves as their effects expand to the periphery; so in this opposite or "negative" type of space forces will tend to lose themselves as they approach the centre. We have to think of forces issuing not from centres but from peripheries—ideally, from planar entities—and spending themselves as they approach the unique "point at infinity" of the space in which they work. They will be forces of suction rather than of pressure—of levitation rather than of gravitation. Forces of active buoyancy, we might also call them.

There will be an untold number of such "etheric spaces"—with their formative activities coming into being and passing away again in the processes of life. Concretely speaking, an etheric space will have its "infinitude within" where there is anything in the nature of a seed or germinating centre. Seeds are minute,

point-like entities. The very notion of a seed suggests a point, and to a lesser extent this applies wherever there is a concentration of germinating power, as in the "eye" or growing-point of a plant, and in the last resort in every living cell.

The polarities of space are interlocked; point and plane interchange their rôles in more than one respect. The concrete objects of physical space are always point-centred bodies; they have their centres of gravity, etc., from which potential forces ray out. Yet the formation of this space is determined by a unique plane—the infinite, all-encompassing sphere. Conversely the real entities—sources of force and activity—in the etheric spaces will be "peripheral" or planar, whilst the formation of such a space as a whole will always be determined by a unique "infinite point" within.

In this idea we have an exact mathematical way of access to the spiritual-scientific notion of etheric forces as explained by Rudolf Steiner. Indeed he spoke of them as working in this very way. Thus, in a lecture at the Hague, April, 1922: "It is as though there were surfaces or planes of force coming inward from the Universe from all sides, drawing near the Earth, and—from without—working plastically upon the different regions that are there over the Earth's surface." We cannot study the etheric forces or the etheric body of man, he went on to say, so long as we think only of the Euclidean type of space. We have to think of a space the very opposite of this, taking our start not from a point as 'origin' but from an infinite sphere. We can study the etheric body of man only "when we perceive how it is formed from the entire Universe; when we perceive how from all sides these surfaces or planes of living force are drawing near the Earth, drawing near the human being too, and from without are plastically forming the etheric body."

We shall now have to recognize two distinct functions of a point-like centre. The living function of a point that acts as "infinitude within" for an etheric space is radically different from that of a centre of gravity or magnetic pole or other point-like source of physical forces. Its activity will be receptive rather than self-centred—active by virtue of what is around it, not within it. Seen with imaginative insight, a seed or germinating point acts not by virtue of the material amount or form that is centred in it. Such form as has already been achieved tends rather to be blotted out and chaoticized in this region.

A very interesting example is afforded by the pupation of the

⁴ A fuller description of how this type of space derives from modern Geometry, and also of its relation to the wide range of scientific tasks and problems arising out of Rudolf Steiner's work, will be found in the essay by the present writer on "Physical and Etheric Spaces," published in *Anthroposophy Quarterly* (edited by D. N. Dunlop), Vol. VIII, Nos. 3 and 4, 1933. Reference is there made to certain earlier mathematical works (e.g. by Felix Klein, W. K. Clifford, and the late Prof. D. M. Y. Sommerville), in some of which the possibility of such a space is suggested. An elementary systematic treatment of this "negative Euclidean," or as he calls it "polar-Euclidean" type of geometry is given by the Swiss mathematician Prof. Louis Locher in his text-book, *Projektive Geometrie*, published by Orell-Füssli, Zurich, 1940. Prof. Locher acknowledges his indebtedness to Rudolf Steiner.

caterpillar, which some biologists have likened to a kind of second embryo-development. The well-known naturalist, Mr. E. L. Grant Watson, who has often witnessed the metamorphoses of the swallow-tail butterfly, describes it in these words:—"Inside the chrysalis "a breaking down of tissues is taking place," reducing most of the organs of the caterpillar "to a kind of non-cellular mush." Yet at this stage "the shape and position of the organs of the butterfly are already stamped on the pupa. These marks are on the *outside*, and there is nothing yet formed inside to correspond with them. . . . Although there is within the creature nothing but the old body of the larva, which is in process of breaking down, there is on the outside of the pupa the pattern of the perfect insect, with wings, legs, antennæ, etc., which are later to be occupied by the as yet unformed organs. . . ." Mr. Grant Watson draws attention to the significance of these facts, which "will modify the accepted idea that development takes place always and only from a centre outwards. Invisible forces outside the insect have stamped upon it the shape corresponding to that final-cause which is inherent in its being."⁵

In an essential germinating centre, therefore, relatively formless matter gives itself up to the inpouring forces, bearing a living archetype of fresh formation. Where there is life, matter resigns itself to the peripheral and cosmic forces, and it will do so the more effectively the less it "holds its own." It is the liquid, watery phase which above all proves capable of this resignation. Where living water thus resigns itself to the inpouring cosmic forces, the outcome is a process of buoyancy and expansion—in a word, what we experience as growth. The upward growth of plants is a phenomenon of suction from without rather than pressure from within; the intense pressures which result while overcoming earthly-material resistances are secondary.

When Goethe in his *Theory of Colour* uses the words "Light and Darkness" he has in mind ideal entities—not in themselves perceptible—which come to visible manifestation in the world of colour, including all the grades of black and white. We shall describe as "Light" in this ideal sense the essence of that ethereal world where the forces issue from the periphery, and as "Darkness" the world of matter where the reverse is true. Admittedly, it is not very easy to use the word "light" in this sense, for the prevailing

theories (e.g., the electro-magnetic theory) make light itself appear as a manifestation of centric forces. It will be found, however, that the original essence of the light is peripheral, not centric. Goethe's theory of colour remained a closed book to 19th century Physics because the latter aimed at including all the forces of Nature (even the hypothetical light-bearing ether) in the "centric" realm. The spatial polarities which it investigated were always those that work from point to point—from one point-centred pole to another. It had no inkling of the primary and far more qualitative polarity of forces, centric and peripheral respectively. The light that pours in upon the Earth from cosmic distances and calls forth the life of plants is peripheral in nature. It does not "shoot" through space—it is not like the corpuscular bombardments known nowadays as "cosmic rays." Matter as such is centric; the light in origin is planar and peripheral.

The celestial light enveloping the Earth draws the life of plants up and outward with each returning spring and summer. We need to read the phenomena of Nature and we shall find that this is what they tell. Just as the iron filings reveal the presence of the magnetic field, so will the gesture of the spreading leaves and branches reveal the character of this ethereal field of light that surges round the Earth. The leaf in its unfoldment, broadly speaking, tends towards the plane. The myriad leaves that shimmer in the light-filled air are like the organs which the Earth puts forth—organs responding to the buoyant forces from the plane of Heaven. The foliage of plants reveals a formative tendency the very opposite of that atomic, pulverizing structure which plays so great a part in inorganic matter. Even as matter has the tendency to fall asunder into atoms, so has the ether—the ideal negative of matter—the tendency to planar texture. This becomes visible where the material is raised and permeated with the etheric formative forces.

All life on Earth owes its existence to the green leaves of plants with their affinity to the cosmic light. Dust unto dust, Earth-matter falls and crumbles; the Universe makes compensation in the leaves of plants that spread their buoyant surfaces and drink the light of Heaven. Where Light and Darkness, or Light and Matter—the centric principle and the peripheral—merge into one-another, matter is lifted into living form, and where they fall apart is death. To spiritual sight, said Rudolf Steiner on one occasion, wings of ethereal light soar heavenward in autumn when the dead leaves fall and crumble.

⁵ Quoted from the *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, Vol. LXX, 1938.

The physical-ethereal polarity of space gives added meaning to the fact that we derive the idea of Euclidean right-angled space from the upright form and carriage of our body. The triaxial right-angled cross, which in geometry and analytical mechanics we postulate at will in every point of space, is like the earthly counterpart of a mobile triangle in the celestial plane.⁶ This archetypal triangle in the infinite periphery determines the pure form of space, i.e., the laws of Euclidean geometry pure and simple; its counterpart in the realm of darkness—the threefold cross in each material centre—is no less essential to the play of earthly forces. In man, the same polarity is at work as in the great universe. The human trunk and limbs are mainly axial and radial in structure. The head on the other hand is spherical—like a minute image of the infinite sphere of Heaven. Even the ideal triangle in the celestial sphere has its tiny image in the three semi-circular canals, the organ of balance in the inner ear. Whatever man *does* in the earthly-spatial world by virtue of the three-dimensional radial formation of his trunk and limbs, he is at once able to *cognize* by means of this spherically three-dimensional organ in his head. Thus he is able to *think* the world of space—geometrically, architecturally.

The correlation is, however, more than formal; it applies also to the forces that are at work in head and limbs. Our head is not only formed peripherally (spherically), but in our thinking activity we live and act within the realm of the peripheral forces—forces that work “from without inward.” Geometrically speaking, *the domain of real forces within which we live when we are thinking is polar to the spatial objects of our thinking.* The objects of ordinary thought are physical—that is, of paramountly pointwise form and structure,—yet in the very act of thinking them we live unconsciously in a planar, in other words, etheric realm. It is as though, whilst we conceive the cube-form of the “salt of Earth,” the octahedron-pyramid⁷ were to arise as a form of light in our head-nature. Yet this does not imply “inside the skull.” Inner and outer are interchanged for the etheric spaces. Inside the skull, the space-of-light in which we live as thinkers has at most its goal, or its infinitude. Such is the essence of the nerve-organs and the brain: they are the “infinitude within” towards which the ether-forces of cosmic

⁶ Scientifically defined as a self-polar triangle with respect to the fundamental imaginary circle.

⁷ The octahedron and the cube are mutually polar forms. What the one is in relation to the pointwise aspect of space, the other is in relation to the planar, and vice-versa.

thinking, pouring in from the wide world-circumference, are directed. When we conceive a geometrical form we all of us are living even spatially within the self-same archetype; we have our several heads, it is true, and at different places on the Earth; yet in our heads are but the cosmic germinating centres into which the one archetype is sending, as it were, its fertilizing forces.

We are here indicating what will prove to be of fundamental significance for our theory of scientific knowledge. The realm of ethereal light, whose fundamental nature has been explained in this essay, is unknown to man precisely because as a knower—that is, in the exercise of his faculties of cognition—he lives within it and is at one with it. In relation to this world of light the objects of his cognition must always be of the nature of darkness—shadows, or shadow-throwers. In the very act of throwing shadows they light up for his cognition. Just as the sunlight flooding the clear air is in itself invisible and yet illumines every particle, every dark object that comes into its way and by reflection thence appears to us as light, so is the world of essential light imperceptible to us. Imperceptible is the very light within the forces of which we live and weave in all our thinking, in all our conscious perceiving. Sensing and thinking, we feel our way through this sea of light until we touch the material, objective darkness; thereat we awaken to consciousness. Yet in its origin the darkness is akin to light; they are—as Goethe himself suggested—the sundering of a pristine Unity, antecedent to all the polarities of space. Thus we see *light* when we awaken to consciousness by the touch of darkness. Dark and material though they be, the objects of sense and thought light up for us in thinking.

It is characteristic of the “exact science” of our time that it abandons itself completely to this world of darkness—in effect, to the material, atomistic, pointwise realm. Finding its satisfaction in the clear thoughts that there light up, it does not bethink itself on the origin of thought in man. To-day, however, the ideal polarity of space discovered by modern geometry, combined with an all-round phenomenological study of surrounding Nature, suggests a wider and far freer way. Only one further step is then essential: to place the human being himself—man as the knower—into the midst of the process. We shall then feel encouraged to seek enhancement of our faculties of knowledge. By dint of a more imaginative, meditative, will-imbuéd thinking we presently awaken to the realm of ether-light even without the help of the material

shadow. True, it is imperceptible to our inherited "objective" consciousness. In this respect, however, mankind is at the threshold of a far-reaching change.

In meditative thinking, we practise the power of thought without reference to outer objects, and as we do so it grows stronger. With thinking thus enhanced, and with an ever-devoted interest in surrounding Nature, including all that is revealed by Science, we come to recognize that fuller world in which matter does not only surge from the dark teeming multitudes of atoms but is sustained by forces bearing inward from the Heavens. In this real world, dark matter with its outward thrust and the in-forming light—dark matter with its downward weight and the upward soaring force of light—hold one another in rhythmic balance even in the normal play of Nature, making the surface of the Earth the home of man.

Even this cosmic balance of the life of Nature is to-day involved; one-sided science and technics threaten not only the equipoise of man's inner life. The frozen right-angled cross of the space of Euclid prevails most exclusively in the electro-magnetic phenomena of induction; so does the atomistic aspect of the world in the corpuscular electronic rays. In our electrotechnics we have made very close acquaintance with this hidden realm of the sub-earthly depths. Our equilibrium not only of soul and mind but of outward culture—even of husbandry and economics—requires us to make acquaintance also with the other realm, the ether-light that has its source in the surrounding Heavens. Alike the mental and spiritual development of modern humanity and the more recent discoveries of science and mathematics indicate this direction. And when we take this path we shall find Goethe's spirit at our side; we shall draw nearer to the great poet-scientist than the 19th century or even his contemporaries were able to in this respect.

GOETHEAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION,

CLENT, NEAR STOURBRIDGE.

September, 1948.

A POET AND A PAINTER

ALBERT STEFFEN

From his *Buch der Rückschau*, published by the Verlag für Schöne Wissenschaften, Dornach).

R. M. RILKE: a Recollection.

MY meetings with Rainer Maria Rilke fall in the war years (1914-1918), which I passed in Munich. I knew him by sight before I knew his name. In the little restaurant where I took my mid-day meal my interest had long been held by a patron who appeared sporadically, sat down unobtrusively at a solitary table and hastily, without troubling himself about his surroundings, consumed a simple repast, only to be off once more. The unassuming yet distinguished air of this elusive stranger was sympathetic to me from the start, but I never inquired who it might be that so obviously concealed himself behind this exterior, because I, too, loved to go incognito. Yet in this respect the two solitary ones were very different. Rilke pondered within. I, from my youth, was accustomed to observe attentively, and this had been sharpened by my scientific studies, so that it had become my habit to sketch people's faces—profile and shape, inclination of the head, bearing and gesture—and only then would I turn to the mood, seeking from that to penetrate to the interior qualities which showed themselves as colouring of the soul.

Rilke hardly rested his eyes on the people who went in and out of the place, although there were some very interesting figures among them. I concluded that this was a habit which he had probably assumed in the city (Schwabing—where he lived—could hardly be reckoned a city), or as a means of self-protection, since his gaze, which was possessed of a searching quality, drew his whole soul after it, and, in order not to be wounded in its sensibilities, had perforce to guard itself against being held captive.

Also when I encountered the stranger in other situations, particularly in the English Garden, he went as one more hearing than seeing.

Now the peculiar thing was that, in order to do justice to this figure, the inner observing sense had to seek new forms of expression. Thus I was often driven to muse: "That brow is like a tower. The watchman on the look-out there beholds an army of spirits soaring overhead, yet they are not the angel hosts of Christendom but of Islam." And noteworthy was the mouth. It reminded one of the upper jaw of the barbel, with its long beard-like strands, which I had so loved to watch as a boy, when it hung back in the clearly running spring water whilst the wavelets rippled over the glistening stony bed.

Suddenly I also understood the gleam, now bright, now shadowy, which flowed from those eyes—the inward alternation of trust and fear.

A spirit who is free and yet senses that some terror hangs over him! But what was this poet fearful of?—Lest he be snatched from his native element.

Of course by this time I knew who he was, and he had also learnt my name.

One day Rilke, who was ten years my senior, sat down suddenly at my table and started to talk of a play which he and I had seen the evening before,—Georg Kaiser's "From Morn to Midnight." The story went that Rilke had already seen it five times. It was about Salvationists who failed in their duty. We went on to discuss the relationship of the word to deed and doctrine.

I told of a friend who had obtained his doctorate in the history of art and then became an officer in the Salvation Army. Then the conversation turned upon the war. Rilke recounted how the painter, Krokoshka, who was a personal friend of his, experienced his first attack in the Dragoons. He had held his hands over his horse's eyes to protect them.

When in the course of conversation I observed that knowledge affected my poetry productively, he kept silent, and I felt his opposition. It would have appeared indelicate for me to have quoted Goethe's words, "... by means of a secret psychological turn, or frame of mind, which would perhaps repay closer study, I believe that I have raised myself to a species of production which in full consciousness brought forth that which even now finds my approval, without maybe my ever being able to swim in the selfsame river again—aye, a frame of mind to which Aristotle and other prose-writers would ascribe a kind of madness."

That secret psychological turn had long since been known to

me; I had of late found it, made trustworthy by knowledge, in the works of Rudolf Steiner. Without the exercise of it, I had to say to myself, the creative power of future poets would be bound to dry up or be engulfed by those achievements of technical science which are gaining the upper hand. I held the method which Goethe applied in the metamorphosis of the plants to be an aid in awakening and keeping alive the nascent forces of the soul. It appeared to me that it would also be of benefit to Rilke, who at that time often felt deserted by his genius. Naturally I did not suppose that any form of training could ever replace sheer poetry. This was, and remained, grace. Despite this, the grain of the gods grew, more readily, if all unnoticed, on a field daily tended by such exercise.

Rilke was also one who trained himself—but not in this field of knowledge. In spite of the admiration which can be felt for his poetry, this uncertain quality still clings to it. Thus, for instance, a strange contradiction runs through his work, which touches on the most profound and all-inclusive insight into destiny, the fact of repeated lives on earth. On the one hand it is said of him that he was convinced "he had once lived in Moscow in a former incarnation"¹, whereas in the *Duino Elegies* he stresses like an incantation the *once only* of life on earth:

... oh, why
have to be human, and, shunning Destiny,
long for Destiny? ...

Not because happiness really
exists, that premature profit of imminent loss.
Not out of curiosity, not just to practise the heart,
that could still be there in laurel. ...
But because being here amounts to so much, because all
this Here and Now, so fleeting, seems to require us and
strangely
concerns us. Us the most fleeting of all. Just once,
everything, only for once. Once and no more. And we, too,
once. And never again. But this
having been once, though only once,
having been once on earth—can it ever be cancelled?²

¹ See the "Reminiscences of Princess Thurn and Taxis-Hohenlohe."
² Translation by J. B. Leishman and Stephen Spender, from their *R. M. Rilke: Duino Elegies* (revised edition, 1948), by kind permission of the Hogarth Press. In the German, Rilke italicises the word *once* throughout this passage.

At that time there was announced a lecture by Rudolf Steiner on the representation of those qualities in art which are both revealed to the senses and at the same time supersensible. From my place I had an opportunity of observing Rilke, who sat among the audience, and I almost had to assume that, as commonly happened with him at that time, he did not feel at ease.

The next day I met Michael Bauer and other acquaintances in our restaurant. For years I had been most deeply attached to Christian Morgenstern's staunchest friend. In my diary is inscribed this sentence about him: "Belief in a man is fellow feeling with his higher self." The assembled company was just discussing Rudolf Steiner's lecture when Rilke entered. There was a general desire to know what he thought about it. After some hesitation I was persuaded to go over to him, as he had done to me not long since. Such a return visit, I felt, might be ventured.

Without expressing any opinion on Rudolf Steiner's exposition, Rilke began to develop his own ideas on our connection with the supersensible.

"We receive impressions through the senses," he said, "through eye, ear, taste. Between these senses are 'voids,' which are still filled out in the case of primitive peoples, but with us have died."

And on a paper serviette he drew a circle, which he divided into separate sectors, shading these alternately, so that finally a sort of disc with black cuneiform characters arose. "It is necessary to render these parts capable of cultivation," he continued. "That gives us enough to do." And he began to speak of Huysman's Symphony of Smells.

I rejoined that the new life which needed to be brought to withered faculties should arise at a higher stage—out of the sphere of cognition, not of sentiency—by means which were open to all, and no longer the privilege of a favoured few.

Here I became sensible of that inner opposition once more, and held my peace.

Translated by Rex Raab.

PAUL CÉZANNE.

At the Summer Exhibition of 1936 where, thirty years after Cézanne's death, more than 180 of his pictures were assembled in the Orangery of the Tuileries Gardens in Paris, several mementos were to be seen just inside the entrance: Cézanne's last palette;

his rucksack; some illustrated letters to Emile Zola and, in addition, a human skull and a Cupid which he had often drawn or painted.

These intimate relics one contemplates with reverent absorption. They are *natures mortes*, witnessing to the living spirit.

The palette had been used by him only two days before his death, when a thunderstorm took him by surprise at his work and brought on the illness which caused his death. The white paint, squeezed from the tube, has the appearance of a butterfly chrysalis, but has become hard and grey; the orange resembles crumbling clay from the wayside; the brightness has faded out of the red; the blue has gone dark; all is lifeless lava-like earth.

The visitor's gaze then roves down the vista of picture-hung rooms to the most distant room of all, its rear wall filled by Cézanne's chef d'œuvre, the giant picture, *Les grandes baigneuses*. Although unfinished, it yet bears the character of completion. The oils are handled like watercolour, so that the predominant hues in this cloud of effulgence—the blues and greens—appear as if created out of their own element, out of water itself. "Everything is born out of Water," says Thales. "Everything is born out of Air," says Anaximenes. But then to the pre-Socratic philosophers of Miletus the elements were still endowed with soul.

Beauty, which sprang from Divine Nature, no longer expressed itself architecturally with Cézanne in the same way as it did among the Greeks, but with rhythmic movement; his forms have become at the same time sounds. The picture is rather composed than built, yet conforms none the less strictly to law.

The triangular form, characteristic of the marble pediment in the Greek temple, is here thrust aloft by arboreal power, curved outward and opened toward the top. In the fourteen female figures who, slim like the tree-trunks, are grouped among them, it is more the harmony of growth than the proportion of limb which is rendered. Thus we may imagine the sacred grove of an ancient people with its life-cult. Through the trees there gleams a flowing stream, arousing in us a longing to journey to Arcady, for over its liquid surface hangs, in spite of the banks plain to present vision, the sense of a dream of long ago.

A painter who is able to set such a picture into an epoch like ours, which looks at things so differently, carries in his eye not merely the outer picture which is projected upon the retina, but a power of illumination coming out of his inmost nature and reaching back to a remote past. This picture is not thought out by the

intellect, but is achieved with a degree of profundity which has unfolded only through tireless practice and by slow degrees. It is the same capacity which can be detected in the great dramatists when with unexpected suddenness they lead up to the critical turning point in their tragedies. One senses in this work Mystery elements of pre-Christian times, and is led back thousands of years.

And one feels moved at the thought of that storm which overwhelmed Cézanne at his last work. To him, the same elements out of which he created his life's greatest composition, brought death.

Next to the palette, with its vestiges of colour, lies the yellowish brown rucksack which accompanied him on his country walks. So eloquent is it that one instinctively visualises the shoulders which bore it.

There, too, is the death's head, and one looks for evidence of the use to which Cézanne put it. Its painted replica is to be found—with two others (*Trois têtes de mort*)—set upon an oriental rug shewing a pattern of flowers in purple-brown colours of the same size as the sombre eye-sockets. These hollows next to the darkly luminous blossoms, make one think of dark whirlpools, sucking in.

It is a post-mortem still-life. Against the richness of the fabric the death's heads produce an effect not merely of death but of deathliness, like potentized death, the "second death" of which St. Paul speaks, which the risen Christ was able to behold after the Crucifixion.

Cézanne always returns to this subject. It reaches back into his "dark period" when he showed a preference for brown, white and black in his pictures. In 1876 he had already painted *une nature morte avec une tête de mort*. Even in old age he could not escape from this model. It is related that for weeks on end he worked at it for several hours daily from 6 to 10 o'clock in the morning—as if making his will—changing the colour and the form almost every day.

The fact that Cézanne was inclined to paint the same theme for long periods at a stretch was by no means due to a lack of imagination, but rather to the inexhaustible depths of his soul. He indulged in such exercises in no naive sense, like a child which can never have enough of a fairy tale, nor in pious manner, like a saint who immerses himself more and more deeply in prayer, but as an artist seeking for knowledge, who makes of himself and his subject a study. He meditates upon the pictorial motive. Through a strengthening of the soul which he thereby achieved, that inner

eye was sharpened which is nourished by the blood (and in the case of passionate people undergoes a dimming), whilst the outer eye—the physical mechanism which gives only lifeless mirror-images—was vitalized. Cézanne was thus able, as one of the first, to bring about the transition from the dark epoch of the 19th century to new illumination, a typical process with the foremost painters of that period.

In his "Still-life with the black marble clock" the darkness of Cézanne's first epoch finds symptomatic expression. Time seems to stand still.

Significantly, this motive is taken from Zola's room. It was in their early youth that Zola and Cézanne met, and it seemed like fate that the famous painter should depict the famous writer with the look which the latter turned on his time—with an eye not as yet illuminated from within but radiating an unflinching will for truth. Zola, as portrayed by Cézanne, is the keenly observing investigator and free spirit, the publicist who fights fanatically for justice. The picture I mean ("The poet Alexis reading to Zola") is of the same epoch as the "Still-life with the black marble clock," painted about 1868. Zola is sitting on a white cushion, himself clad in white. His garments, in spite of their ordinary cut, have a strange charm. His pose, which suggests collectedness rather than repose, involuntarily gives rise to the thought: this might have been an Arab. It certainly is of more than artistic significance that Cézanne paints Zola not upon a stool—like Alexis, who is seen in profile on the left of the picture, crouching rather than sitting, with the manuscript in his hand—but almost at floor level, as if in a mosque, where neither stools nor benches are to be found.

In this room all is bare. Zola, with a concentrated yet open expression, holds his head forward and slightly bent. One hand hangs carelessly down, one knee is tucked under. Thus he appears like a Kadi who has emancipated himself from Allah but has now transferred the will to fight, which formerly employed the sword, to the pen; he appears as the father of naturalism. His head reaches above a threshold at his back, into a very dark and narrow elongated space, cut off at the top. In spite of the abstract effect of the geometrically divided dark and light surfaces, the picture is uncanny, its austerity oppressive. But Cézanne has succeeded in bringing light into the gloom which later on suffocated Zola. It is as if his eye had derived vitality from those senses not yet bereft of their own life, the senses of taste and touch; as if it had converted

itself into an organ of life. The geranium blossom with its dull pink can almost be felt upon the lips, whilst the rough green surface of the leaves almost invites a caress by the fingertips. In that landscape yonder, shadow has vanished from the green. Light red glimmers forth. The mountain dissolves in violet-blue haze. The light which invades the space expands its boundaries, but the effect is not either of dissolving or of blurring, in spite of the incomprehensible extension, but rather of a deepening and strengthening. The outlines of the earth remain defined.

Cézanne's browns are of the purest, the brown of earth, of corn and of bread. One experiences everywhere access to an etherial world. How heavenly do sea, hills and woods now appear! The world is presented to us anew, the tree, the plucked apple upon a plate, the plate itself, next to it the knife, the bottle, the cup, the tablecloth; every object, whether on kitchen-table or piano. The clay pipe in the mouth of the card player can be tasted visually.

People scarcely noticed in everyday life, housewives, peasants, have been so transformed by a touch of bluegreen or blueviolet that one is never tired of contemplating them. And his homely wife, that good soul with her oval face, commands our reverence.

And next, there is the mountain, Sainte Victoire. One recognises here the task given to Cézanne by the gods themselves, to paint it over and over again until the beholder is able to take the picture with him as a goal for his whole life and the beyond. Let the earth fall into dust, its picture as painted by this artist will remain. What he has made of the mountain with its happy colour stages, from orange-yellow to violet-red, we may retain; he has presented us with a goal—the new earth.

Remarkable, that one is able to take away more than one has seen on those canvasses. For if one closes the eyes and pictures the gallery to oneself, the visual space behind the eyelids is filled not only with the landscapes, portraits and still-life one has seen, but with many other beings which mingle with them.

And now the master himself stands before us. "Come," he says, "there are still more beautiful things to paint."

He lifts the rucksack, and as he buckles it upon his shoulders, one sees there are wings. . . . He soars away.

Translated by R. E. Raab.

DARWINISM AND DREAMS

ARNOLD FREEMAN

"We are such stuff as dreams are made on."

(Shakespeare's *Tempest*).

"Why don't you give up your fiddle-faddle of geology and zoology and turn to the occult sciences?"

(Earl Stanhope to Charles Darwin—recorded in Darwin's *Autobiography*).

"Steiner also propounds a theory of organic evolution, which, fantastic as it may sound at the first impact, seems to me to fit the facts better than any other. He postulates that the tree of evolution, Darwin's famous tree, is, the great bulk of it, in the super-sensible world, and composed of a material *more plastic* than any material which our senses can perceive. From time to time, and from place to place, this material incarnates; archetypes are formed. They are the incarnated twigs on the ends of the branches of the unknown Tree of Life. From these, processes of devolution may or may not develop. For example: Man is an archetype, and from him the apes have been *devolved*. There is very considerable support for such an idea from many modern biologists."

(E. L. Grant Watson: *But to What Purpose*).

§1

OF dreams in days gone by we have abundant record. All the evidence goes to show that they were regarded as having significance. It is unmistakable also that they were naively accepted.

Here is a passage from the *Crito* :—

Socrates : Well, *Crito*, may it end fortunately. Be it so, if so the gods will. But I do not think that the ship will be here to-day.

Crito : Why do you suppose not?

Socrates : I will tell you. I am to die on the day after the ship arrives, am I not?

Crito : That is what the authorities say.

Socrates : Then I do not think that it will come to-day, but to-morrow. I judge from a certain dream which I saw a little while ago in the night : so it seems to be fortunate that you did not wake me.

Crito : And what was this dream ?

Socrates : A fair and comely woman, clad in white garments, seemed to come to me, and call me and say, "O Socrates—

'The third day hence shalt thou fair Phthia reach'."

Crito : What a strange dream, Socrates !

Socrates : But its meaning is clear, at least to me, Crito.

Crito : Yes, too clear, it seems.

In the 37th Chapter of Genesis we are told of Joseph's dream of the sheaves and also of his dream of the sun and moon and stars. In the 40th Chapter, we are told of the butler's dream and the baker's dream. In the 41st Chapter we are told of Pharaoh's dream of the kine and of the dream of the ears of corn. If the reader will read these chapters again, he will note not only that the dreams are immensely important facts in the narrative but that they are unquestioningly accepted as authentic and important and compelling in a way we should never think of accepting them nowadays. In Matthew's Gospel we are told of the dreams of another Joseph :—

"But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel : for they are dead that sought the young child's life. And he arose and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither ; and being warned of God in a dream, he withdrew into the parts of Galilee, and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, that he should be called a Nazarene."

In earlier days the objectivity and importance of the dream was not questioned ; if there were any questions at all about it, they were exclusively in reference to the interpretation. Decius asks Cæsar why he is refusing to go to the senate with him. Cæsar replies :—

"The cause is in my will : I will not come ;

That is enough to satisfy the senate.

But, for your private satisfaction,

Because I love you, I will let you know.

Calpurnia here, my wife, stays me at home ;

She dreamt to-night she saw my statua,

Which, like a fountain with an hundred spouts,

Did run pure blood ; and many lusty Romans

Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it.

And these does she apply for warning and portents,

And evils imminent ; and on her knee

Hath begg'd that I will stay at home to-day."

Decius rejoins :—

"This dream is all amiss interpreted ;

It was a vision fair and fortunate :

Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,

In which so many smiling Romans bathed,

Signifies that from you great Rome shall suck

Reviving blood ; and that great men shall press

For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.

This by Calpurnia's dream is signified."

Our dream world to-day is an extraordinary medley of everything and nothing ; profundity and triviality ; past, present and future ; order and confusion. Sometimes dreams are evidently a dramatisation of what our senses convey to us while we sleep or of other aspects of our physical life. As a rule they seem to be as irrelevant to the realities of life as the dust is to the hurrying coach. But it is not always like this. Sometimes we dream dreams of staggering significance. Sometimes we dream dreams of unsurpassable greatness and beauty. Kubla Khan was one of Coleridge's dreams :—

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure-dome decree :

Where Alph, the sacred river, ran

Through caverns measureless to man

Down to a sunless sea."

Robert Louis Stevenson tells us that his Brownies gave him the plot of Jekyll and Hyde while he slept. Here is Eckermann telling Goethe a precognitive dream of the kind we are now scientifically investigating :—

"I related a wonderful dream of my boyish years, which was literally fulfilled the next morning.

'I had,' said I, 'brought up three young linnets, which flew about my chamber and came and settled on my hand as soon as I entered. One day at noon, on my entrance into the chamber, one of the birds flew over me, out of the house. I sought it the whole afternoon, on all the roofs, and was inconsolable when evening came and I had discovered no traces of it. I went to sleep with sad thoughts in my heart, and towards morning I dreamt I was roaming about the neighbouring houses in search of my lost bird. All at once I heard the sound of its voice, and saw it behind the garden of our cottage, upon the roof of a neighbour's house. I called to it, and it approached, moved its wings as if asking for food, but still it could not venture to fly down. I ran through our garden into my chamber, and returned with a cup of soaked rape-seed. I held the favourite food towards it, and it perched upon my hand. Full of joy, I carried it back into my chamber to the other two.'

'I awoke; and, as it was then broad daylight, I quickly put on my clothes, and with the utmost haste ran down through our little garden to the house where I had seen the bird. The bird was really there! Everything happened as I had seen it in the dream. I called, it approached, but it hesitated to fly to my hand. I ran back and brought the food, when it flew upon my hand, and I took it back to the others.'

On this dream of Eckermann's Goethe makes one of his usual massive comments:—

"This boyish adventure of yours is certainly very remarkable. But there are many such things in nature, though we have not the right key to them. We all walk in mysteries. We do not know what is stirring in the atmosphere that surrounds us, nor how it is connected with our own spirit. So much is certain—that at times we can put out the feelers of our soul beyond its bodily limits; and a presentiment, an actual insight into the immediate future, is accorded to it."

As we contemplate this unexplored and unexplained world of dreams, two sets of questions clamour to be resolved:—

(1) Why do we dream at all? What is this mysterious activity for? What biological purpose does it serve? If dreams have no biological function, why do we have them? . . . How has it come about that we are miraculously able out of ourselves to conjure up

a make-believe world which is yet so vivid, so detailed, so real that the cleverest biologist may wake up from out of it sweating with fear? What super-Shakespeare is this, lurking somewhere in our depths?

But to-day we have also begun to be aware of another and even more inexplicable quasi-dream phenomenon. Within the next few years it will no doubt have its Dunne coming forward to investigate it:—

In "The Confessions of an Opium Eater," De Quincey relates:—

"I was once told by a near relative of mine, that having in her childhood fallen into a river, and being on the very verge of death, but for the assistance which reached her at the last critical moment, she saw in an instant her whole life, clothed in its forgotten incidents, arrayed before her as in a mirror, not successively, but simultaneously; and she had a faculty developed as suddenly for comprehending the whole and every part."

In his book "The Marvellous Country; or Three Years in Arizona and New Mexico," S. W. Cozzens tells us how in climbing a mountain in Arizona he stumbled, fell, felt death to be inevitable, but was saved by a projection of rock. He states:—

"Convinced that death was inevitable I became perfectly reconciled to the thought. My mind comprehended in a moment the acts of a lifetime. Transactions of the most trivial character, circumstances, the remembrance of which had been buried deep in memory's vault for years, stood before me in bold relief; my mind recalled with the rapidity of lightning, and yet retained a distinct impression of every thought."

Father John Gerard, quoting from his personal diary in "The Month,"¹ relates how:—

"Three of us Seminarists, Henry Edwards, John Hamilton

¹ I acknowledge here my indebtedness for accounts of experiences of the life-tableau to an article by Father Herbert Thurston in "The Month" (1935). Since the article here published was written, "The Observer" and other papers have printed a letter of mine asking readers who have come very near death to let me know if they have had any such experience. Many of those who have kindly written to me deny having seen any panorama of their past life. On the other hand a large number of quite obviously sincere correspondents assert that they have experienced it; what the Rev. G. Kellert Grice says is an example of those which came to me in this way. I should be grateful to any readers of this Annual, who have come near death through drowning, etc., if they would give me an account of what they experienced in their consciousness.—(A. F.).

and myself, went skating on Gore's Pond, near Stonyhurst, known to be very deep. . . . Edwards went through the ice in the middle and I, trying to help him, lay down flat and gave him my hand. He pulled me into the hole and I even went under the ice beyond. I well remember the dark grey roof above me with a bright patch a little way off, to which I somehow managed to struggle. I was not then a swimmer. At the moment of leaving the ice for the water there flashed across me, along with the realisation that death was, apparently, immediately inevitable, a perfect picture of my past life in every minutest detail. It was not a chronicle of successive events but a picture, or rather a map, which thought instead of sight perceived—everything was seen simultaneously and everything with equal clearness, yet without any confusion, as an insect may be supposed to see through its compound eyes."

Harriet Martineau, in her "*Biographical Sketches*," records the similar experience of Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort when he was in imminent danger of being drowned:—

"My sensations were now of a rather pleasurable cast, partaking of that dull but contented sort of feeling which precedes the sleep produced by fatigue. Though the senses were thus deadened, not so the mind; its activity seemed to be invigorated, in a ratio which defies all description, for thought rose above thought with a rapidity of succession that is not only indescribable, but probably inconceivable by anyone who has not himself been in a similar situation. . . . Thus travelling backwards, every past incident of my life seemed to glance across my recollection in retrograde succession; not, however, in mere outline, as here stated, but the picture filled up with every minute and collateral feature. In short, the whole period of my existence seemed to be placed before me in a sort of panoramic review, and each act of it seemed to be accompanied by a consciousness of right or wrong, or by some reflection on its cause or its consequences; indeed, many trifling events which had been long forgotten then crowded into my imagination, and with the character of recent familiarity."

An equally interesting statement was made to the Psychological Society by Stainton Moses, the well-known Editor of "*Light*." He was at the time of the incident an undergraduate at Oxford:—

"Many stories are on record as to a phenomenon which precedes death in many cases; I mean the unfolding of the whole panorama of life at the moment of the severance of soul from body. It has chanced me to pass through that experience, and I will endeavour to describe what I felt. I was upset out of a little boat on the Isis . . . I recognised fully that I was drowning, but no sort of fear was present to my mind. I did not even regret the fact. By degrees, as it seemed—though the process must have been instantaneous—I recollected my life. The link was—Well, I am drowning and this life is done with. It has not been a very long one. . . . And so the events of it came before my mind, and seemed to shape themselves in outline and move before me. It was not that I thought, but that objective pictures of events seemed to float before me, a moving tableau, as though depicted on the mass of water that weighed upon my eyes."

The Rev. G. Kellett Grice (Superintendent Minister in the Otley Circuit of the Methodist Church) has kindly allowed me to publish the following account of a personal experience:—

"Before I entered the Methodist Ministry I was an elementary school teacher at Sacriston, County Durham. The school was about four miles from my home at Framwellgate Moor, which is a village on the north road from Durham to Newcastle, about a mile from the former city. I cycled to and from school each day. There are cross-roads near the Black Boy Inn. Coming from Sacriston to the inn there is a long declivity and normally I put on my cycle brake to take the right-angled turn safely. One evening I was in a hurry and resolved to use gravitation more, and I ran a great risk at that corner. As I rounded the corner at a great pace I saw a speeding motor-car approaching on the wrong side of the road. To save myself I switched left into the hedge, expecting to fall in that direction. For some unaccountable reason I was catapulted into the road, right under the car. Motor bodies in those days were higher from the ground than they are now. (The year was 1904). The car passed over me without hurting me. My only injury was on the palm of the right hand which was a bleeding pulp. The road was wet, and I got up between the two lines made by the motor-tyres, in time enough to read the number of the car, whose occupants were peering backwards at me,

but with no intention of stopping to see whether I was hurt. Between the saddle and the ground was only a matter of seconds, but in the little fragment of time I saw all my twenty years of life in detail, its ups and downs, its lights and shades, its rights and wrongs, important things and trivial things. It seemed to start from a broken toy in early infancy, and the final thought was of the grief my mother would feel when my death was reported to her!

"I cannot now remember all the wealth of detail, but it was marvellous and I have always been ready to believe the psychologists who say that everything we have ever experienced is recorded in the cells of the brain."

These records come exclusively from some of the very few mortals who have undergone what amounts to a temporary death—persons who have been for a moment virtually dead but then come back to life. The number of such persons who thus come within a hair's breadth of total death must be exceedingly few. Possibly not all of these had any such strange experience as those here recorded; possibly not all of them were able to recall it if they had it. But there would seem to be in general currency sufficient stories of this experience of a life-tableau to make the fact that it can and does occur incontrovertible. At least it would be worth somebody's while to collect evidence widely.

What is the significance of dreams? Why were dreams taken in the World of Antiquity in a quite different way from that in which they are taken to-day? What sort of a dream is this life-panorama of which there would seem to be many authenticated records? . . . Let us pass from the world of dreams into the world of realities! Let us seek the verdict of science upon these sleep dreams and death-dreams. Do Darwinistic theories of evolution account for them? If not, is there any alternative theory of evolution in which they become elucidated? Present-day psychologists treat dreams in all seriousness, but their attitude towards them is altogether different from that of the men of antiquity; why is this?

§2

We used to believe that a Being of Immeasurable Power and Wisdom and Love decreed our creation with the words: "Let us make man in our image." We once felt we were at the centre of

things. We thought of ourselves as known by the Cosmos and loved by it. We called the Universe "Our Father." We held up our hands to it in prayer.

Modern Science requires us to think otherwise. It indicates a world-whole which is not only indifferent to us but is altogether unaware of us. It insists that neither at the outset nor anywhere along the line was there any prevision of what has actually taken place in evolution nor any intention to bring about the results with which we are familiar. That we exist at all is explained as merely the latest result of a series of "accidents." Astro-physicists are still in debate about the origins of our earth. A hypothesis until recently much in favour was that somewhere about 2,000 million years ago another star in our galaxy happened to pass near enough to what was then "the sun" to attract out of it the blazing substances which became in due course the planets of our solar system—among them a planet on which by a chance the physical conditions were such as to make life as we know it practicable. After some 1,000 million years: at a certain place or at certain places: at a certain moment or at certain moments: conditions occurred which resulted in the formation of special chemical compounds having the property of livingness. Living matter, having been brought forth, somehow maintained itself. It not only maintained itself. It reproduced itself and it evolved. It evolved blindly into many blind-alleys. It evolved with equal blindness along what the unscientific regard as a uniquely important and specifically intended main-line:—cell—cluster of single-celled organisms—some sort of jelly-fish—flat-worm stage—round-worm stage—coelomate—primitive chordate—fish—amphibian—reptile—monotreme—marsupial—true mammal—insectivore—some sort of tree shrew—some sort of lemur—some sort of monkey—some sort of ape—and finally man.

The full title of Darwin's great first book on evolution was: "The Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life." Here in the title are indicated the essentials of Darwin's doctrine. He asked his readers to look at facts on every hand observable in nature: that organisms vary; that features are transmitted by heredity; that in every environment and at every level of life there is among living organisms competition for survival. He argued convincingly that in the Struggle for Life in any given environment those that survive will be those that possess characteristics giving them in that particular situation some biological advantage over their com-

petitors; he argued further that those surviving would tend to hand on their helpful qualities to their offspring. Thinking along these lines he saw every environment mechanically eliminating organisms ill-adapted to it and mechanically bringing into existence organisms that could adapt themselves. This materialistic, mechanistic mode of accounting for what has taken place in evolution was applied more and more comprehensively. Darwin himself brought man into his evolutionary scheme in his "Descent of Man." Darwin's followers out-Darwined Darwin. In the period from 1859 to the present-day we have witnessed the rise of an official biology, almost universally accepted in universities and schools, which purports to explain man as originating exclusively from blind physical and chemical events.

Those who think on these lines feel themselves compelled to regard the human being pretty much as they regard an ape or a blade of grass or an atom. Their scientific knowledge makes it unthinkable to them that a human being is anything more than a haphazard and temporary assemblage of molecules. That man is uniquely an object of interest to the Cosmos; that he has spiritual-moral reality (apart from his private feelings of self-importance); is not a line of thought that Science, as generally cultivated, is ready to entertain.

What Julian Huxley writes in his Foreword to Eileen Mayo's "Story of Living Things" (1947) is typical:—

"The discoveries of the nineteenth century concerning life rank with those of the seventeenth concerning lifeless matter as the two achievements of science which have had the greatest influence on general thought.

"Galileo and Newton, following on Copernicus and Kepler, finally robbed our earth of its claim to a central position in the universe. At the same time, they introduced us to the idea of universal scientific law, by demonstrating that the behaviour of the moon, the earth and the other planets was due to the same force of gravity that makes a raindrop or a stone fall to the ground.

"So, two centuries later, Darwin, following on Lamarck and the other great naturalists, comparative anatomists and physiologists who preceded him, finally dethroned man from his claim to a unique position as Lord of Creation. At the same time he introduced us to the idea of universal law in biology, by demonstrating that all plants and animals, including man himself, share many basic similarities, and that

the origin of human species is due to the same general type of agency which is involved in producing a local variety of snail or a new breed of poultry: evolution operates as automatically as gravity."

Great as were Darwin's discoveries; great as the work of Darwin's disciples have been;—do they account for man? Is man as we actually know him really *explained*, or is he jammed into a theory and made to fit it as best he can? Does Darwinism explain any of man's dreams:—his irresponsible dreams at night; his rational dreams by day? . . . I will even dare to ask the audacious question whether the adherents of Darwinism really do themselves believe that their theories account for the sort of thing they inwardly know themselves to be. My own impression is that the Darwinistic account of man is accepted not at all because it is really believed in, but because no alternative to it has emerged.

Alfred Russel Wallace came forward with the notion of Natural Selection at the same time as Darwin himself. It is arguable that if Darwin was the greater of the two as an observer, Wallace was the greater as a thinker. However that may be, it is a matter of the deepest interest and importance that Wallace never allotted to the principle of Natural Selection more than an exceedingly circumscribed scope in evolution. That evolution in general can be explained along Darwinian lines; that man himself can be accounted for materialistically and mechanically, Wallace flatly denied. Here are quotations from the last chapter of his book on "Darwinism":—

"The special faculties we have been discussing clearly point to the existence in man of something which he has not derived from his animal progenitors—something which we may best refer to as being of a spiritual essence or nature, capable of progressive development under favourable conditions. On the hypothesis of this spiritual nature, super-added to the animal nature of man, we are able to understand much that is otherwise mysterious or unintelligible in regard to him, especially the enormous influence of ideas, principles, and beliefs over his whole life and actions. . . . These three distinct stages of progress from the inorganic world of matter and motion up to man, point clearly to an unseen universe—to a world of spirit, to which the world of matter is altogether subordinate. . . . And still more surely can we refer to it those progressive manifestations of Life in the vegetable, the animal, and man—which we may classify as unconscious,

conscious, and intellectual life,—and which probably depend upon different degrees of spiritual influx. . . . As contrasted with this hopeful and soul-deadening belief, we, who accept the existence of a spiritual world, can look upon the universe as a grand consistent whole adapted in all its parts to the development of spiritual beings capable of indefinite life and perfectibility.

"To us, the whole purpose, the only *raison d'être* of the world—with all its complexities of physical structure, with its grand geological progress, the slow evolution of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and the ultimate appearance of man—was the development of the human spirit in association with the human body. . . . We thus find that the Darwinian theory, even when carried out to its extreme logical conclusion, not only does not oppose, but lends a decided support to, a belief in the spiritual nature of man. It shows us how man's body may have been developed from that of a lower animal form under the law of natural selection; but it also teaches us that we possess intellectual and moral faculties which could not have been so developed, but must have had another origin; and for this origin we can only find an adequate cause in the unseen universe of Spirit."

Wallace saw the possibility of a Greater Darwinism. His suggestion of "spiritual influxes" will one day be recognised as the aperçu of a great thinker. Evolutionary theory has in the first post-Darwinian phase succumbed to the materialistic mood of modern science; it is almost a department of physics. In the next phase there is every reason to believe it will shake off materialism and mechanism and take up these altogether more hopeful suggestions of Darwin's great fellow-worker.

§3

Dr. Steiner was from the first to last an evolutionist. He knew Haeckel personally; he differed from him radically; but he saw how much greater Haeckel was than most of his critics; and he wrote a book in defence of Haeckel where the reader will find fully recognised everything that is great and true in Darwinism. In two several standard editions of the Natural Scientific works of Goethe which he edited, Dr. Steiner had occasion to comment multitudinously upon the views of the great pre-Darwinian apostle of evolution. In a 200-page chapter called "Man and the Evolution

of the World" in his "Outline of Occult Science," Steiner sums up his views. In a hundred various lecture-courses and books, in relation to different branches of science and culture, he elaborates them.

The enquiring reader will in all probability have heard that Steiner claims to base his views of evolution upon clairvoyant vision. But perhaps he will be well-advised—at first, at any rate—to ignore this question of the sources of Steiner's account and give his attention exclusively to what Steiner actually states. Let him be content to ask himself whether what Steiner has to say explains the known facts more satisfactorily than they are explained by Darwin and the Darwinians. What I bring forward for the purposes of this article is only a hint of Steiner's account of things. The reader must say to himself that in numberless connexions and contexts he can look for confirmations in Steiner's published works.

"And God said, 'Let us make man in our image and in our likeness'." Steiner postulates Man Himself, as a supersensible being, brooding (as it were) over the entire evolutionary process. Man Potential stands at its beginning; Man as we know him to-day struggles amid material conditions for self-realisation; one day there will be Man Actualised.

The Fiat of God is for the making of a free being. Man originates in the supersensible. That he may become self-dependent and morally responsible, he is thrust down into the darkness of matter. His evolution is carried forward to a certain point—from without, as it were—by Spiritual Beings. From that point he is required to take increasing responsibility for his own evolution.

The disciples of Darwin see animals brought forward mechanically,—specialised to this or that form by the requirements of a particular environment,—some of them in the same sort of meaningless way mechanised up to that improved ape called a "human being." Steiner sees an evolutionary process pregnant with Man. The Cosmos, with man in mind, set itself to the perfecting upon earth of a physical mechanism suitable for the needs of self-consciousness and freedom of will. The animals are the *disjecta membra* of the advance to the human form. When he had prepared the necessary apparatus for existence under physical conditions, man took possession of it. Evolution became henceforward man's own responsibility.

The great myths of mankind represent poetically man's widespread ancient knowledge of his cosmic origins. Adam and Eve

are driven out of Paradise. Persephone is snatched from Demeter into the Lower World. The Gods vanish in the twilight. . . . The Divine Spiritual World remains always in the background :—man is required to live for threescore years and ten under material conditions, is then drawn back for a long interval into the supersensible, then thrust once more into the outer darkness ; for seven or eight hours out of every twenty-four, he is drawn back into his true environment for spiritual rejuvenation. Keeping its hold upon man by means of death and sleep, the Spiritual World thrusts him more and more forcibly as ages pass into the sense-perceptible. It progressively withdraws its control and supervision. Man upon earth increasingly loses consciousness of his spiritual origins and connexions.

Pre-historic man "clairvoyantly" knew himself to be a member of a Spiritual Universe. He was aware within and without himself of the working and weaving of Spiritual Beings. His consciousness was rich with colour-filled images of their activity. Awake and asleep, he dreamed. But by night he had a thicker sort of dream than he had by day.

Ancient History represents to us a man who is losing connexion with the Spiritual World. He retains vivid memories of that Higher World to which he knows still he belongs ; but it is now only under special conditions that he can directly experience it. Greek for ever met Greek in battle, but all Greeks alike consulted the oracle at Delphi. Through the prophets God still spoke to the people of Israel. In the mystery-centres in all the early civilisations, highly-developed human beings underwent special training that they might become spiritually receptive. And in what was in those days still a quite natural manner—during the time in each day when they were shut off from the newly-dawning sense-world—human beings were still able to receive revelations from the Higher World in their dreams.

How does man stand in the world to-day ? In the light of what Steiner has to say about evolution, how shall we see ourselves ? What is our present-day thinking ? What are our dreams ? What is that strange life-panorama to which witness is borne by an occasional traveller back from the undiscovered country ? Into what are we evolving ? What are our possibilities ? How can we make the most of them ?

We were once altogether dream-stuff ; we were filled with the working and weaving of spiritual reality ;—but from within our-

selves we were inactive. We were not yet an "I." To-day the Higher World no longer pours into us its imaginative, creative dream-revelations. Our consciousness nowadays consists only of lifeless reflections of the dream-self activity in the dead matter of the brain. But these abstract thoughts exercise no compulsion upon us. We can pick and choose among them. We are enabled to be morally free. No longer lit up by Cosmic Light from without, we are granted the evolutionary possibility of lighting up a Light Within.

In the background of our being lurks the ancient dream-self. It awaits resurrection. It awaits an evolutionary transmutation ; here and there are persons under sentence of death who have caught a glimpse of it in its entirety, freed from its physical prison in the body. For the most part our dreams in sleep are merely a pathetic remnant of this ancient self ; but sometimes they become magical with divination of the present and promise of the future. The genius is a person who has already discovered how to dream by day. If we consider persistently what conscious memory signifies ; if we learn to look upon ourselves not as a momentary embodiment in matter and space but as a continuing, developing entity ; we can begin to know ourselves as that time-dream self which we fundamentally are.

What does evolution now require of us ? What is morality at this juncture in the history of mankind ? To all such questions the anthroposophical account of things offers a clear and positive answer. In times gone by we were the dream of Spiritual Beings ; to-day we are required to dream dreams of our own. We are such stuff as dreams are made on ; our sub-conscious self is a sea of imaginative, creative forces ; our task is to effectualise these forces into conscious willed activity. We were once unfree and clairvoyant ; these times represent a moment in which, in order to gain our freedom, we have become unclairvoyant ; the demand is made upon us out of our freedom to become clairvoyant again.

§4

Steiner is not particularly concerned to offer mankind a new *Weltanschauung*. What he aims at is to bring each one of us to the point where we can generate our own views of things. As we study Anthroposophy, we find, for indubitable fact, that we bear dormant within us a second Dreaming Self. And we come

to ask ourselves insistently how we can let these imaginative creative forces become effectual in our lives.

The problem of problems for every fully awakened human being is : "How can I enable this Dreamer within me to dream his dreams upon the stage of my everyday existence?"

Negatively stated, the problem is how to cease being so interested in our present self—so excited about it, so satisfied with it. Unless we can overthrow the existing régime, how can we place a new ruler upon the throne? It is extraordinarily difficult. It calls for the utmost exertion of one's forces. We are so completely identified with our present notions, ways, interests, aims, that it is at first virtually impossible for us to catch even a fleeting glance of what we look like in the eyes of the Cosmos. We will not even dare to attempt to look. We are filled with fear that if we begin to see ourselves as we truly are, we shall not be able to avoid taking up that further fearful task of ceasing to be what is now ourselves. . . . Steiner urges us to spend every morning at least five heroic minutes in the effort to know ourselves. He urges us to undertake every night a retrospect of the course of the previous day's activities, going through them, item by item, in reverse. He tells us that "the occultist has no preference for his own opinion," and urges us to cultivate the habit of listening without any comment, conscious or unconscious, whether of assent or dissent, upon what is said to us by other people. . . . Such exercises may seem simple, even trivial, to the reader. He will not regard them as simple or trivial if he tries to do them. Done heroically and done persistently—if necessary, over many years—they will have their effect.

Let us now go further. Let us make the supposition that we are willing to efface our present selves. How shall we enable the Dreamer to dream his dreams within us? What exercises, what inner disciplines, what meditations are required?

If the reader begins at this point to consult Dr. Steiner's works, he may well find himself becoming bewildered. Dr. Steiner, he may feel, says too much on these matters. How shall he pick and choose among so many possibilities? Where and how shall he begin? . . . But the difficulty is more apparent than real. The technique of meditation elucidates itself as the result of sincere, energetic experiment. The true difficulty is to find in ourselves that "most holy earnestness" without which all our meditation will be unavailing.

What follows is a Meditation given by Dr. Steiner in his "Out-

line of Occult Science" in the chapter called "Perception of Higher Worlds." In this same chapter and in other places, he indicates numberless other spiritual exercises of many various kinds. I give this particular exercise not only because it is a very great and beautiful meditation, but also because it has a certain appropriateness in an article which deals with the evolution of the human being.

'Let us think of a plant, calling to mind how it is rooted in the ground, how leaf after leaf shoots forth, and how finally the blossom unfolds. Then let us imagine a human being placed beside this plant. Let us now say to ourselves that he has qualities which make him higher than the plant. We dwell on the fact that he is able to move here and there according to his desires, while the plant is forced to remain stationary.

'But now let us also say :—"Yes, the man certainly seems to be greater than the plant. Yet I find in him imperfections which force me to think of him as lower. He is filled with desires and passions. Whereas the plant follows the pure laws of growth from leaf to leaf and the blossom opens passionless to the rays of the sun. I can see that man possesses a certain perfection beyond that of the plant ; but I see also that he has paid for this perfection by admitting into his being lower inclinations and desires." Let us then call to mind the green sap flowing through the plant and think of it as an expression of the pure and passionless law of growth to which the plant adheres. Let us also call to mind the red blood coursing through the veins of the man, recognising in it an expression of man's instincts, passions and desires. Let us call up vivid pictures of the pure green sap on the one hand and of the impure red blood on the other hand ; not only thinking these things but feeling them deeply.

'Let us now go on to say to ourselves that man is able to purify his inclinations and passions by means of higher soul faculties. Let us think and feel how thereby these inclinations and passions may be born again on a higher plane. We can now think of a blood that expresses these purified passions and desires.

'We gaze in spirit upon the rose and say to ourselves :—"In the red sap of the rose is the erstwhile green sap of the plant. The red rose follows the same pure passionless law of growth as did the green leaf. The red of the rose may be thought of as a symbol of such blood as expresses cleansed inclinations and impulses, purged of all lower elements, and resembling in their purity the forces working in the rose."

'Let us now try once more not only to think such thoughts but to let them come strongly to life in our feeling. We can experience a sensation of liberating bliss if we think of the red rose as the symbol of the purified red blood which has become the carrier of pure inner experiences.

'Let us finally transmute these thoughts and feelings into a symbolical concept. Let us picture a black cross. Let this be the symbol of the lower desires and passions which have been put down. Let us imagine, at the point where the arms of the cross intersect, seven red roses in a circle. Let these roses be the symbol of a blood which expresses cleansed passions and desires. Let us call up this symbolical concept in our soul—excluding all else—concentrating mind and heart upon the life-filled image.'

To undertake such a meditation is to encourage the conscious, willed activity of one's sleeping inner forces of imagination and creativeness. Whoever does it day after day, year after year, with heroic intensity and persistence, will find himself entering into that new kind of dreaming which will characterise the new sort of human being.

LAZARUS

ADAM BITTLESTON

EUROPE in her need of spiritual refreshment looks back, and studies again the sources of her civilisation. But the Greeks have become pale forms in her mind, without depth; and the New Testament has been torn in pieces. In order to draw life from the ancient writings, we need to learn over again how to read; and we must first be convinced that the effort to train ourselves for the reading, in mind and heart and will, is justified by the worth of the books themselves. We need clear ideas about the origin of writings which claim a value greater than that of those produced by the everyday human consciousness. We turn to them, indeed, feeling that they have this greater value; but our minds in general interpret them on an everyday level that is unfruitful.

One of Rudolf Steiner's great gifts to our time is a description of Inspiration as a distinct, comprehensible process. The human

consciousness is capable of intensifying its delicacy of perception, its clarity and orderliness, and its impregnation by conscience, until it rises beyond its ordinary limits and shares in experiences which can be so clothed in earthly language that they nourish whole civilisations. The development of Inspiration in this sense is part of a way of Initiation described in great detail by Rudolf Steiner as having been followed during almost all periods of our history—with certain significant variations.

Many objections are brought against this view. Here we can consider—very briefly—only those brought from a traditional Christian standpoint. There has been much discussion of the relation of the Gospels to the Mystery religions of their time; and on the whole, critics have come to emphasise how very different the religion of the Gospels is from that of the Mysteries. Has, then, the idea of Initiation—in the Mystery sense—any place in Christianity at all?

It should be remembered that the critics are discussing the Mysteries from outside; while the ancient writers who defend the Mysteries constantly emphasise that the impression of them gained by those who have not passed through the essential experiences is misleading. Only in our time have we a description of Mystery experiences *from within* in terms completely intelligible to the healthy human understanding in ordinary consciousness—through the work of Rudolf Steiner; and on the relation of these experiences to Christianity his witness should be heard.

We find that on the one hand his description of the Mysteries throws a flood of light upon the origin, the form, and the right reading of the Gospels; and on the other, that he regards the coming of Christ as bringing about an entire change in the human situation, which transforms fundamentally at the same time the place of the Mysteries in man's life. A crucial example of this view is to be found in his treatment of the story of Lazarus in St. John's Gospel.

For the historical critics, this story is surrounded by many difficulties. To begin with, it appears as a miracle particularly inaccessible for our ordinary understanding: the raising to life of a man more than three days dead. If it occurred—as a conspicuous public event, hastening on the enmity against Jesus which led to His trial and crucifixion—why is it recorded only in the Fourth Gospel? And in the details of the story are many hard

things: the apparent heartlessness of the delay in going to Bethany—in order, it seems, that the miracle should be more astonishing; the long conversations with Martha and Mary; and Jesus' tears.

Often commentators have been driven to the conclusion that the whole story is allegorical. Such a conclusion fits easily into that view of the Fourth Gospel which regarded it as a late mystical writing without much pretension to historical value. But in recent years external evidence has brought the date of the Fourth Gospel back with reasonable certainty to about 100 A.D., and has shown how widely it was accepted within a short time. And that school of criticism—always relatively strong in England—which takes the Fourth Gospel seriously as a source of knowledge about historic fact, has grown in confidence and influence. Dr. William Temple pointed to the chronological framework for the ministry, given only in the Fourth Gospel, and to grounds for preferring its account, where this appears to contradict the first three Gospels; and to the fact that the writer's whole theology implies that he is describing real earthly happenings.

"It is no doubt true," Dr. Temple writes, "that St. John selects his chosen events for record because of their significance; but it is essential for his purpose that the significant occasion should also be an event. If the whole story is a myth, its quality as revelation is destroyed. The Gospel is that 'the Word was made flesh' and being incarnate so spoke, so acted, so died and so rose from death. It is not the mere occurrence of its several episodes that constitutes the Gospel; it is their spiritual and eternal significance; but part of their spiritual and eternal significance is their physical and temporal occurrence. For it is the whole world, inclusive of matter—of flesh and blood—which God so loved that He gave His only begotten Son. It is then vital to St. John's purpose that the events which he records should be actual events. We can be quite sure that he never consciously wrote what he did not believe to be fact; he is not a constructor of allegories." (*Readings in St. John's Gospel*, page xiii).

It appears then to be in flagrant contradiction with the intention of the Gospel, if we do not take the raising of Lazarus as an actual event. And we have evidence that the Gospel came from a respected source at a time when many were living who had had long and intimate contact with the Apostles—whether any of the Apostles themselves survived or not. It was a time when a critical faculty towards facts and documents was very much alive—much more

alive than later, during the early Middle Ages. (Most of the 19th century criticisms of the Gospels can be found already either in the Primitive Fathers themselves, or in their quotations from opponents of Christianity). Thus, as in many other matters, research brings us back to the original, fundamental difficulties. It is the same with New Testament study as a whole. The gentle Teacher found by 19th century students in the Gospels did at least have a place in their whole world picture. But the Christ Jesus with mighty cosmic claims about His own being, whom we now know to be the only Jesus of whom we have any evidence at all—how can He be seen within the pictures of the nature of our world that the man in the street tries to make—or gives up trying to make—to-day?

In the single example of the Lazarus story we can see—and try to interpret in detail—the kind of answer Rudolf Steiner gives. He says—in one of his earlier fundamental writings, "Christianity as Mystical Fact,"—that the raising of Lazarus is an account of an Initiation which stands at the transition between the pre-Christian Mysteries and the Mysteries as they were to become through the effects of the deed of Christ. Others have suggested that the raising of Lazarus involves an Initiation, or the acquisition by Lazarus of a special consciousness,—Browning, for example, in his poem "An Epistle." But Rudolf Steiner is unique, I believe, in pointing to the raising of Lazarus as evidence of this great historic change.

In Initiation it is necessary to transform a part of man's being that can be influenced by his ordinary consciousness only with great difficulty. To one aspect of this we refer when we speak of a person's "temperament"—to another, when we speak of his "vitality." The sum of those forces, through which the physical body of man is immediately shaped and enlivened, up to the moment of death, Rudolf Steiner called the "Life-Body," or "Body of Formative Forces" or "Etheric Body." All these terms he regarded as more or less misleading in themselves; only through approaching such an idea from many different sides can it live in us with adequate richness and clarity.

This "etheric body" is largely given up during ordinary life to the work of bearing the memories, the abilities, and the habits that fit us for the external world. In Initiation it is necessary that it receive a deep impress from the forces of a soul given up to the spiritual world; and in ancient times this was achieved by a temporary, but far-reaching, detachment of the etheric body from the

physical—a “death” from which the pupil was called back by his Initiator. Through this detaching of his life-organism, he had then become a citizen of the spiritual world, as we fit ourselves to become citizens of earth through our childhood and education. In accordance with a native rhythm of the life-body, this death-like condition had to last about three days.

By its composition, the Fourth Gospel prepares us to see that the raising of Lazarus is a deed of Initiation by Christ Himself. The preceding “Sign”, the sixth, is the healing of the man born blind. Through his healing, this man is able to stand before the hostile council of priests, and bear witness about his Healer. Then Lazarus is raised—“for the glory of the Son of God.” Jesus waits for the Initiation process to be completed, in order that the one called back from the grave may be capable of a witness grounded on citizenship in the spiritual world.

Why, then, is so much said about Martha and Mary? Here Rudolf Steiner does not give, in his published work, a direct answer. But materials for an answer can be found from many sources. In an ancient Initiation, the elements out of which man’s being is composed were represented by those who served the Mysteries—so that the pupil could be surrounded, as it were, by the actors in the drama of his own soul. Martha and Mary are intimate fellow-disciples, with Lazarus, of Christ Jesus. They are also bearers of contrasted qualities of soul. In St. Luke’s Gospel this contrast is shown very drastically, between Martha’s concern with external tasks and Mary’s quiet will to listen. Now in the story of Lazarus the difference between them is indicated more subtly; but again, Martha lives in observation and action, Mary in personal feeling. Lazarus, looking on these two, could see in them elements of his own self. And now, at the crisis of Initiation, how will they support what has to be fulfilled?

We see here something of the great transition between the ancient and the new Mysteries. In the new Mysteries the whole earth becomes Temple; the hidden tragedy and triumph of the pupil begin to become external fact. A man’s own friends begin to become for him, though they may know little of it, the terrible and wonderful actors in the ceremony of his Initiation. How much can Martha and Mary realise, what bridge of ages it is, across which they are being led? Martha comes first to Jesus, can receive the word of Resurrection, and can speak of her own faith and know-

ledge. Mary, when she comes followed by the mourners, seems more deeply sunk in personal sorrow. There is a difference, difficult to render in English, between Mary’s first words and those of Martha; Mary’s words could be rendered, slightly over-emphasising this difference, “Lord if Thou hadst been here, I would not have lost my brother”—and no compensating word of faith, as with Martha, only lamentation.

But at the tomb itself it is Martha who is overwhelmed by the consciousness of the process of physical death: “Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he has been dead four days.” At this point, we find in the Greek text an extraordinary example of “Johannine irony.” Why do we read, before these words, in the English versions: “Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto Him. . .”? Does the writer of the Fourth Gospel, who weighs every syllable, think that at this point we might have forgotten who Martha is? The word used here, and here only, for “of him that was dead” means literally, “of him that had run his course” or “had reached the goal.” The writer of the Fourth Gospel never elsewhere uses this word in the sense of dying, and it is very rare in the whole New Testament. The passage can mean, quite faithfully to the original, “there saith to him the sister of the perfected one, Martha, ‘Lord, already he stinketh. . .’.” The earthly consciousness fails so utterly to penetrate through the veil of ruin and corruption to the process of perfecting man’s living being. (It is as if later Mary brings redress for her sister’s word when she pours the ointment upon the feet of Jesus; “and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment.”)

The disciples, too, have received a preparation, that they might share with understanding in the deed that is coming; and they too fail, at the time, to grasp the full sense of this preparation. They had listened to the words of Jesus, in which he spoke of Himself as both Door and Shepherd—both standing where the earthly world meets the spiritual, and leading men across this threshold. But they cannot take in this sovereign power of His; and when the news comes of Lazarus’s sickness, they are very puzzled.

Jesus tells them that this sickness is for the revelation of the Son of God; and then, in great enigmatic words, that it is for the enkindling of an inner light. “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world; but if any man walk in the night,

he stumbleth, because the light is not in him." We would ordinarily say : because he has no light with him. But here it is a question of awakening the Sun-power *within* man. For the time of greatest spiritual darkness, of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, and the Crucifixion, *one* disciple is to be prepared, that he may not stumble. Lazarus is to bring into the night, the clarity and confidence of day ; into the day, the healing power of sleep. Jesus tells the disciples now that Lazarus is sleeping, in order that they may understand that this "death" has the power of refreshment, only in much greater degree, that sleep ordinarily has for us. But the disciples can think only of the negative aspect of death : Thomas says, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

To that act, at which Initiation is brought from the secrecy of the Temples into everyday life, the sisters and the disciples bring minds clouded by sorrow and anxiety. There are also present the mourners from Jerusalem, who seem to be quite trivial spectators. From this side we can perhaps approach the strange, tragic words of the Gospel about the emotion of Jesus. The word translated in the Authorised Version "He groaned in the spirit," in the original expresses indignation or stern warning. (Moffatt : "He chafed in spirit"). Trivially expressed—the task of the Hierophant is made immeasurably more difficult, because those who surround the grave bring their uncontrolled emotion and their conjectures to this most holy act. The word used of Mary and the mourners is really "wailing," but of Jesus, "weeping." Tears can mean a strengthening of the "I" at a turning point of its destiny, not a weakening of our power over the soul, as when we cry out. In His Manhood Jesus gives the example of calling upon the Father when He fulfils a great task ; and it is explicitly said that He thanks the Father in order that those who stand by may understand.

For what then is Lazarus called forth from the grave, loosed from the grave clothes, and let go his way ? It is another of the mysteries of the New Testament—what became of Lazarus ? Did his experience of heavenly reality make him—as he is represented in Browning's poem—a loving, but deeply-puzzled onlooker at earthly events ?

In modern times, there are two great misunderstandings of the nature of an Initiate. He is thought of either as standing aside, in complete inner detachment from what is happening to mankind—a "Yogi" as this term is now often used in modern speech ; or he is

thought of as attempting to exercise an authoritative influence, based on his claims to spiritual status, on those around him. It is a great deal *because* of these misunderstandings that the concept of an Initiate seems to have no place in Christian thought—for neither attitude is consistent with Christian social relationships.

Is there any third possibility ? Only that the Initiate should exercise on his environment an influence which leaves his fellow-men free—which does not *depend* for its effect on his Initiate claims, but has the kind of authority which any wise and loving advice may have ; that those who receive it recognise in it the speech of their own truest being. Exercising this influence, he need not, and ordinarily will not, refer directly to his own Initiation. But what he says can be tested by the healthy judgment of his hearers ; some will reject it, because it contradicts a prejudice to which they are attached ; but some will feel that it springs from a realm in which they also share, though less consciously—their real home in the spirit.

We should expect such an influence, in a very high degree, from one who received Initiation from Christ Jesus Himself. And Rudolf Steiner's account fulfils this expectation ; for he says that "Lazarus" was in fact the writer of the Fourth Gospel, known to tradition as "John."

The Fourth Gospel itself never names any other John than the Baptist—while the first three Gospels give lists of the Twelve which include John the son of Zebedee, and refer to him on other occasions as well. The Fourth Gospel, after the raising of Lazarus, speaks several times of "the disciple whom Jesus loves"—and at the end of chapter 21 it is said "this is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things ; and we know that his testimony is true."

Of no named person, except Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, is it said that Jesus loved them ; *that* it is said, must indicate a very special relationship of Jesus to the one concerned—since His love streamed out to all who truly came to Him. If we identify "the disciple whom Jesus loved" with "Lazarus," endless light is thrown on the relationship of the Fourth Gospel to the other Gospels. And as a first result we gain an answer to the question "Why do the other Gospels not mention the raising of Lazarus ?"

Dr. Temple comes near to this when he conjectures—without being entirely satisfied with the suggestion—that Peter, as the instructor of Mark, may have had a reason for omitting the story :

"For if Lazarus was still alive, to tell his story in public preaching might cause him grave inconvenience, if not ridicule and persecution." There was a much stronger reason to hold back the description of a Mystery act, of which the one concerned alone knew the full significance—and which, bluntly related, would give him an authority that might render others unfree, against his will. From the scattered traditions, it does seem as if John, for many years, remained very much in the background, while James "the brother of the Lord," Peter, and Paul, were the principal architects of the Church in Judæa and beyond. But though Peter and Paul certainly, and perhaps also James, influenced the one or other of the first three Evangelists, it is not at all impossible that they also had a certain guidance from John himself. For he is in a very special sense *the* witness about Christ Jesus. The other Gospels really imply his witness in order that what they describe may be intelligible, as Dr. Temple and others have pointed out. They are preparations for the most intimate record, given from the consciousness of the one whose head rests against the heart of Christ.

Rudolf Steiner has described in the most illuminating way the difference in consciousness between the first three Evangelists and the Fourth. "What meets us in St. John's Gospel, could depend only upon the research of the Initiate, who could rise to Inspired and Intuitive knowledge. What we find in the other Gospels could depend on the reports of Imaginative, clairvoyant men, who could not yet themselves reach the Inspired and Intuitive world."

These three terms—Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition—are of course used in the exact sense, which has already been touched on here in the case of Inspiration. Imagination is described by Rudolf Steiner as a means of knowledge through living pictures, inwardly experienced when our powers of thinking, and of observing our own thought process, are so intensified that they are freed from dependence upon the physical brain. This condition is as much above our ordinary state of consciousness as the life of dream is below it. But Imagination is akin to dream in its symbolic character. And with the help of Imagination alone, man cannot find his way within the spiritual world. He has indeed manifold spiritual experiences; but he cannot determine their relative value and their place in the whole world-order. "Without knowledge through Inspiration the Imaginative world would remain like a writing at which one gazes without being able to read it. . . . Imagination

leads the pupil of spirit-knowledge to feel perceived impressions no longer as external qualities of Beings, but to recognise them as the manifestations of soul and spirit. Inspiration leads him further into the inner nature of Beings. Through it he understands what these Beings are to one another; while in Intuition he penetrates into their very selves" (Rudolf Steiner, *The Outline of Occult Science*).

We may perhaps compare Imagination to the kind of knowledge of human beings an artist could obtain by watching a group of people attentively, with their characteristic choice of clothes, their movements and the play of expression on their faces; Inspiration with that gained by long and intimate conversations with them, in which each described his life and his intentions; and Intuition with the comprehension won through selfless love, in a shared work.

The Imaginative character, in this sense, of the first three Gospels is shown by their richness in parables. The content of these parables—for example those which deal with judgment in Matthew, or those of forgiveness in Luke—are not exhausted by any intellectual interpretation. They are, as it were, dream-experiences of human history, but in the intensified wakefulness of the artist's consciousness. The Prodigal Son is not simply an anecdote with a moral—it is a vision of the destiny of man, squandering upon earth his heavenly heritage. Luke can relate it, because his Imaginative capacity is sufficient for him to receive and understand this part of the teaching of Christ. As he says of himself, he is "autoptes" an eye-witness, or better, "self-seer," possessed of independent inner sight—and the servant, not the possessor, of the Word, which comes through Inspiration.

The transition from Imagination to Inspiration is one from abundance and bliss to poverty and pain. For the Imaginative riches must be blotted out, must be sacrificed, before the greater and more delicate faculty of soul can develop. It is, of course, a vital distinction whether the soul empties itself of content *after* having achieved the strength and intensity of imaginative vision—or whether it does so in the ordinary consciousness, as in some methods of seeking "Guidance," or as may be done by mediums. Without a far-reaching training of mind and character, the soul may be helpless before powers that seek to invade and misuse the instrument they find at their disposal, disguising their real nature—the "devils" that find the "house swept and garnished." Only through a discipleship, in which his devotion to the good powers of the world has

been thoroughly tested, does the pupil come in a right way to the threshold of Inspiration—offering there all that he has so far gained.

In the Gospels, a real, historic example of this way of poverty is given—the way from Galilee to Judæa. “Go to Galilee to become rich, to Judæa to become wise” was the advice of ancient Jewish tradition. The wealth of Galilee was not only physical; the grace of nature, the mixture of peoples, the less austere interpretation of the Law, all supported a consciousness more favourable to the Imaginative power than the bleak earnestness of Judæa. Thus we find that the Gospels which contain many parables, are those that deal particularly with the events in Galilee. But in the Fourth Gospel, there are really no parables in this sense at all, no “dream-stories”; where a kind of picture language is used, it is used in quite a different way. And St. John is more concerned with the events in Judæa, than those in Galilee, though he gives of these certain great examples. This tremendous difference of emphasis has led many critics to doubt the truth of St. John’s account altogether. The long, harsh-seeming controversies of Jesus with the Jews, which occupy the greater part of chapters V-X, have repelled many. The Gospels themselves make clear how unwilling the disciples were themselves to go this way, and how puzzling their Master became for them.

The “disciple whom Jesus loved” must have made the greatest efforts to go with Him the way of impoverishment and sacrifice. For the Christ, this was the sacrifice of cosmic majesty and power, the emptying of Himself unto the experience of human need and death; for the disciple, the sacrifice of the whole Imaginative wealth of ancient times, to sit as spiritual beggar covered with sores, at the threshold. Thus Luke could Imaginatively describe the condition of the true disciple; and for this reason perhaps John could use the name Lazarus for himself at that point of his discipleship. And as Lazarus in the parable dies—the beloved disciple has also to experience how humanity appears, seen from beyond the “great gulf”; and to return to bear witness before a world that rejects again and again the messengers of the Spirit—as Dives asks Lazarus to return.

But there is still the question—why, if Initiation is essentially a Christian reality, and one that is taken by the Christ Jesus out of the privacy of the Mysteries on to the open stage of history, does John

veil the story at all—enough, in fact, for much of its meaning to be seen hardly at all through two thousand years?

It belongs to the destiny of mankind that the Gospels were originally given much more to the dreaming heart, than to the conscious understanding of mankind. How deeply the heart understood, the works of artists right from the Catacombs to the Renaissance—most perfectly, scenes from the Gospel of St. Luke—bear witness.

Certain events from St. John’s Gospel, too, have been wonderfully represented in pictures—among them the raising of Lazarus itself; this appears in the Catacombs, in connections which show how its significance was felt. But men’s experience of St. John’s Gospel was continually leading them, though they could often not apprehend this clearly; *beyond* pictures. Again and again it was felt as the Gospel of the future of mankind, which also helped the individual to lift up his heart towards his own future destiny.

In our time, it was necessary that the intellect of man should tear the Gospels to fragments. But the living Imagination of man, beholding the sickness of our civilisation, must learn in poverty and need to honour the greater powers of knowledge, through which alone Resurrection, which is the heart of Christianity, can be won for our conscious understanding.

WHAT IS A HEALTHY SOCIETY?

CHARLES WATERMAN

IF several doctors examine the same man, they will agree roughly on his general state of health. They recognise certain conditions which the human body must fulfil in order to be healthy. The political doctors who take the pulse of societies have no such agreed standard. In Western Europe, for example, freedom of thought is regarded as a sign of social health; in Eastern Europe it calls for a purge.

Is it possible, perhaps, to find some more objective standard of social health? Can we say of a typical modern society (more or less industrialised, fairly well educated, not Far Eastern) that it must have certain features—conform broadly to a certain pattern—if it is to be healthy? I believe we can; but of course it will all depend on what we mean by “healthy” in this social sense. And before we can talk about that we must know what we mean by ordinary human health.

The doctor defines health in terms of function and performance. The body must function harmoniously and be capable of normal exertions. But this criterion applies equally to animals: for *human* health it is not quite enough. Human health must meet also the demands of human consciousness, the activities of the spirit; and between them and the animal health of the body there is a certain antagonism.

Obviously not a complete antagonism; a body which is unhealthy in the medical sense may cloud or obstruct the spirit. A better word than antagonism is *polarity*—a balance, a tension—and to understand this polarity we must turn to Rudolf Steiner's conception of the threefold structure of the human organism.

He perceived in the human organism (for him it was not theorising) three interwoven systems: he called them the nerves-and-senses system, the blood-and-breathing (or rhythmic) system,

and the metabolic-limb system, concerned with nutrition and the movement of the limbs.

The nerves-and-senses system is the basis of consciousness; we perceive the outer world through the senses and are most conscious in the head, the centre of the “upper man.” At the metabolic pole, in the realm of the “lower man,” we are unconscious. Normally, the metabolic processes of the body go on without our being aware of them; we are unconscious also of the processes which set our limbs in motion. The rhythmic system—in which we are dimly conscious, half-aware of our breathing and the beating of our hearts—mediates between the upper and the lower man.

So the three systems are associated with three degrees of consciousness, from the clear through the dim to the unconscious dark. And also with three soul-powers: the nerves-and-senses system is the basis of thinking, or cognition; the rhythmic system of the ebb and flow of feeling; the metabolic system, of conation, the action of the will.

Now, if clear human consciousness—conscious thinking and the distinctively human ego-consciousness, or consciousness of self—is to find room in the organism, the life-promoting activities of the lower man have to be held back, kept to their own sphere. Not absolutely: the head has to be nourished with blood. But the head consists chiefly of bone and nerve substance: not very much metabolism goes on there. The brain is *relatively* lifeless; it has no power of regeneration after injury. The head is like a cave, washed but not invaded by the surging sea of life; and it is just because the head is thus withdrawn, a bony cavity where *life* is weak, that *consciousness* can light up within it.

If the life-forces of the lower man were to invade the head, we should be as unconscious there as we are in the metabolic system. If the head-forces were to invade and master the metabolic system, its life-sustaining activities would be petrified.

The rhythmic system prevents these invasions. It is a regulating system (Rudolf Steiner always said the heart was not a pump, in the crude, mechanical sense, but a regulator of the circulation), designed to check any tendency of the head-forces or of the metabolic forces towards excess. For both tendencies are always active, and both are essential for human living; but if one or other gains temporary dominance, illness results. So the rhythmic system may be regarded as a source of healing; it is constantly correcting a constant *tendency*

towards illness. And health consists precisely in this regulation: this tension between the form-giving forces of the head system, which press back the life-forces and so clear a space for consciousness, and the life-giving forces of the metabolic system, which nourish the body but would extinguish consciousness if they were allowed. The true picture is not of health at one pole and disease at the other, but of death-forces and life-forces radiating from the two poles, and in the midst the healing rhythm of blood and breathing which maintains human health.

Usually, health is pictured as an idyllic condition of which one might have more and more, with illness and death thrust away as alien, unnatural intruders. This is a false picture; to wish to have nothing to do with illness, and as little as possible to do with death, is really a wish to escape from an essential element in human living. It is like wanting to live only in spring and summer, and rejecting the fall of the leaf. The true picture is of health arising from the healing process which holds in balance the two extremes.

Those to whom Rudolf Steiner's conception of the threefold human organism seems strange, perhaps fantastic, may yet discern some psychological truth, perhaps, in this picture of human health. For human living, in all its aspects, has this same characteristic: it is a perpetual adventure between precipices, a constant wrestle with those "pairs of opposites" whose dynamic interplay makes up the context of our life. And it is no use looking for some haven where the struggle will cease. Unless man constantly wins back lost ground he will be swept over one precipice or the other. But without the struggle he could not live at all; for its rival energies are his own. His holding of the balance is a constantly repeated healing of the illness from which his flesh is never wholly free.

So much for human health. Now we must gain some idea of what social health is to mean. We could apply, as before, a sort of medical test and say that a society will not be healthy unless it functions with a certain efficiency; it must be a going concern, reasonably prosperous, orderly and secure. But that, again, is not enough. For the *raison d'être* of a society is human living; a healthy society must be one in which human needs, physical, social and spiritual, are not starved or crushed. Hence we might expect the pattern of a healthy society to have some relation to the pattern of a healthy human organism; for without some such correspondence, some element in human nature will find no social outlet.

Some relation—but I am not going to draw close parallels between the human organism and the social organism; these can be sometimes illuminating, but they are often confusing and easily deceptive. Nevertheless, it was not far-fetched fancy but quite ordinary observation that first led Rudolf Steiner to speak of society, as well as of human beings, in three-fold terms. One has only to look around to see that every modern society falls broadly into three realms—a spiritual or cultural realm, concerned with the activities which derive from man's inner life; a political realm, concerned with government, law and social relations; and an economic realm, concerned with the production and consumption of commodities.¹ Moreover, there is a relation—not an exact correspondence but a relation—between the three realms of society and the three systems of the human organism, for the activities of the three realms spring from the desires and needs and capacities of human beings. Threefold man creates threefold society out of himself. And he carries into society his own tensions and conflicts—the tensions and conflicts which are part of his life, and inescapable; part, indeed, of his health.

A fundamental tension in society is between anarchy and order. This reflects the tension between man as individual and man as social being. As individual he seeks freedom—freedom to think his own thoughts, obey his own conscience, pursue his own desires. As a social being he seeks companionship, co-operation. On this practical level, he seeks co-operation in order to ease his daily toils and to improve his conditions of life. But also he seeks a refuge from loneliness; he craves freedom and yet fears it. He chafes against the discipline of law and order; yet he accepts it because it makes social life possible. The tension between anarchy and order is also a tension between adventure and home.

The activities of the spiritual realm—religion, science, art, education, medicine, human culture in all its aspects—spring from man as individual. Of course they often involve also a great deal of co-operation, but the essential achievements in this realm require always the presence of a person with the necessary gifts. Any three men of average strength can carry a log, but they will be useless in a school unless they have some gift for teaching; useless in a

¹ It is perhaps worth noting that the Congress of Europe (unofficial but influential), when it met at The Hague in May, 1948, distributed its work among three commissions: cultural, political and economic.

laboratory unless at least one has a scientific gift (the others might then be useful assistants). And in some activities of the spiritual realm—religious searchings, philosophy, most forms of art—the three men would have to separate and go their ways alone. No-one can share with another his inner life.

Hence we can say that activities of the spiritual realm will not contribute to social health unless they are given freedom; otherwise an essential human need will be denied. But to give them freedom is to invoke danger. From out of the individualism of the spiritual realm arise the rebels, the exploiters, the tyrants. Give all these free rein and they will either disrupt society or bend it to the pattern of their private desires.

The activities of the economic sphere depend very largely on co-operation—the division of labour, the exchange of commodities, the combined exertions of men working in teams. Of course they call also, and constantly, for individual talent and initiative; but in this realm the individual cannot get far alone. If society is to be kept going, nourished and enriched, the individual has to accept the discipline of processes and orderings outside himself. But economic co-operation is not merely a response to these practical demands. It does much to meet the human need for fellowship; one of the most satisfying forms of fellowship is partnership in work. It meets also that human need which is the opposite of self-assertion—the need for self-giving. The more co-operative in character is the economic life of a society, the more readily will it meet the need of the individual to give himself to a common enterprise. Hence we can say that the activities of the economic sphere will not contribute to social health, either practically or humanly, unless their keynote is co-operation. A corrective to egoism should come from economic life. But here, too, there are dangers.

The more closely men co-operate in the economic sphere and the more interdependent are their activities, the more intricate becomes the *system* in which they find themselves immersed. The system has to be managed; the control of it gives power to the managers; they may come to resent any independence within the system which disturbs their authority. They can always find reasons why, for the sake of the efficiency and smooth running of the system, this independence must be curbed. So arises the danger that the free co-operation of men who choose to work together may sink towards the forced co-operation of the slave gang. The faceless anonymity of the ant-heap lies at the far end of this road.

A further virtue of economic life, which again has its dangerous side, is that it brings men into partnership not only with one another but with the earth. In working with the raw materials of nature they learn patience, the patience of the farmer, and the engineer's respect for stubborn facts. They learn the importance of accurate measurement and calculation, the need to put speculation to experimental test. By learning these lessons men are able to bring water into the wilderness and make it flower. The danger is that the world they shape with their tools and calculations may become the only world they recognise. In the spiritual realm, then, they will be blind, like moles above ground. Such men, to-day, may gain great influence; they may use it to impose mechanical conceptions and economic valuations on realms of life and spirit, which are blighted by this frost. Or they may recklessly employ their tools to exploit the earth, turning fertility to dust, or to release from nature energies which they cannot control. At the end of this road lies a machine-society, threatened by subterranean fires, with men as the frightened servants of machines.

It is no use trying to banish these dangerous potentialities from the spiritual and economic spheres. The individualism of the spiritual sphere, the co-operation and the technical science of the economic sphere, are essential sources of social nourishment. And each sphere must be left free to develop its own characteristics, or its distinctive contribution will fail. The first step in dealing with the dangers is to recognise them—to recognise how, if either danger gets out of control, a distortion of the human image occurs: the lives of men are pressed into unnatural shapes. The next step is to provide correctives: to establish in the midst of society an influence which will check either danger before it runs to extremes.

This regulating influence *should* flow from the political realm. So far in history governments have always had a class bias; they have mainly represented the interests of a dominant or rising social class. Yet the practice of democracy bears witness to another purpose of government, never fully realised but always pursued. Men assent to governments, even rather bad ones, because they want at the centre of affairs an authority which will give them order and justice; which will enforce rules of social conduct and protect the weak from exploitation by the strong. The ultimate source of justice in a democratic society is the law-making authority—Parliament; one of its prime tasks should be to safeguard the human

person (or, one might say, the human image expressed in the human person) against the oppressive and distorting influences which spring from the individualism of the spiritual sphere and the impersonal collectivism and mechanisation of the economic sphere.

In the spiritual sphere, for example, it should see that freedom is not denied to persons who work outside the orthodox establishments, whether religious, scientific, medical or educational. And that spiritual-cultural activities are not starved, or reserved for the wealthy by the application to them of rigid or grasping economic standards. In the economic sphere it should see that conditions of work and wages are equitable and not inimical to health, and that men are not reduced to the level of tools either by despotic authority or by inhuman processes. And in order to fulfil these tasks—which I can only briefly indicate here—it must stand on its own independent ground and apply its own distinctively human standards and judgments.

If the political, law-making authority assumes heavy and detailed economic responsibilities, it will become confused in purpose, and will be under constant inducement to subordinate its care of the human image to the demands of economic efficiency. If it takes over the administration of spiritual-cultural activities it will be under constant inducement to limit the freedom of individuals in these fields, for the pioneers, the experimenters, and the eccentrics will rank as its opponents and critics. It may tolerate them, but it will not actively support them, for the authority they question will be its own.

In a democracy, political authority is exercised by governments which come and go. Political assemblies, from Parliament downwards, follow a time-rhythm; they have periods of activity and periods of recess; after a certain time they must dissolve and submit to election for a further span. Their activities are usually based on the interplay of parties; one party takes office and rules, while another "goes into opposition." It is no accident that there should be this analogy between the functioning of the political element in society and the functioning of the rhythmic, regulating, healing system in man. For in any realm of life, where active processes are at work, it must be through rhythm that regulation acts. The holding of a balance between living extremes does not consist in finding a null point and establishing a balance once for all; that would reduce the organism to stasis and death. The correction

of excess has to be achieved by a mobile influence which is free to exert itself first in one direction, then in another. In this way the state of balance is never *perfect*; but neither is it overthrown.

Herein lies the value of the party system, which repels many people by its noisy conflicts, its facile oratory, the apparently wasteful friction it engenders by making rivals out of men who should surely be co-operating for the national good. Certainly, the party system as we know it has obvious defects; but more important than these is the means it gives for one party to correct the mistakes and excesses of another. So it becomes possible for change in one direction, according to one set of ideas, to be checked before it has gone to extremes; and this organ of regulation is something that the health of society imperatively requires. The party system, in fact, implies a realistic and salutary recognition that political policies and actions are always imperfect, that even the best-intentioned and most urgently needed reforms carry oppressive or destructive potentialities—seeds of social ill-health—and should therefore submit to correction at regular intervals.

The party system is always abolished by totalitarian régimes. Sure of their own rightness, they cannot admit any need for a healing influence to redeem them from social sin. In practice, these pharasaic pretensions to perfect health bring on chronic disease. The totalitarian flesh is ulcered with concentration camps or forced labour camps; here are confined those opponents and critics which every human society requires. If they are thrust out, repressed, the society becomes inhuman—inhumanly proud on the surface, inhumanly cruel beneath. "No health without healing" is as true of societies as it is of men. And in our modern times the healthy social pattern must be threefold, for only then will it be able to provide, from out of its own rhythmic heart and centre, a healing influence to correct its own excesses and mistakes.

In early times the three social realms are not yet born. They are often foreshadowed in the existence of three classes, or castes, or estates—the nobles (lords spiritual and temporal), the traders, the workers (often slaves). In this sense the threefold idea is very old. But the "lower orders" have no independence; they live under the authority and protection that flow down from the spiritual pole. The authority of the rulers is accepted because they are felt to draw wisdom from higher realms: the priests receive inspiration, the king is anointed and rules by divine right.

This picture changes when men outside the ruling caste come to demand some voice in social affairs. So we get the beginnings of a distinct political realm. Later on—towards the end of the Middle Ages in Western Europe—we find emerging a distinct economic realm, marked by the growing independence of the traders in the towns. So, gradually (I cannot go into details here), the three social realms are born; we see them struggling painfully into existence, confused and distorted, as they are to-day. They are there, around us; but in no society have they yet been harmonised, or even consciously recognised; and the prospect now is that unless they are harmonised the three will merge convulsively back—as in some countries they have done already—into the atavistic, totalitarian one.

In this country, what are the signs? We have left behind the middle-class heyday; a new ruling class, based on the support of the workers and the Trade Unions, is rising to power. Of course, its power is not unchallenged; its rise may be checked and for a time may seem to recede. But many of the far-reaching social changes which are following from its rise will not be reversed, for no party which sought to reverse them could hope to gain office. And they are particularly important changes, because this rise of the "working class" is the last revolution of its kind. No other sub-merged class is left to rise in due course. We are in the midst now of this social revolution: might it lead towards a healthy, threefold order of society, or is it leading away? A few words on the origins of the Labour movement are necessary here.

Fifty years ago the economic sphere had an air of independence which it is now losing. The spiritual sphere also, in that age of liberalism, had a wide measure of unquestioned freedom which is now in decline. But in spite of these appearances our society was far from the threefold pattern. The freedom of the economic sphere was accompanied by oppression and exploitation; the "working class" was shut out from the sun. And the political sphere was not independent; it was dominated by the economic interests of the men of property and wealth. Hence it was not free to discharge its natural function as the source of justice and the protector of human rights.

Against this dominance rose the voice of the Labour movement. At first it was a voice calling simply for justice and fraternity; the

State Socialism of our own day has a different origin. Its chief inspirers were middle-class intellectuals who wanted to take over political power in order to run economic life with planned efficiency. They had a most genuine concern for social justice, but their determining motive was impatience with the disorders of capitalism, its tendency to create unemployment, its chronic booms and slumps. Even without their influence a Labour Party would no doubt have sprung from the Labour movement; the opportunity to form a Labour Government, as the surest way of overcoming the dominance of property interests, would still have been sought. But it was not inevitable that a Labour Government should pin its faith to State Socialism; the economic sphere could have been *socialised*—that is, turned from a field of exploitation into a co-operative enterprise—by other means.³

There is no room here for a critique of State Socialism, but two of its unhealthy features call for remark—its distortion of the idea of justice, and its concentration of power in one social sphere.

Justice should have always an element of freedom playing through it; otherwise it becomes an enforced mechanical equality, one of the most dehumanising forms of tyranny. This means that, so long as exploitation is prevented and rules of fair dealing and open opportunity are enforced, human beings should be left free to find their own levels; and competition, within the rules, must be allowed. If, however, the political State, which should be the guardian of justice, becomes also the great planner and manager of economic life, making itself the arbiter of priorities in most fields—then the element of freedom is driven out of justice, and "what I deserve" comes to mean, "what the State thinks I am worth as its servant." That is the essence of totalitarianism; and State Socialism, if it is to discharge its self-appointed tasks, must always have the tendency to move towards this inhuman extreme.

Now as to the concentration of power. The modern world has been plagued by no worse evil than that of irresponsible power, whether exercised by nations, corporate bodies or individuals. And power nowadays tends always to be irresponsible, for those who wield it seldom recognise any moral order transcending human affairs; and the wielding of it is increasingly divorced from the sobering influence of tradition. The poisons of power are thus

³ As Guild Socialism believed. This true child of the Labour movement died in infancy, supplanted by State Socialism, a bastard of mixed and partly alien parentage.

gaining in virulence ; less than ever, to-day, can a social order be healthy if it is ruled from one centre of unchallengeable strength. Social power needs to be distributed among various centres which check one another—as in the human organism.

In this country we have not reached the stage of making the political State the sole and unchallengeable centre of power, but the trend is in that direction. In pursuit of its faith in political-economic planning, the Socialist State is bringing economic activities increasingly under its ownership and control ; in pursuit of its somewhat mechanical idea of social justice it is reaching out to extend its influence over the spiritual-cultural sphere. The result is a curious distortion of the social picture : I must explain briefly what I mean.

If we form a rough picture of the structure of a threefold social order, we shall find it has some affinity with the picture of threefold man. A threefold society is founded, through its economic realm, on the earth ; its spiritual realm stands free and open, as it were, to the heavens ; and in the midst, mediating between the poles, is its political realm. It is a picture of organic harmony ; of tension and balance ; a picture of health.

The picture of a society moulded by State Socialism is not like that ; it is more like the picture of an inhumanly Fat Man, his political centre in process of absorbing his extremities. He is losing the free use of his limbs ; his head is sinking into his bulging middle. What can be done to remedy this creeping disease—without reverting to the equally distorted social picture of the capitalist past ?

A slimming régime, to reduce the Fat Man's gluttonous centre, is clearly required. This would relieve the State by degrees of its economic burdens (but not of currency control or the Budget), and would entrust them to responsible associations and groups of persons (including representatives of consumer interests) who are directly engaged in the life of the economic sphere. How exactly this might be done is a complicated question which I must pass over here ; one essential is that the economic sphere should be seen not merely as a great machine for producing goods, but as a place where a great deal of human living goes on.

Economic activities draw human beings into intimate relationships with one another and with their work. Unless the human relationships are equitable and fairly harmonious, and unless the work gives some opportunities for responsible initiative, the economic

sphere will be unable—even though it may supply the goods—to fulfil its human function in society. From a human point of view it will wither ; and then the only way to run it will be to plan and bribe it from outside. Democracy, moreover, will become a political fiction, for it needs responsible citizens, and it will not get them if their work gives them no training in responsibility. This training need not be confined to managerial levels ; it can and should be carried in simpler forms right down to the site of the job, so that working teams are entrusted with intelligible tasks and left free to organise them in their own way.

This kind of socialisation is harder than State Socialism to introduce—it is always easier and quicker to centralise than to decentralise—but it is the only way to humanise the economic sphere ; and also the only way to disperse those power-toxins which are bound to accumulate if political and economic power are concentrated in one swollen organ.

As regards the Fat Man's other trouble, the declining independence of his spiritual-cultural life, the practical needs are rather simpler. The freedoms of the spiritual sphere—we have a good many still in this country—require to be not only defended and maintained, but enlarged. For instance, we should aim at eventually putting education on a footing which would keep its doors open to all but would make it independent, no longer administered by political authorities. Of course this must be a distant goal ; the important thing is to see the need for it, and to move towards it by whatever steps are practicable at any moment.

One reason for the present decline of spiritual liberties is fear. When people are bewildered, frightened, anxious about the future, they look to some authority for protection. To-day they are inclined to look to the most obviously powerful authority, the national State. The Fat Man's swollen centre is partly a response to the perils of the times. Like an endangered snail, he draws in his limbs and sinks his head into his body ; he mobilises the resources of his organism to build himself an armoured shell. But the dangers are not reduced—far from it. These Fat Men—these swollen national States—are much too aggressively frightened of one another ever to agree. It is human beings who agree, when they meet on common ground. They cannot meet if they are penned behind the Fat Men's frontiers, so that all the most important communications between them are in effect communications between Fat Men. To liberate

spiritual life and economic life from political control is one essential step towards easing international tensions and enabling human intercourse to flow freely through natural channels. The Fat Men are diseased, and so, inevitably, are their relationships.

The world is riven by campaigns for ideals and absolutes; the men of peace, the mediators, are murdered by fanatics with a burning faith in the necessary rightness of some cause. Whole societies are dedicated to the promulgation of some creed. Before men destroy themselves by violence they are driven mad, and to-day the violence springs from a century or two of belief that men are under no judgment but their own. Science is held to have exposed the view that man is a fallen being, fallen out of the moral order of the universe; and equally the view that any such moral order can exist. The human voice speaks into the empty spaces and the vast indifferent distances, and nothing but a radar echo returns. So, in refuge from this apparently alien universe, men worship their own gods. The promise of these gods is that once certain enemies are destroyed, the age of human triumph will begin; one more scapegoat will carry away the last sin.

Challenging this outlook is another, its opposite; this holds that fallen man can do nothing to redeem himself, or to redeem fallen nature, by his works on earth. Those who take this view are confined to the pulpit; their voice rings out in the darkening cathedral, summoning to judgment whoever listens; but the men of violence are free to seize the town.

The right view of man is that he is sick, but not unto death. He is well enough to work, and he has work to do. He should pursue his work, a work of learning as well as acting, with hope and patience and humility; there are helpers with him in the field. And this is the view he should take also of his society. His need is for a society which can learn from its mistakes; not an ideal society, proud of its finality and perfection, but a society which recognises its weakness and dependence and yet has faith in its capacity to sow and reap.

At one pole this society will recognise its dependence on the heavens; it will cherish spiritual freedom in order that its mind may be open to the winds. From this pole it will receive the unpredictable, disturbing impulses which kindle human genius and create the social future. At the other pole it will recognise its dependence on the earth; it will seek here for co-operative ways which give the work a social purpose and enable its fruits to be fairly

distributed. And here it will respect its heritage from the past; it will feel responsibility for husbandry.

In the middle realm, the realm of citizenship and politics, the feeling will be one of responsibility of man for man.

Such a threefold society will be constantly exposed to illness, for its spiritual freedom, a revolutionary force, will penetrate it through and through. And the mastery of natural environment, the science and technology, which arise from its other pole, will carry their precise methods of calculation and their dangerously potent tools into all realms, a mechanising and enslaving force. Moreover, the keys of order and justice which are held in the political realm are keys of power; power cannot be exercised without provoking some resistance and conflict, and it can always be abused.

But from the tension of opposites, the refusal of absolutes and the recognition of weakness, will come a means of correcting aberrations and restoring the balance before it is overthrown. This is the threefold pattern which preserves the human image; the pattern we should look for as the mark of a society which is responding to the demands of present and future time.

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