

AN APPROACH TO CONTEMPORARY QUESTIONS
IN THE LIGHT OF ANTHROPOSOPHY

The Golden Blade

SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE: A WAY OF LIFE
RUDOLF STEINER

✓ MOUNTAIN AND CITY: A STUDY OF THE IMAGES IN
"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE"
A. C. HARWOOD

THE EXPERIENCE OF BIRTH AND DEATH IN CHILDHOOD
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ADAM BITTLESTON

BETWEEN SEA AND LAND
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A Review by Owen Barfield of the first volume of
Briefe von Rudolf Steiner (Rudolf Steiner's Letters).

Edited by Arnold Freeman and Charles Waterman

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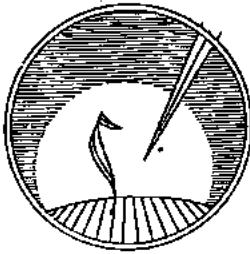
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Anthroposophy, a way of thought rather than a body of dogma, springs from the work and teaching of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). He spoke of it as "a path of knowledge, to guide the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe."

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."

SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE: A WAY OF LIFE

RUDOLF STEINER

A Lecture given at The Hague on November 16, 1923¹

THE road that leads to a knowledge and understanding of the spiritual world differs in many respects from the method of knowledge that meets with general acceptance to-day.

As I have explained on other occasions, not only is it possible in our time to travel on this road, but there is in the man of the present day a deep need—yes, a hunger—for knowledge of the supersensible. Certain preparatory inner experiences are, as you know, required in order to awaken in man the hitherto slumbering consciousness of the spiritual world and of the eternal in his own being. Man cannot, therefore, follow this path of knowledge without its affecting him in his innermost soul. Here we have at once a radical difference from the way of cognition to which we are accustomed.

Consider for a moment the scientific knowledge we acquire to-day by the activity of the intellect—and all present-day knowledge is so acquired, whether it be based on observation or on experiment. *Where*, to begin with, is this knowledge? For the most part, in books, in writing. The path of knowledge is in consequence well-defined, and man has continually to accept—and is often glad to accept—the limits marked out for recognised knowledge. How readily, when entering into some question of practical life, a man will defer to books—or shall we say, for it sounds a little better, will seek the requisite knowledge along purely scientific lines! This knowledge once acquired, he is, of course, ready to be himself—to be man—again. He has no wish to remain, *in life*, in the mood that accepts without question, maintaining even with a certain pride:

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

it has been scientifically proved. . . . When anyone brings forward something he has discovered out of his own experience, it will frequently happen that one who is *au fait* in scientific matters will immediately reply: But that does not tally with what is already known and proved, with what has been established as scientific fact. Knowledge has become severed from direct personal experience, so much so indeed that it is regarded as genuine only if acquired and experienced quite apart from any relation to what springs from the heart of man.

The path of knowledge which leads to a recognition of the spiritual world and of the eternal in the human being has quite another character. It calls upon the personal in man; he cannot so much as take one step upon it without heart and soul being directly concerned. And I want to-day to speak of the results for the life of man when knowledge is in this way brought into immediate connection with the personal in the human being.

Knowledge of the spiritual world is not just a continuation or extension of the knowledge that prevails to-day; rather does it imply a change in the whole way of experiencing knowledge.

Let us look a little more closely at a distinctive feature of the knowledge that has made such advances in our day and generation. Do not think I want to criticise this method of knowledge. It has achieved a very great deal on its own ground, and has brought to humanity quite remarkable blessings of a material kind, although it must be admitted that these are, in the present age of civilisation, somewhat heavily cancelled out! Present-day knowledge has, throughout, this characteristic: it starts from the assumption that things are either "true" or "untrue", and sets out to decide between the alternatives by the exercise of the intellect. We make a point, do we not, of being logical and of basing our conclusion on the facts of experience. Once we have come to see that some scientific statement is true or untrue, then it stands there before us in its truth or untruth and our personality has very little concern with it. We can of course—and should—be filled with enthusiasm for the truth, and turn with loathing from error and falsehood; but if we compare our personal relation to the scientific findings of our time as regards their truth and falsehood with other relations of life, we find a considerable difference.

Let me take a simple, practical example. When we satisfy our hunger, we are doing something in which we are ourselves personally

involved; the satisfied hunger cannot be said to stand before us as something objective to ourselves. Whereas when we come to a conclusion between truth and untruth in the realm of science we seek rather to keep our personality out of the decision. If yesterday we were in error on a certain matter, and to-day are no longer so, the implication is, we have arrived at a conclusion, but in doing so we have not essentially changed in our personal being. If, on the other hand, we have eaten something we never tasted before, and have enjoyed it, then we are not quite the same as we were.

Now it will be found that the concepts "true" and "untrue", "true" and "false", become changed when we begin to have immediate experience of the truths of spiritual science. As we gradually find our way on this new path of knowledge, we stop saying: This is true, that is false. The criterion holds good for the material world; there we can rightly let it be our guide. Few people, however, are aware of its origin. If we trace back the word "true" in the various languages, we make an interesting discovery. The abstract concept it denotes to-day is comparatively new; it is a product of evolution. In earlier times, anything to which man felt he owed acknowledgement and assent was said to be "what the Gods willed." The world was divided for man into what the Gods have willed and what the Gods have not willed. In many languages the word "true" still retains this older meaning as well. "True" meant "true to the Divine Order"; the abstract meaning came later. When the intellect took command in the field of knowledge, men forgot the origin of the word "true". And so to-day we have this completely impersonal relation to knowledge.

The new way of knowledge, however, leads us again to associate something actual and vital with what we assent to or reject. In spiritual science we are not content to say of something that it is true or correct; we ascribe to it a *quality*, an effectual quality. We speak of knowledge being sound, wholesome—or unwholesome, and to be discarded. The concepts "true" or "correct", and "untrue" or "incorrect", which are really valid only for the physical world, are replaced by the concepts "sound" and "unsound". We are thereby obliged to come into a nearer, more personal relation with the whole of knowledge. For we must needs regard as desirable what is sound and wholesome, we incline to it; on the other hand, we turn away from, we reject, so far as we are able, what is unsound or unhealthy. And as we begin to discern in the field of knowledge

whether ideas enrich life or impoverish it, strengthen and aid life, or render it sick and feeble, we begin to realise how intimate is the connection of ideas with life. The knowledge of the present day we approach rather as we do a person to whom we are more or less indifferent, with whom we have merely a conventional relation. Not so with the Spiritual Science I am representing here. We approach it in the way we would a friend whom we love.

As we come to apprehend the truths of the pre-earthly life of man—the life he had as a being of soul and spirit in a purely spiritual world—or as we take our way into the realms of the spiritual world through which man lives between death and new birth, we begin to feel deeply connected with these worlds and with all that they contain; we feel impelled to unite our very being with what we recognise as sound and healthy knowledge, giving us a sound, healthy outlook on life, while on the other hand we naturally reject and cast behind us views that we cannot help seeing are unhealthy, unsound.

Let me illustrate my point by comparison once again with a familiar everyday experience. Normally, man takes nourishment, and this, when it has undergone change inside him, enables him to replace what he has used up in his body; and in this metamorphosis of the means of nourishment man has a feeling of well-being. Conditions, however, may arise, owing to which he is unable to take food—perhaps because his organism is not in a state to digest it, or for some other reason. When this is so, man feeds on what is in his own body; he begins, so to say, to devour himself. Certain illnesses are associated with this condition. This is not unlike what happens with us in the pursuit of knowledge. As we gradually acquire knowledge of the spiritual world, we come to feel how, through such knowledge, we are being brought together with the spiritual world, we are becoming one with it; we are finding our way to the Gods, and to our own immortal soul, finding our way to what we shall experience in the spiritual world when we have passed through the gate of death, and to what we experienced there before we came down to earth. It is almost as though we had offered up our own existence, surrendered it in devotion to the world; but that thereby our life had become richer, inwardly richer. We have become the world, but in so doing we begin to apprehend ourselves for the first time in our full human inwardness. We discover that the whole being and existence of man depends on his coming together with the world in this way. Similarly, too, we learn to understand

how the lack or neglect of such truths is like having to live in the world without the organs for receiving nourishment, driven to feed on our own body.

It is different on the intellectual plane. Here we can dispute and argue about idealism and materialism, and so forth; to one we may feel kindly disposed—to another perhaps not, but we do not suffer on that account; none of them affects us deeply. But when we have learned to apprehend sound spiritual truths, then ideas that have a materialistic orientation give us pain; for we know, such truths leave man to feed upon himself.

Now we shall find that the experience I have described enables us to distinguish spiritual truths in yet another way, for it brings home to us that truth is related to love, that healthy and sound knowledge is related to selflessness in man—not the selflessness that loses the self but that leads rather to the possession of the self in the true sense. When man has learned to go out of himself and into the world, becoming in this way not empty but filled with world content, then it is that he finds his true manhood.

Devotion, loving devotion to the spiritual facts of life, becomes a characteristic of one who is able to receive spiritual knowledge. We do not, as a rule, find that the pursuit of purely intellectual knowledge has any specific effect on character; but when a man has probed to the heart of spiritual knowledge, he knows that he cannot apprehend such knowledge without its affecting his character, without its entering—to speak in a paradox—into the flesh and blood of his soul, developing in him an inclination to selflessness, to love. He comes also to understand that when man receives knowledge that lacks this health-giving impulse, it drives him—spiritually speaking—to feed on himself, and from this he can learn the true nature of egoism.

The effect upon character is one of the most important results that can accrue from spiritual knowledge. Abstract intellectual knowledge is like an artificial root; it has been constructed by the intellect—no plant can grow from it. This is true of all the scientific knowledge that men respect and revere to-day, useful though it be, and by no means to be disparaged. From a real root grows a real plant; and from a real knowledge, whereby man can unite his spirit with the Spirits of the World, grows little by little the complete man who knows what true selflessness—selfless love—is, and what egoism is, and from this understanding derives impulses to act and

work in life—the impulse, where it is right, to be selfless; or again, where he perhaps has need to draw forth something from his own being in preparation for life—there, openly, without any disguise, to develop egoism.

A certain clairvoyance will be found to enter into this self-observation, and into the way it is led over into deed and action. From the root of spiritual knowledge springs the plant of the higher man, the man of soul and spirit. Spiritual knowledge leads therefore quite naturally and inevitably to morality. As regards present-day knowledge, we tend to be proud of the fact that it has no connection with morality or ethics. We assume as a matter of course that we have to examine the inorganic processes in Nature in accordance with their laws, looking in them for cause and effect and not expecting to find in them any ethical working. We boast that we can even go on to apply these methods to *living* processes, to our study of the plant, of the animal and of the human being, allowing ourselves to concede the presence of a moral element only when we come to consider the deeper impulses that rise up in human hearts and souls; impulses of which, however, we cannot say that they are able to demonstrate their independent existence by accomplishing the transition to objective reality.

Knowledge of the spirit, on the other hand, leading as it does to an intensive development of the experience of selflessness, of that loving devotion to the matter in hand, without which spiritual knowledge is unattainable, and on the other hand to a fine perception of the nature of egoism, brings us right into the moral world-order. The moral world-order begins to be for us an immediate reality. Let us examine a little how this comes about.

We begin to speak no longer merely in an abstract way of a pre-earthly life of man, but actually to look into the spiritual world in which we lived before we descended to Earth, even as we look out with our physical eyes on our physical surroundings; and we find that we are surrounded there by beings who never take on a physical body, just as here in the physical world we have around us beings who have, like ourselves, a physical body. The spiritual world and its beings become actual and objective; we begin to be familiar with them.

What is the secret of our bodily existence on earth? Even as through the years of childhood, from birth onward, we are continually being impelled, unconsciously or half consciously, to find our way

into our body, to grow increasingly one with it, so do we in like manner, throughout our physical life on earth, gradually approach the world, feeling our way towards it by means of our physical organs. When we are active and creative, we—so to speak—lose ourselves in our body; soul and spirit are surrendered to the body and we lose consciousness of them. The content of the world is communicated to us through our bodily nature. Materialism is quite right as far as earthly consciousness is concerned, for we are obliged to make use of the body as long as we remain in the earthly consciousness, and so have to be content with perceiving only what is bodily. If, however, man wants to comprehend the spiritual world and his own supersensible being, he has to undergo in himself a development wherein the body acts as a hindrance. For the body would wrench us away from the spiritual world, would alienate us from it, driving us back again and again upon ourselves and our own egoity; whereas in spiritual knowledge we have to come right out of ourselves—rather as we do when we love another human being. And in so far as we become able to do this, a deeply significant truth begins to dawn upon us, namely, that man passes through repeated earthly lives.

As a matter of fact, many of the feelings and impulses that we carry in our soul are there as a result of earlier lives on earth; only we do not observe them as such because we remain in our body. Suppose we meet someone, and the meeting leads to a friendship that alters the whole course of our life. When we look back over the earlier years, we discover with the eye of the spirit what we could never find by the aid of bodily vision alone: namely, that our whole life up to the moment of meeting him was a search for that person. One who is already a little older and looks back in this way is able to see his life as the working out of a plan; he recognises how, when he was quite a little child, his life took a direction that was to bring about eventually the meeting with this friend. We can go further in this kind of observation of life and discover that all we do, though it may seem to result from the working of earthly physical forces, is in reality guided from elsewhere. We come in fact to recognise that the life we are now living is dependent on earlier lives on earth. And between these have been also lives in a spiritual world.

Now we can come to a knowledge of the other lives we have lived on earth only when we learn to imbue with love the faculty of cognition. It is by no means so easy as some people think, to discover the man we were! For he is a complete stranger to us now.

Only a selfless, love-imbuéd faculty of cognition can grasp this other person, so that he enters into our consciousness.

This is how it is with all stages of higher, spiritual knowledge. Our knowledge has to become a loving knowledge, intimately bound up with our personality, a knowledge that simply cannot *be* at all without our personality taking part in it. And as we grow into this larger world, and learn to look beyond birth and beyond death, to look also beyond and behind the world of the senses—for in the plant, animal, and mineral kingdoms we begin to behold beings, spiritually active beings—as we do this, we come into a kingdom of reality, where the ethical impulses that inhere in our knowledge have place. I will give you an example.

Destiny, we say, is hard to bear. So little good seems often to result from actions that spring from the highest motives, whilst others that flow from evil motives reap marvellous success! How is this? The reason is that this physical world of the senses, notwithstanding that we have taken for ourselves a fragment of it to form, as it were, a garment for our souls, has in it no moral impulses. The moral and ethical impulses that are behind our actions have no place there; they are wiped away out of whatever we do or make in the physical world; the nearest approach to moral working is a purely formal compensatory effect. But this physical world is permeated throughout with *spirit*; we carry our moral or immoral actions into the world of the spirit. And here, even as we found that “true” comes to mean for us sound or healthy, we recognise that when man devotes himself to moral truth, he becomes in his inner being, strong, well developed; whereas when he gives himself up to error he becomes a cripple in soul and spirit.

In the present cycle of evolution this does not find expression in the physical body (there we carry the results of what we did and achieved in our *previous* life on earth); but when we have laid down our physical body and gone through the gate of death, then there is no longer anything to prevent our soul and spirit from assuming the physiognomy we have acquired from the ethical quality of our experience. There in the spiritual world we, as soul and spirit, are strong and well-developed, or crippled and weak. Then, later on, comes the time for us to resume a physical body; and in forming it we build, from within, our own destiny. For we may, on the one hand, be able, having brought from an earlier life a harmonious soul-and-spirit nature, to form the new body in perfect order and

proportion, so that we can employ it in good and useful activity; or, coming into incarnation, as it were, as a moral cripple, we may find ourselves able only to form and guide the new body in a clumsy and awkward fashion, from embryo up to adult age. And now this inner destiny becomes our outer destiny. For it is clear to an unprejudiced observation that whatever befalls us from without is closely connected with what we ourselves have prepared as our inner destiny. In all our intercourse with the world outside, we make use of the body as an instrument, and according as we use it skilfully and well, or badly and clumsily, we occasion, at any rate in part, the events that befall us. And then, in the further lives that follow, come new compensation and balancing-out. Thus in the spiritual world we find the formative forces that belong to our moral life. The moral world becomes for us a reality.

We see how an ethical impulse cannot in one earth-life effect a change in the physical body, but when it passes over into the next life on earth, can work there quite definitely as a health-giving influence, no less truly than heat works in the physical world, or light, or electricity. That we imagine the moral world-order to be no more than a man-made abstraction is due to the fact that we take cognisance only of the physical world, tracing everything back there from effect to cause; we can, however, equally well recognise this law at work in the spiritual world; only there we have to trace the effects, as they show themselves in one life, back to causes in an earlier life on earth. In other words, we need to know the *level* on which the law of cause and effect has to be applied to human destiny.

Now all that sounds very well, someone might say, but as things are, men have not this spiritual knowledge of which you speak; only a researcher in the spirit can see into the spiritual world—others must be content with the words and ideas in which he clothes his perceptions. To this I would reply: To paint a picture, one must be an artist; but to experience the beauty and inner content of the picture one need not be an artist, one has only to approach the picture with a sincere and open mind. It is the same with spiritual knowledge. In order to “paint” in ideas, one must be a researcher in the spirit; but once the picture is painted, it stands there for others to behold. And if these, who are not themselves “artists”, are free from prejudice and are sincere seekers after truth, they will receive health and healing from the descriptions of the spiritual world.

We are actually, at the present day, in a peculiar position in this respect. Spiritual Science, in the sense we understand it here, is, comparatively speaking, a new thing in our civilisation. The person who is able to represent it from immediate experience, stands alone; and all he can do is to clothe it in words and ideas, and impart these to his fellow men. It might even be thought that what he has to say concerns himself alone! In any case, that is how the position is to-day. One earnestly hopes it will soon alter, for Spiritual Science has power to quicken and awaken man inwardly. As things still are, however, mankind remains to-day a recipient only of spiritual knowledge.

For him who *acquires* spiritual knowledge, the case is very different. There comes a point where he has to undergo a pain with which no other pain can be compared. It is at the moment when he passes beyond his own spiritual experience between birth and death and launches out into the vast ocean of eternity in which we shall be when we have gone through the gate of death, and in which we were before we descended through birth to physical life on earth. An indescribable pain is involved in leaving, on the path of knowledge, the world of the physical senses, and entering the world of the spirit. The whole being is, as it were, steeped in pain. And now a remarkable thing happens. At first the higher knowledge seizes hold of the traveller in his entire being; but then, it wrests itself free of him with unbelievable force and certainty.

Since we have set out in this lecture to show where the personal has place in the path of knowledge, you will allow me, I think, to describe at this point what is, on the face of it, an entirely personal matter. As we shall find, however, what seems most personal in it has nevertheless an impersonal character. It is an experience that can befall anyone who comes into a similar situation.

To begin with, as I said, the knowledge of the spiritual takes hold of the entire human being. Ordinary intellectual knowledge is a concern of the head, the intellect. It is in the head alone that we have to exert ourselves. True, the acquisition of this kind of knowledge often obliges one to sit still for long hours at a stretch, so that one may be glad to break off for sheer weariness! It is nevertheless true to say that ordinary knowledge does not call upon the whole human being. But if we try to acquire, with the aid of the intellect alone, knowledge of the spiritual and supersensible, it evades us like a dream; its great and far-reaching conceptions slip from

our grasp. When we have, so to speak, pressed forward to the spiritual world, when we have passed what is spoken of as the Guardian of the Threshold, we have the greatest trouble to bring to consciousness—not the content; *that* one can acquire as a matter of knowledge—but the experience.

It is a fact that very many people become able, comparatively quickly, to have experiences in the spiritual world. But presence of mind is needed to grasp these experiences. With the majority of persons it happens that before they can give their attention to some experience, it is gone again. Presence of mind is altogether indispensable for the attainment of spiritual knowledge, as you will know from my book *How to attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. When one succeeds in acquiring knowledge of things that are beyond space and beyond time, they seem like a dream, and only with the greatest difficulty can one lift them on to a higher level of consciousness. They vanish away like a dream if one tries to grasp them with the head alone.

Now it is important for one who speaks about the spiritual world in ideas to have always the spiritual world before him as he speaks; and he can acquire the habit of standing in this way within the spiritual world only if his whole being participates in the knowledge. Everyone will find his own way of doing this. I, for example, find it necessary to fix the results of spiritual knowledge by jotting down either brief notes or symbolical drawings. I need hardly say, I mean by this nothing of a mediumistic nature, but a perfectly conscious and deliberate action. Putting down some note at once ensures that the activity is not confined to the head alone but is shared in by the whole human being. It is of no consequence whether later on one refers to these notes: the point is, to *make* them. I can assure you I have used up whole cartloads of notebooks in this way and never looked at them again. What has been seen in the spiritual world is more strongly retained when the experience is allowed to flow into an impulse of will that leads to the activity of writing; for ultimately, all depends on experiencing the truths of the spiritual world—let me say—“organically”, experiencing them with one’s whole being.

Initiation-knowledge of the present day has perforce another characteristic, which need not continue indefinitely and was not present in earlier and other paths to initiation. I mean the following.

Suppose one has produced some spiritual knowledge, and later on has occasion to come back to it. If one is, let us say, as old as I am, and produced some 40 years ago much of what one has to communicate, then as far as the inner spiritual activity is concerned, it is almost as though one had to deal with something one was reading for the first time in an old book. Please understand me aright. Knowledge one has oneself produced many years ago becomes as strange to one as a book one has never seen before. It is not remote in the way that we feel abstract knowledge to be remote, but spiritually it severs itself from one. A man who stands outside initiation-knowledge, may feel how this knowledge, when he receives it, becomes united with his very being; but for the one who has produced it, it separates itself from him; he feels as if he had before him another human being.

Many a book, I assure you, by one or other of our friends, strikes me as more familiar than the books I wrote myself in earlier years. In fact, I read these only when I must: for instance, to revise them for a new edition. The teaching of the spiritual researcher severs itself from him and becomes objective; he is quite unable to feel any particular pleasure or satisfaction in it—as one might naturally expect in other circumstances! This has nothing to do with the knowledge as such; it arises only from the fact that one is obliged in the present day to attain the knowledge in solitude. In earlier times, when the path of initiation knowledge was far more instinctive and less conscious, it could not rightly be pursued in solitude. There were societies for the fostering of initiation knowledge. Such societies exist even in our time, but they merely carry on a tradition. If to-day one speaks from direct personal experience in knowledge, one is compelled to stand alone.

How was it arranged in societies of this kind? And how will it be in the future, when knowledge of the spiritual will be received again into civilisation and be called upon to enter once more into all the practical spheres of life? For spiritual knowledge will be able to do this, when once man begins to take hold of it. The societies of which we have spoken were ordered in the following way. An agreement was come to, freely and willingly on the part of all, that one of their number should undertake a particular field of knowledge, another another field, and so on. One, for example, would concentrate all his powers on inquiring into the influence exercised upon the life of man by the world of stars, another on investigating

the path leading from pre-earthly existence into the sphere of the earth.

This plan made it possible for the several fields of knowledge to be investigated in detail. For if it takes ten years to get to know something of the influence of the stars on human life, it takes, not ten years, but a lifetime to explore in detail even a few steps of the way from pre-earthly into earthly life. There was accordingly good reason for distributing among different persons the several realms of knowledge. Each made a deep study of the field of knowledge upon which he set himself to concentrate, and for the rest, allowed himself to take the knowledge from his companions. He had thus the double experience; he knew what it was to produce knowledge himself inwardly, and he had also the experience of receiving knowledge he had not himself produced.

When men learn to be more open-hearted and to approach knowledge with real warmth of soul, then it will afford them the same kind of experience one may have from the painting of a great artist. Man's own natural feeling for reality will enable him to take hold of what lives in the idea he has not himself produced; he will have a direct inner experience of the idea. He will undergo also the pain and suffering of which I told you—all the phases of inner personal experience that come from meeting spiritual knowledge face to face. This can be achieved by one who receives spiritual truths; he can grasp them, take hold of them with the entire forces of his soul. Such an experience is, however, in large measure denied to the spiritual researcher of the present day; he has to forgo it in so far as he produces the knowledge.

The fruits of spiritual knowledge can accrue to those who receive the truths with warmth of heart. And within the societies of earlier times provision was always made for the receiving of knowledge. When a particular field of spiritual research was allotted to one member—or the member chose it for himself—then, as far as that field was concerned, he went without the receiving which gives so much help and enrichment to life; on the other hand he experienced the blessing of receiving, in that he received knowledge from his companions who undertook other fields of research. Something of the kind must come again in the future.

Do not think I speak out of a desire to attach importance to my own experiences; I want rather to draw your attention to the fact that in order to reap the fruits of spiritual knowledge, one does

not need to have produced the knowledge oneself. Let a man follow the exercises—in meditation, concentration, etc.—described in my book, *How to Attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. Then, if he succeeds in rousing himself to inner activity of soul, and takes but a few first steps towards an understanding of life, his heart will be open to receive what the spiritual researcher can give, and what he receives will unite itself with him in quite an intimate manner, for it speaks directly to the personal in him, and he will find the way, as personal man, to the deep sources of life whence the eternal in his own being is derived; he will enter into the experiences man has in the spiritual world before his life on earth, and into those also that await man when he has passed through the gate of death and come again into the spiritual world. And as he makes this knowledge his own, a second higher man will grow up within him.

On this path of knowledge we learn to feel, as it were, at home in the spiritual world in the way we feel at home in the world of nature, with its secure and stable laws. The fact that we have muscles and bones unites us with nature; our own physical nature makes us feel at home in the physical nature of the world around. And when we begin to apprehend the reality of spiritual conceptions and to see their content as part of the spiritual world, then we begin to feel at home in a divine spiritual world—even as with our body we feel at home in the world of the senses. And it is this feeling at home in the spiritual world that is so important, for thereby we attain to a knowledge of ourselves as having eternal spiritual existence in the eternal divine spiritual world.

For not only is it true that mankind in general is rooted in a spiritual world. Every single human being, just through that which is most personal in him, just through that which he, as an individual, can experience by being on earth in a particular place and at a particular time, is rooted in, and belongs to, a spiritual world which bears the stamp of eternity. As we come to realise this, we begin to feel as though a voice were calling to us: "Make not yourself a cripple in soul and spirit!" For not merely man in general, but each single human being, is relied upon to play his part.

It is also through what is most individual and personal in him that man finds his way to religion, and to all true artistic experience. Hence it is that Spiritual Science leads directly into a religious mood of life. You will find abundant evidence in our literature

of how Christianity is deepened, and can stand forth in its true light and in its true being, when we try to understand the personal experiences of the Christ Who appeared in a personal form.

Attaining thus by a personal path to our own eternal being, we know how to give personality its right place and meaning in the world, conscious that each one of us is needed and reckoned upon as single personality. Knowledge of the spirit has become for us a human and personal path in life. We feel inwardly seized and quickened by the content of spiritual knowledge, in the same way that our body is seized and quickened by the power of the blood.

The meaning we have been led to discern in our personal, our individual existence, may perhaps be best conveyed in a picture. A meeting has been called, and we are summoned to attend the meeting, because it is important for just that to be said in it which we alone can contribute. Suppose we take some action which has the result of preventing our being present. We are not there; we—who are expected, who are looked for—do not appear.

Whatever we do and accomplish under the impulse of spiritual knowledge serves, we shall find, to enrich our life; we begin indeed to recognise how our path in life leads always in a direction where we are needed and expected. In the world where spiritual beings are at work, creating and fashioning our individual existence, we begin to see that we are counted upon to do our part, and we understand that the only way we can fulfil what is expected of us and join with our companions in a higher spiritual world, is by following this personal path of life into the spiritual world, and finding within us, as we tread the path, the higher eternal man, the soul and spirit of our being.

Thus does this human knowledge of the spirit bring us face to face with the challenge: Are we going to arrive in that place where it is given to human beings to unite in a common experience of the spiritual—for we are expected there, we are awaited—or, having passed through many births and deaths, shall we come at length to a point where the word of reproach rings out: You were expected, and you did not come!

Translated by Mary Adams.

FAIR MOUNTAIN AND FINE CITY

A STUDY OF THE IMAGES IN *The Merchant of Venice*

A. C. HARWOOD

ALL the evidence of Mythology, Fairy Tale, and tradition points to the fact that mankind had a pictorial consciousness before developing an intellectual one. Pallas Athene was earlier than philosophy, and the wrong-doer saw the Erinyes pursuing him centuries before the word conscience was conceived or used. Our concepts were indeed born by a process of abstraction from concrete picture and experience. Men knew that wine was good and giants were big, long before they could speak of quality and quantity. The dwellers on islands saw and felt their remoteness from the world long before anyone thought of the idea of isolation.

Our modern abstract and colourless words are the whitened bones of a once living and heartfelt vocabulary. But this ossifying of speech represents only one half of that great change in consciousness which has precipitated our technical civilisation. The other half, its corollary, is less well recognised and less easy to describe. It is a question of human vision, and may perhaps best be illustrated by reference to the starry constellations. A single star considered alone in the heavens is as much an abstraction as the idea of position or duration.

The two kinds of mentality, the modern mind making a fanciful picture based on sense experience, and the mind which sees a spiritual vision beyond the boundary of sense experience, have been illustrated by William Blake in a well-known saying: "What, it will be questioned, when the sun rises, do you not see a round disk of fire somewhat like a guinea? O no, no, no, I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host crying, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty. I question not my Corporeal or Vegetative Eye any more than I question a window concerning sight. I look through it and not with it." The difference is whether you look with the eye or through

the eye. To-day we look with the eye and see the disc of fire "somewhat like a guinea."

This may, perhaps, seem remote from the time of Shakespeare, but in fact the modern abstract consciousness is very modern indeed, and the remnants at least of the older pictorial consciousness survived well into the Renaissance. There was still at least an instinctive feeling for the "correspondences" (of which Professor Tillyard has written) and the knowledge of them was based on the old pictorial vision, not on sense perception.

Sometimes, indeed, sense perception will help us to understand some of these old connections between diverse phenomena. The sight of gold may at once suggest that this metal is an expression on earth of the power of the sun, and the pleasure in seeing it, which most people instinctively feel, may help us to imagine that it is also connected with the heart, the "bosom's Lord", which is to the rest of the body what the sun is to the lesser lights of heaven. But we should hardly go so far as to give gold as a heart medicine (as Chaucer's Doctor did), merely because of what we would describe as a fanciful feeling based on a similarity of colour. Colour might also associate silver with the moon, or iron with Mars. But nothing in our senses (I use the phrase equivocally) would make us attribute lead to Saturn, or tin to Jupiter. Such connections were established in ancient times when men saw a picture of correspondent character shining through planet and metal; and not only through planet and metal, but also through herb and tree, and the parts of the body and fishes and animals, and the days of the week and the hours of the day, until everything became a mirror reflecting the qualities of other things, and every organism—man above all—was a picture in miniature of the whole great universe.

You may not believe in these "correspondences", but most people in Shakespeare's time still did, and you will miss a great deal in the plays unless you understand them. They are particularly important in *The Merchant of Venice*, where they play as necessary and pervasive a part in the plot as the ghost does in *Hamlet* or magic in *The Tempest*. For the play (as Mr. C. S. Lewis has pointed out in an admirable essay on *Hamlet*) is really about metals. But I think it is about metals which are not merely metals, but metals which evoke corresponding human and cosmic qualities; about gold, which is also the sun in the heavens, and kings who are the sun in

their kingdoms, and the heart which is sun and king of the body, and the blood which carries the light into all parts of the world of man, and love and mercy and generosity which are the virtues of the heart and the glory of kings and the likeness of the sun in human life. For all these things lived as neighbours in the mind of Shakespeare and his audience. Each evoked the other; none could be thought of except as endowed with the qualities of the rest.

Gold, therefore, is to be sought for in many places and diverse spheres. If there were no such metal on the earth, we would still know its essential quality in the light of the sun, in the attributes of kings, in the human heart and its virtues. From these we could invent or imagine the metal, even if God had not chosen to place a physical representative of it into the earth itself. But the actual metal is the lowest form of gold. It is to be loved, not for itself, but for the qualities which it represents. The metal fulfils its real mission when it is the servant of kingly generosity and mercy. *The Merchant of Venice* is a play of contrasts in the uses of the power of gold.

The more obvious contrast is, of course, between the Jew Shylock and the Christian Antonio. The Jew makes the metal his god, and confounds dead substance with living flesh. His justification for the increase of the metal by interest is taken from the breeding of the parti-coloured lambs by Jacob, and to Antonio's objection that gold and silver are not ewes and rams, he replies, "I make it breed as fast." We have here the instinctive medieval feeling against usury. Cows produce calves, and sheep produce lambs, but metal does not beget metal. Shylock repeats the confusion between the living and the dead in his cry for "my daughter and my ducats." He has begotten the one no less than the other, and they are equally tangled in his heart. Antonio, on the other hand, lends money freely without the "breed of barren metal." He puts the price of usury down, and, were Antonio out of Venice, Shylock says he would make "what merchandise I will". The Christian is a pattern of friendship. He loves the world only for his friend, and at Bassanio's need he pledges the pound of flesh nearest his heart. The heart is pledged for love against gold.

This is the obvious and exoteric contrast, pleasing no doubt to Shakespeare's Christian audience, only too ready to believe that a Jewish physician had plotted to poison their queen. But there is a more subtle though hardly less well marked contrast between

the two places in which the action takes place, Belmont and Venice. In the fine city, the shining of the metal is all attractive, and casts a dullness over the light of day; in the fair mountain lives and rules a kingly lady who is all light and sun and heavenly gold. In Venice everyone is something of a Jew; in Belmont everyone is, or turns, Christian. Even the wit in the city is somewhat forced, as though designed to cover up uneasiness or melancholy; on the mountain, gaiety and high spirits are at home with wisdom and modesty.

In Venice, Antonio is especially the representative of the Christian principle. But even he has no Christianity towards the Jew. He spits upon him and foots him like a cur, and is like to do so again. The sign of a gentile spirit in Jessica (for which the Christians praise her) is to steal her father's jewels and money. Nor did she spare the ring he had from Leah when he was a bachelor. Shylock describes the barbarous way the Venetians treat their purchased slaves—and no Venetian present denies the charge. The reason why the Duke does not interfere to save the life of Antonio is that such an action would lessen the confidence of foreign traders in Venetian law and so jeopardise the wealth of the State. In Venice, Bassanio is, or is content to be known as, a mere fortune hunter; it is Portia's wealth that draws him to Belmont, and the journey is not the first of its kind; in Belmont he becomes the lover, willing to renounce love altogether if he may not have the lady of his heart. That is, indeed, the condition of love at Belmont.

A moralist or a sentimentalist might perhaps have wished to see Portia beautiful but poor, to contrast her with the riches (and ugliness) of Venice. This, however, would obliterate the metal theme from Belmont. The point about Portia is not that she should have no gold, but that she should use gold in the right way. She is indeed all gold. We first hear in Venice that her hair "hangs on her temples like a golden fleece". It is for this reason, not for her metal gold, that "many Jasons come to woo her". She is the sun as well as the queen of the fair mountain, and even says of herself, "Let me give light but let me not be light." To win her (being first prepared to renounce all other love if you fail of this), you must make the choice between the caskets of gold, silver, and lead. But in Belmont you do not win the golden fleece by fixing your attention on what "many men desire", or on what you conceive you deserve. The true gold can be won only by the man who can "give and hazard all he has".

Bassanio rejects the "gaudy gold, hard food for Midas", and the silver, "pale and common drudge 'tween man and man". As his friend Antonio has done on his behalf, he chooses to "give and hazard all he has". He is true to that noble generosity which is the very air of Belmont. With what gracious freedom Portia bestows herself and all she has on Bassanio, and when the paper comes announcing Antonio's danger (which is a gaping wound issuing life-blood), how promptly she offers her gold to save that blood, and nobly she urges Bassanio to set out even before their wedding night, with no thought for her own disappointment, but only for the safety of her lover's friend whom she has never seen!

It is because Antonio in Venice has also "given and hazarded all he has" that Belmont must come to his aid. In the court Shylock is sharpening his knife to cut the pound of flesh nearest the heart, when the learned young Doctor arrives. And what is her first plea? In substance, merely the plea for mercy which the Duke has made at the opening of the trial. But the language and images are different. The mercy of which Portia speaks drops like the gentle rain from heaven; it becomes the throned monarch better than his crown; it is enthroned in the hearts of kings; it is an attribute of God, and in deeds of mercy earthly power "shows likest God's!" It is only when Shylock has rejected the vision of the heavenly mercy, and has indeed retorted that he has carried vengeance to the place whence Portia would draw mercy, and has an "oath in heaven", that the law is turned against him.

We may, perhaps, suspect that the plea for mercy comes from Portia, and the knowledge of the subtleties of Venetian law from the learned doctor Bellario. And what is the point that turns the law against him? Shylock has forgotten the living element—the blood—in the pound of flesh for which he has contracted. His mind is so fixed on the metal gold that not merely the qualities of the heart, elude him, but even the element of life. He is crucified on the cross of his own gold, because he knows it only as a dead earthly metal, and not as the representative of heavenly powers and living forces.

When we return to Belmont our mind is at once led to the idea of correspondences by the comparisons of famous nights. We look up and find that Belmont, the home of the lady of the golden fleece, is covered with a mantle of heavenly gold:

*Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.*

Lorenzo tells Jessica of the Harmony of the Spheres to which earthly music is correspondent. The immortal soul incarnate can no longer hear the music of the macrocosm which fills it, but the man who is not sensitive to its correspondent earthly music is "fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils."

This is the state of Shylock, not only in that he hates music, but in that he sees nothing of the heavenly correspondence to his gold. Portia next enters and speaks at once of the candle in her window shining "like a good deed in a naughty world." But when the moon shines, the greater glory dims the less, and so

*A substitute shines brightly as a king,
Until a king be by.*

Bassanio arrives and greets Portia as the sun:

*We should hold day with the Antipodes
If you would walk in absence of the sun.*

And Portia replies:

Let me give light, but let me not be light.

Heavenly Gold, Sun, Light, Kings—these are the images through which we enter the house of love on the fair mountain. Even the last spirited joke is concerned with the rings—the gold which is not coveted for its own sake, but as a pledge of the love of the heart. Such is the contrast in the play between the Mountain and the City. I think it is a more important contrast than the obvious one between Jew and Christian because it is both deeper and more hidden. You may not believe in the correspondences on which the contrast is based, but you will hardly be able to appreciate an important aspect of the play unless you take them into account. And for those to whom these things have again become real, this play and many others of the Shakespeare canon begin to have a new life and significance.

It was the nineteenth century (as Mr. C. S. Lewis has pointed out in the paper already quoted) that discovered the development of personality and character in the plays—perhaps sometimes even where it was not discoverable. To the twentieth century the plays are beginning to reveal themselves as something more like Mysteries, speaking to a picture-consciousness which has long been overlaid, but is again breaking through to the surface in the changing mind of man. It is a test of inspiration in a work of art that it reveals new things to succeeding generations; custom cannot stale its infinite variety.

THE EXPERIENCE OF BIRTH AND DEATH IN CHILDHOOD

KARL KÖNIG, M.D.

IN his book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, Rudolf Steiner describes certain experiences which the human soul undergoes in training itself to gain knowledge of realms other than those revealed by sense-perception. The reader who is versed in psychology finds on almost every page descriptions which he has encountered in dealing with his patients, when analysing their problems or explaining their dreams. If even a few of the exercises given in this book are done, gradually a certain amount of clarity is reached as to the boundaries between conscious and unconscious, which were not known or recognised before. It is not necessary to achieve clairvoyance. The mere fact of trying to educate our own thinking, to unfold our emotional life under self-control, and to exercise our volition, makes the human soul into an ordered instrument which is gradually tuned to such an extent that harmony rules in it and not discord.

In preparing the soul to reach, in full consciousness, the borders of the unconscious, we experience, at the gate which leads down into this realm, two special emotions. They are more than mere emotions, however. They are the two archetypes of man's emotional life. We are all constantly filled by them, although they are very well hidden, and in balanced people seldom shoot up to the surface of the mind. These two primary emotions, or rather elementary soul-experiences, are fear and shame.

Fear, with all its varied possibilities—fear of death and fear of dogs; fear of parents and the fear of being shut into a closed room (claustrophobia); fear of crossing a street, of entering a house; fear of the dark and fear of infection.

Shame, with all its implications—shame of being stripped and shame of being spoken to; shame at having to appear in a gathering of people; shame appearing as modesty, and shame disguised as bashfulness.

These two experiences are like two guardians constantly watching the gate which bars the way from the conscious to the unconscious. They are always present, always awake, and readily appear if the gate should be opened by an unprepared mind, or shaken from its hinges by outer events. Although brothers, fear and shame are in themselves as different as day from night. The bashfulness of a young girl and the fear of a terror-stricken culprit are poles apart.

If we experience fear, we are overcome by a feeling of cold, of tightness, of oppression. It is as if some unknown force had thrown belts of iron round chest, neck, and heart. We feel, sometimes, unable to move, rooted to the spot; our life is frozen, the will under a spell.

Shame is different: we are not held tight but rather feel limp, as though all our strength were draining away. In shame, also, we feel quite unable to do or act, but this impotency is entirely different from the incapacity we experience with fear. To feel ashamed means to feel helpless, given up to surrounding circumstances—loose, not tight; limp, not spastic. We wish to disappear in the helplessness of our plight—"Oh, if only the earth would swallow me up!"

The man haunted by fear has the desire to run away and is unable to do so. The man gripped by shame has no power to run away either; he can only slip away.

Shame and fear were experienced by Adam and Eve as soon as they had eaten of the Tree of Knowledge. "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked."

To know that we are "naked" is the fundamental meaning behind the experience of shame. Therefore all shame, bashfulness, and even modesty, have an emotional background of guilt. That we are here on Earth, human beings, children parted from the Great Mother, and that all this has happened through our own fault—all these feelings lie behind the experience of shame. Therefore we try to cover our nakedness, and we blush. In blushing we cover this naked existence, though not very successfully.

"And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, 'Where art thou?' And he said, 'I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.'" In these few verses from Genesis it is clearly stated that Adam and Eve first experienced shame. As long as the guilt of the Fall is hidden, shame is the result. As soon

as the guilt appears, in the image of God the Father, shame changes into fear, for in this moment death hovers above Adam and Eve. This the devil had not told them: that although they would become as God, knowing good and evil, they would have to pay for their knowledge with the coin of death.

Human souls are not permitted to experience their nakedness—e.g., their clarity of mind and their consciousness—without paying for it with death. Shame may guard the threshold, and we may forget that we have to pay for our “nakedness”. Fear makes us aware that death is round the corner at every moment of our existence.

The indecision and uncertainty of modern psychology, and the possibility of interpreting almost everything into anything in psycho-analysis, are the result of a complete inability to co-ordinate psychic experiences with bodily processes. In the last edition (1947) of Flanders Dunbar's standard book, *Emotions and Bodily Changes*, 2,400 books and papers are quoted in the reference list, all dealing with psychosomatic facts. A wealth of information is given about the possible ways in which mental conditions can influence the body and vice versa. In spite of this, it is not possible yet to describe scientifically “how” and or in “what way” mental processes can penetrate and directly bring about a change in the bodily nature of man and animal.

If we look for references to fear and shame in this book we shall not find them. If we search for scientific descriptions of the actual bodily place where fear and shame are experienced, we shall do so in vain. Nevertheless, fear and shame leave deep impressions on the body, and we should be able to locate the seat of their activities.

Within our bodies are two different and opposite layers: the blood and the nervous system. The blood is the continuously flowing fluid and the nerves the ever-resting structure. The blood is the fluid which is constantly destroyed and renewed again. The short span of life of the blood cells is a conspicuous feature of this special fluid. The nerve, be it cell or fibre, once built, remains throughout our lifetime, hardly altered within the body.

Flaming red is the colour of the blood; pale yellow the tinge of the nerve. Warmth is the nature of the blood and coolness the quality of the nerve. The blood has its centre in the heart, from which it flows and to which it returns. The nerve, on the other

hand, has its centre in the central nervous system, from which the thousands of nerve-fibres endeavour to reach their different organs. The blood is a never-ceasing continuum; the nerve, a fixed structure of space.

The central nervous system, brain and spinal cord, lie firmly enclosed in the cave of the skull and the spinal column. There they are enshrined and communicate with the different parts of the body by means of the nerves. Like embrasures are the small holes through which the nerves reach out into their bodily environment, with all its different organs. The whole central nervous system is like a body within the body, kept apart by the skull and the spine. Seen in an imaginative way, the brain and spinal cord have withdrawn from the remaining part of the body and sought their abode in a kind of splendid isolation. The blood is different. Its central organ, the heart, has not withdrawn from the body but rather lies in the middle of it. It communicates with the body by a continuous giving and taking.

Quite evidently, most of the experiences of the soul which reach consciousness are connected with a properly functioning nervous system. Sense-perception, the forming of concepts, emotions and voluntary actions are all bound up with the nerves. The lower we descend into the animal kingdom, the less completeness do we find in the nervous structure. The so-called “progressive cerebration”, the progressive enlargement of the brain through evolution in the animal kingdom, leads to the development of consciousness.

Not so readily accepted is the bodily sphere of the unconscious. There is no proper place in our body to which it can be ascribed. The sympathetic nervous system, with all its ramifications, may be thought of in this connection. It influences our breathing, the heart-beat, the tension of the blood vessels, the functions of most of the organs. Yet this sympathetic nervous system is part of the whole complex of nerves, and therefore serves our conscious soul-experience.

Our higher sense-organs (the retina in the eye, the cochlea in the ear) are guarded by a system of transmitters, whose task is to shield the organ from the full impact of the outer world. If we think of the lens and iris of the eye, or of the drum and ossicles of the middle ear, we shall understand what is meant. Colours and sounds are sifted by these special organs.

Such is the task of the sympathetic nervous system with regard to the brain and the spinal cord. It shields the organ of consciousness

from the experience of our inner emotions. We should never be able to experience our surroundings in an unbiassed way if the sympathetic nerves did not put up a barrier against our emotions, our feelings, our passions. Our sense-organs would be flooded with our subjective experiences and we should be given up entirely to hate and sympathy, to antipathy and desire. The fact that our brain remains cool, and that we are able to judge not only according to our subjective emotions but also according to our objective opinions, we owe to the sympathetic nerves. This system of nerves creates a barrier round our consciousness and has the task of preventing the inner world of our unconscious from penetrating it.

We may accordingly suggest that the whole of our sympathetic nervous system forms the most complicated gate between the conscious and the unconscious. The unconscious itself, therefore, lies beyond this gate, and its place is none other than in the ocean of the blood. Bound up with the life of our blood is the unconscious realm of the soul. This means that Man, as an eternal being, is connected with the blood of his body, and only part of his being rises up into his conscious experience. Those of our inner experiences which are sifted through the sympathetic nervous system reach our consciousness. Everything else remains in the dark, bound to the blood. What analytical psychology calls the "collective psyche" is to be found in this realm. There live the archetypes with all their manifold ramifications. The whole, hidden wealth of our soul's existence, unknown to us, is there.

Analytical psychology has also shown that even in earliest childhood these archetypes are present, and known to the child. In his book, *The Life of Childhood*, Michael Fordham writes: "The fundamental idea behind this book is that the child starts life with a psyche that is not known to him, but through which he grows and becomes conscious." This, Dr. Fordham shows; but he never ventures to ask the question: "Where does this psyche come from, with which we all start life?"

The sea of the blood holds the "collective psyche", and the whole of the nervous system gradually brings part of the psyche into our consciousness. Blood and nerves are part of our body, and our bodies we receive from our mothers. The psyche itself is ours, and there is no other possibility but to accept the fact that the soul unites with the body at a certain moment during the embryonic development, or gradually during this embryonic time and the time of earliest childhood.

This process of unification of body and soul is a twofold one. The soul unites with the blood and also with the nerves. The part of the soul's being which unites with the blood remains unconscious; or it may manifest, especially in early childhood, in the form of "projections" out into the world of the child's dreams. The growing consciousness frees itself from these "projections" and gradually learns to distinguish the world around from the life within.

There are some reports about this; one of them, from the autobiography of H. M. Stanley, may be quoted :

"My personal recollections do not extend beyond the time I lay in the cradle. Up to a certain date in the early 'forties, all is profound darkness to me. Then, as I awoke from sleep one day, a brief period of consciousness suddenly dawned upon my faculties. There was an indefinable murmur about me, some unintelligible views floated before my senses, light flashed upon the spirit and I entered into being.

"At what age I first received these dim but indelible impressions, I cannot guess. It must have been in helpless infancy, for I seem to have passed, subsequently, through a long age of dreams, wherein countless vague experiences, emotions, and acts occurred which, though indefinable, left shadowy traces on my memory. During such a mechanical stage of existence, it was not possible for me to distinguish between dreams and realities.

"I fancy I see a white ceiling, and square joists, with meathooks attached to them, a round, pink, human face, the frill of a cap, a bit of bright ribbon; but before I am able to grasp the meaning of what I see, I have lapsed into unconsciousness again. After an immeasurable time, the faculties seem to be reawakened, and I can distinguish tones, and am aware that I can see, hear, and feel, and that I am in my cradle. It is close by a wooden staircase, and my eyes follow its length up, and then down: I catch sight of a house-fly, and then another, and their buzz and movements become absorbing. Presently a woman advances, bends over me a moment, then lifts me up in her arms, and from a great height I survey my world.

"There is a settle of dark wood, a bit of carving at the end of it; there is a black, shiny chimney; a red coal fire, with one spluttering jet of flame, and waving soot flakes: there is a hissing black kettle, and a thread of vapour from the nozzle; a curious old clock, with intensely red flowers above and chains and weights below it; and lastly I see a door cut into two halves, the upper one being wide

open, through which I gain my first view of sky and space. This last is a sight worth seeing, and I open my eyes roundly to take stock of this pearly space and its drifting fleece as seen through the door, and my attention is divided between the sky and the tick-tock of the clock, while forced to speculate what the white day and the pearly void mean.

"There follows a transition into another state of conscious being wherein I appear to have wings, and to be soaring up to the roof of a great hall, and sailing from corner to corner, like a humming bee on a tour of exploration; and the roof presently being removed, I launch out with wings outspread, joyous and free, until I lose myself in the unknowable, to emerge, some time after, in my own cradle-nest at the foot of the wooden stairs.

"And thus for an unknown stretch of time, I endure my days without apparent object, but quietly observant, and an inarticulate witness of a multitude of small events; and thus I waited and watched and dreamed, surrendering myself to my state, undisturbed, unaffected, unresisting, borne along by Time until I could stand and take a larger and more deliberate survey of the strange things done around me."

Quite often, in the recollections of well-known people, there appear, in earliest childhood, these moments, when the dawn of the conscious experience of the world around is recorded in almost minute detail. These memories are like small islands in the sea of the time of childhood. It is as if the panorama of dreams and projections is broken by these islands, until gradually they merge together and become a conscious perception of the surrounding world.

When we are born the river of Life is transgressed. Our soul enters the house of the body and gradually merges with the organs. The soul enters the blood, but it also permeates the nerves, and these two experiences are entirely different in character. To describe it in an appropriate way we would have to say that we die in the ocean of our blood, and are gradually born in the realm of our nerves.

The death in the blood brings about the experience of oblivion. We forget everything that was known to us before we were born. We lived in a world beyond space, and now we die into the river of time, the blood. Part of our soul gradually emerges from this drowned existence and takes hold of the world which is opened to us by our senses, and this, when later recalled, forms our first memories.

The experience of oblivion by drowning in the blood is the first experience of death in childhood. The dawn of consciousness by means of our senses and nerves is the first experience of birth. The latter some of us are able to remember; the first one we can make only indirectly accessible. I shall refer to this indirect way presently.

The birth into the outer environment by means of our nerves is accompanied by a constant experience of shame. The death into the blood is accompanied by fear. Fear is the soul's attribute when it stands in front of death, and death to the soul means departure, forgetting itself, dismembering itself. Shame is the soul's quality when it stands before cognition. Cognition means birth to the soul; it means to remember, to know, to experience consciously.

The child establishes his life in the tension of these two emotions. The soul is drowned in the blood to experience the world of space and earth. By this process our unconscious is created. The soul reawakes through the nerves to comprehend the world of space and earth by means of the sense-organs. Thus our conscious experiences are born. At the shore of the river of blood, there stands eternal shame. At the border of the land of nerves there watches perpetual fear. Fear and shame close the gate between the two realms of the soul's life on earth.

Fear is the guardian who keeps the gate closed from the side of consciousness. As soon as the unconscious tries to break through into conscious existence, fear rises up and consciousness harnesses all its powers to ward off the attack. Shame is the guardian who keeps the gate closed from the side of the unconscious. As soon as consciousness tries to invade the unconscious realm, shame comes into action. Shame inhabits the blood and fear inhabits the nerves. If the nerves try to attack the blood, shame appears. If the blood tries to overwhelm the nerves, fear comes into action.

In many forms and variations, the descent of the human soul into the body is described in fairy-tales. When a fairy-tale speaks about two children, it is describing, in an older way of thinking, these two parts of the soul which, after birth, unite respectively with blood and nerve. "Hansel and Gretel", "Little Brother and Little Sister", "Iorinde and Ioringel", are only a few examples.

In "Hansel and Gretel" the two children enter the dark wood and at last reach the house of the witch. So the soul leaves the

spirit-world, enters on its way towards earth-existence, and at last finds its body. Hungry after their long journey, the children eat parts of the witch's house, until she appears and imprisons them both. Hansel is put into a cage and Gretel has to serve in the house. The human soul has to serve in the body by being drowned in the blood, and is also put into the cage of the head and brain to gain experience of the outer world. Therefore, Hansel is well fed, whereas Gretel is starved.

This lasts for a certain time until the witch is ready to put Hansel into the oven and eat him. Gretel, however, is clever enough to throw the witch into the oven. Then she opens Hansel's cage and both are free again. They gather the witch's treasures, gold and precious stones, and return to their father enriched and happy. In death the human soul frees itself from the grip of the witch and returns with the experiences (treasures) gained on earth, back to the spirit realm.

In "Little Brother and Little Sister" the same thing is described in a different way. The brother who, thirsting for a drink, succumbs to his desire and is turned into a little fawn, represents that part of the soul which drowns in the blood. His sister takes him with her to live in a house in the wood. Here the sister represents the part of the soul which gradually grows conscious, being enshrined in the house of the brain. There they live until the king of the country, out hunting, appears upon the scene. The king represents something new, those spiritual powers which can wake up within the conscious part of the soul to lead us to gain higher experiences than those of the senses. The marriage of Little Sister and the king takes place, but Little Brother must remain a fawn and is disenchanted only when his Sister, the conscious part of the soul, has suffered the probations and trials on the way to higher knowledge.

In these stories we are able to behold true images, which mostly remain hidden when speaking about the soul. The human soul has a twofold existence here on earth, the conscious part and the unconscious one. Although they are parted, they belong together, like two lovers unable to reach one another. Romeo and Juliet we may call them, or Hero and Leander, or any of the names which appear in mythology related to the same realm.

Each part of the soul has a companion. In the conscious part it takes the form of a dog, and this is fear; in the unconscious it takes the form of a hare. This is shame. In childhood, as well as in

later life, we are continually accompanied by these two figures. The details of the mythology of the dog and the hare, if studied thoroughly, will confirm this statement.

The child's soul, having gone through the first experiences of birth and death, has gained certain qualities which from then onwards are available to him. He knows death in its inner meaning, and birth is not foreign to him. Wherever the child comes into contact with the world, the ideas of birth and death are applied to it. It is therefore not surprising that Mlle. Thomas made the following observation regarding a story completion test in the Geneva Report (1937): *Nous avons été frappé en dépouillant nos résultats de trouver traité très fréquemment, soit dans les rêves, soit dans les fantaisies, soit directement, un sujet absolument étranger à nos histoires: la mort (66 pour cent des cas).*" This means that 66 per cent of children, on being asked to complete a certain story, referred in their answers to death or dying, to killing and parting. Mlle. Thomas is *frappé* by this very unexpected result, though she might have known, as a child psychologist, that death is a common subject in the fantasy-life of childhood. Therefore, it is ridiculous of many teachers and doctors to instruct parents not to tell gruesome fairy tales to their children and to avoid mentioning death and dying. Whether we do so or not, the child knows at least as much as we do about death. His soul has died in his blood, and he knows the horror and pain involved.

Sylvia Anthony, in her book, *The Child's Discovery of Death*, makes the following comment: "How does the child think about death in his fantasies, if one of his family has actually died recently? There may, then, be no mention of death at all, but the idea of guilt may assume obsessional proportions in the content of the child's thought. He may express a fear of imprisonment and see every misfortune, occurring to himself or anyone else as a just punishment, from which he assumes that they have been guilty of some crime, although he may have no idea what the crime could be."

Drs. D. and R. Katz, in their *Conversations with Children*, write: "We tried in every way to keep from our children the idea of the death of people, and we believe that a similar reticence is common to most parents. . . . It is true that in fairy-tales there is a great deal—indeed too much—about striking dead, burning to death, but the child does not really comprehend what lies behind it. For

the child, death in fairy-tales, probably means nothing more than 'not playing any longer', the withdrawal of the person concerned. Our children also spoke quite often about murder and shooting in the shallow sense just mentioned." Sylvia Anthony, who quotes this passage, adds: "But only the last sentence gives evidence of the children's actual behaviour. Whatever death may have meant to these children, it certainly was not absent from their thoughts." This is a correct statement. The child has some inherent knowledge of death, with all its implications. He has experienced death as a means of being alive here on earth.

I shall quote from another autobiography a narrative which, in this respect, is most illuminating. In her book *Aus Meinem Jugendland*, Isolde Kurz writes: "During the same time I made another shattering discovery. One day, in gazing out of the window I saw a group of men, clothed in black, passing by. They were carrying something wrapped in black cloth, which appeared to me to be a big trunk. This sight touched me painfully, and Christine, our new nursemaid, in answering my question, said it was a corpse, which the men were carrying to the cemetery. 'What is a corpse?' I asked, with disgust, for I had never heard the word before and it sounded strange and gruesome. She answered by saying that it was a dead man. I was astonished that human beings should die, for I had always thought that death was a bad accident, which happened only to birds, dogs, cats, and such beasts. Christine tried to lead me away from these thoughts, but I would not be led and ran to my mother, crying, 'Is it true that men die?' 'Who told you so?' 'Christine.' I at once discovered that Christine had broken a commandment. 'Poor darling!' my mother said, 'you should not have been told for a long time, but now it is done. Yes, it is true, men have to die!' 'But certainly not everyone, mummy?' 'Yes, child, everyone!' She kept me in her arms as if she wanted to console me. 'But not you, mummy?' 'Yes, I also, child.' 'But not daddy?' 'Yes, daddy also.' 'Then perhaps I also?' 'Yes, you also, but only in a long, long time to come.' The long time of which she spoke was no consolation to me. A fearful, black abyss yawned, which swallowed up everything."

This is the typical story of the re-discovery of death in early childhood, experienced in the realm of consciousness. It is nothing new to the child. The sight of the coffin, although she did not know what it was, touched her painfully. She still wanted to suppress what her unconscious told her, and therefore Christine, the maid,

had to perform the task which the child herself was afraid to undertake. This is the re-discovery of death. The child would never have understood the impact of her experience if she herself had not known beforehand what death is in reality—forgetting, dissolving, parting.

This experience of death can appear also in other forms. The great German dramatist, Fr. Hebbel, writes in his autobiography, a mine of information for every psychologist: "I could not endure seeing a bone, and buried even the smallest one which could be found in our little garden. Later I even erased the word 'rib' from the Catechism with my nails, because it suggested this nauseous thing so vividly that I could visualise a rotting cadaver."

These quotations could be enlarged by very many other examples. They all show one thing: the child has an inborn knowledge of death due to his first experience, for birth is the death of the soul in the blood of the body.

I have tried to propose, in this short study of the child's experience of birth and death, that these two experiences are common to every human being from earliest childhood upwards, and that the outer birth of the body, the release from the motherly womb, involves a double experience, the death of the soul in the blood and the birth of the soul in the perception of the outer world, through the nerves and sensory organs. Thus the two realms of our mental life on earth are created—the gradual unfolding of our conscious mind and the establishment of the unconscious. Both are a fundamental experience of man's life here on earth.

A last word should be said about those two emotional qualities, fear and shame, which guard the threshold between the conscious and the unconscious mind. I said that fear inhabits our nerves, guarding the conscious realm from the intrusions of the unconscious. What then is fear? Leo Kanner, in his book, *Child Psychiatry*, writes: "Watson was the first to study, experimentally, the emotional responses of infants during the first months of life. He found that from the very day of birth they reacted to a group of situations in a mode which impressed the observer as being an indication of fear. Sudden catching of the breath, clutching randomly with the hands, sudden closing of the eye-lids, puckering of the lips and then crying." Further, he says: "The meaning of the term 'fear' implies the idea of existing or anticipated danger, as well as the

individual's attitude in the face of such danger. There are other sets of facts which, in spite of their resemblance to the combination alluded to as 'fear', show sufficient dissimilarity to have warranted the creation of other names, such as 'apprehension', 'dread', 'fright', 'terror', 'horror', 'alarm', 'concentration', etc."

In these two quotations, two fundamental qualities of fear are stated. First, that fear is present from almost the first day of man's life, onwards. Secondly, that fear is a special reaction of the soul, different from dread, fright, and so on. But just these latter reactions, which Kanner quotes, are born in the soul, when faced with existing or expected danger. Fear, the true fear, is not caused directly by the threat of danger. If it happens that we have to face a dangerous situation, the gate of the threshold is crushed by the unconscious, and this crushing, not the danger, creates fear. Then we turn pale, feel tight, sweat all over, the breath is arrested, and our conscious perceptions are raised to the highest pitch. It is as if the conscious part of the soul, having concentrated all its powers and resources, had been inhaled entirely into the nervous part of the body. The valves between blood and sympathetic nerves are closely shut. A oneness of soul and nervous system is created.

The opposite experience is shame. Sir Arthur Mitchell writes: "The state of the mind during a blush, described broadly, is one of confusion, and this is often strongly marked. 'Covered with confusion', indeed, is a way of describing persons who are in the act of blushing. Darwin says that they 'lose their presence of mind, and utter singularly inappropriate remarks. They are often distressed, stammer and make awkward movements and strange grimaces.' Excessive blushers do not rightly know what they are saying and feel stupid."

Quoting Bacon, he writes further: "Bacon says: 'Shame causeth blushing and casting down of the eyes,' and there is not much more than this to be said about the cause and character of blushing. It consists of a 'resort of blood to the face with a casting down of the eyes' arising out of a sense of shame." He says also that, "If I am asked to define with sharpness and shortness the meaning of the word 'shame', as the word which best names the cause of blushing, I confess that I cannot do so, nor have I found any other person able to furnish such a definition."

The experience of shame creates in the body this very peculiar symptom of blushing, the casting down of the eyes and the confused

state of mind. These are signs exactly opposite to those of fear. In fear, we turn pale; we widen the eyes in a sense of horror, and the mind is fixed and entirely clear. This shows that when feeling ashamed the subconscious part of the soul loosens its grip on the blood, and the blood therefore rises up into the face; the mind is blurred for a short time and the eyes are cast down, because the comprehension of the world is withdrawn. A process of exhaling takes place within the unconscious part of the soul, which is trying to overcome the conscious mind. If we were able to state that fear is an inhaling of the soul into the nervous system, we can now add that shame is an exhaling of the soul from the blood.

It is a well-known fact that in persons who belong to races whose normal state is nakedness, the blush is extended over almost the whole body. Not only neck and face, but also the chest, the arms, and sometimes even the thighs blush. To me this is a sign which establishes the statement that shame is the state of mind in which we experience our "nakedness". The soul tries to hide this "nakedness" and blushing occurs. The feeling of "nakedness" is rooted in the idea that someone in our surroundings is able to see our faults, has uncovered our sins. Thus Mitchell says: "In the sense of shame, that raises a blush, conscience plays little or no part. It is not the feeling of guilt, but the thought that others think us guilty."

In shame we experience our own nakedness, a condition of being "given up" to the eyes of others. In fear we experience our own guilt and the result of it, the necessity of death.

If this statement is correct, then every human soul, by experiencing fear and shame, carries within itself the last remnants of the eternal shock which man experienced with the Fall. The implications of the first sin, described in the Bible in the imaginative picture of the eating of the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, are still experienced when we feel ashamed or frightened.

Shame is the repercussion of the world-moment when Adam and Eve discovered their nakedness. Fear is the repercussion of the other world-moment when they learned that death is the result of the awareness of nakedness. Through the Fall, the human soul was able gradually to be born in the nervous system. This birth into earthly surroundings, by the opening of the eyes, is necessarily accompanied by shame. The consequence is the necessity to experience death, and this is accompanied by fear.

The human soul exhales when ashamed and inhales when afraid, and is thus able to establish the conscious part as well as the unconscious. As every human being is endowed with these two emotions, he is under the spell of the first sin, the Fall.

It was through Christ that the redemption of the Fall was initiated. Only by accepting Him into the life of the human soul can shame and fear be overcome.

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PLANT GROWTH AND THE FORMS OF SPACE

By GEORGE ADAMS and OLIVE WHICHER

MANY of Nature's secrets are "open secrets." The truth is manifest for all to see; yet generations of mankind, even epochs and civilisations can go by, and it is not seen. For man beholds reality not with the outer bodily senses only, but with the spiritual eye of the mind. The outer eye may be focussed however sharply, conveying to the consciousness ever so accurate a photographic picture of the external object; yet it will stare blindly and without understanding until one day the mind becomes imbued with the ideal concept belonging to the phenomenon in question and in some way revealed in it. Then and then only do we begin really to see.

Look at the growing plants in spring or early summer. See, in infinite variety of form, the characteristic gesture at the growing-point of the vegetative shoot. The young and tender leaves appear to open out as if between them they would harbour something of great value in the hollow space immediately above the growing-point of the stem. Plants such as woodruff bring forth a whorl of leaves at every node. The young leaves reaching upward form a hollow cone above the growing-point, slender and deep to begin with and opening out as the leaves grow older. So long as the vegetative phase of the plant's life continues, the hollow space above the growing-point is maintained, node upon node bringing forth the leaf-buds. They first appear with this enveloping gesture and thence open and spread out towards the horizontal plane, which often tends to be the ultimate position of the mature leaf.

In the great majority of those plants which form but a single laterally placed leaf at every node, this tendency to form a hollow cup or cone at the growing-point, with the enveloping gesture of the young leaf-buds around it, is still in evidence. Here the leaves follow one another in some form of spiral sequence. Generally at the growing-point the successive nodes have not yet opened out

and away from one another. The internodes have yet to grow; the young leaf-buds of several nodes form more or less of a spiral whorl, enclosing once again a hollow space within. Even a single leaf will often shew the enveloping and protecting gesture very eloquently.

Some hitherto unknown reality underlies this rather childlike impression which the mind receives from the gesture of the growing and unfolding plant. What is the essence of this hollow space enveloped by the young leaves above the growing point of the stem? Where shall we find the concepts which will help us really to see this process with the inner eye of understanding?

Physical science, since Faraday and Maxwell, is not unfamiliar with the notion that in a seemingly empty space there may reside the potential essence of those forces which the behaviour of visible objects will under given conditions make manifest. We speak of "fields of force." We think the unseen nature of the field of force between two charged conductors accounts for the reactions of the latter, or of other objects introduced, when these potential forces are released. We find the explanation not in the tangible objects but in the space between them. Thus it is not inconceivable that in the seemingly empty space lives a reality, unseen at first, determining the behaviour of what we see.

But we must ask: If this be so for the growing-point, what will its nature be? The image of an electrical field will not help us here. If in the hollow space between the unfolding leaves there is an unseen sphere of force, we might be tempted to think of some pole of force at the centre, radiating outward like an electric or magnetic pole or the centre of gravity of a material body. But the phenomena do not indicate anything of this kind.

In pure geometry and mathematics, however, it is possible to describe not only points of the kind which occur in physics as electric or magnetic poles or centres of gravity. "Singular points" of many kinds occur in geometry and in the theory of functions. Now, from elementary projective geometry we learn that every plastic form in space—every curve or surface—has a dual aspect. The surface of a sphere, for example, is not only the sum-total of all points at a fixed distance from a given centre. To describe it thus is only one aspect; in a qualitative sense it represents only half the truth. For at each point the sphere has also a tangent plane. It is

enveloped by its tangent planes, and we need only assign the right law of movement to a moving plane, to form the sphere as an infinite assemblage of planes no less accurately and completely than by the usual definition, where we are really forming it as an infinite assemblage of points. Modern geometry has learnt to think of all forms in space, even of the very structure of space itself, in the planar as well as the pointwise aspect.

Known since a century or more ago—its depth and beauty recognised and much admired by the pure mathematicians—this form of thinking has found very little direct application in mathematical physics, for the simple reason that the fundamental entities of physics are pointlike, which is another way of saying, atomistic. We shall discover, however, that it has its application in the sphere of life—in the morphology and physiology of living things. Nature reveals in her phenomena the planar and not only the pointwise aspect of space. For the planar aspect of the sphere, the elementary entities will be the tangent planes that touch and mould it from without. If we choose a finite number from among them and in a regular sequence or pattern, they will reveal a gently enveloping and enclosing gesture, like the petals of a half-opened flower.

In visible Nature, the ideal entities of pure thought are but approximately realized. Every particle of matter is pointlike, yet it is not an ideal mathematical point, however finely we grind the matter down. That this is so, makes the ideal conception of the point no less significant for physics. Where it applies, it applies exactly, not as an approximation but as an ideal key to the underlying law. The centre of gravity of a chair is in most instances not even a point of the material chair; it hovers in mid-air. Yet the dynamic behaviour of the chair can be described exactly by reference to it and in no other way.

Thus the notion of the point and of the pointwise properties of space (such as the relations of distance between points) is essential to an understanding of the realm of matter, yet this does not depend on the ideal point being realized in any material particle. And that the particles of matter, e.g., the drops of an emulsion, approximate to ideal points, is like a hint, an indication, of the kind of ideal truth prevailing in the inorganic laws of Nature. To use an old form of expression, it is in the nature of a "signature"—a *signatura rerum*.

So too, if it be true, as here suggested, that the plane prevails in the ideal space-formation underlying the characteristic phenomena

of life, we shall not expect any exact reproduction of the plane in the phenomena. We shall have even less cause to expect it than with the point and the particles of matter. For to our outer senses only the material is visible. The "more than matter" in a living thing can reveal itself to our senses only by the character which it imparts to the material living body. And if this "more than matter" is in polar contrast to the realm of matter, as in pure geometry the plane is polar to the point, it stands to reason that the material entity will be able only to reach out, as it were, to receive it; will be able to manifest it only partially and transiently. It is an apparent truism that the whole of a point is there wherever the point may be. The geometrical plane, on the other hand, is of infinite extent; in the material world, therefore, only an infinitesimal part of any plane can be represented. The planar element in the visible form may nevertheless become for us a key to the understanding of just that aspect of the living world which is not fully contained in or explained in terms of physical substance alone.

Profound and beautiful as the discoveries of the last century or two in pure geometry have been, it is at first not easy to see how they apply in practice, nor is it easy so to adapt our mental habits that the new insight thus gained becomes second nature. Our own self-consciousness is very much concerned with the *point*. A man must in any given moment be at a particular point in space; what he achieves in the outer world must at each moment radiate outward from the point where his body is. Unconsciously we project this spatial sense of our own entity into the material or quasi-material entity whose movements and reactions we are conceiving, be it a visible body, animate or inanimate, or an imagined one—molecule or atom.

Now let us try to conceive a world in which the fundamental entities are planar—in which, if real beings did exist, they would be plane-like instead of pointlike. They would, if gathering into themselves with the feeling "I am here", be doing spatially the very opposite of concentrating. They would expand with the greatest possible intensity throughout their plane. We have no word to describe it: expansion with the quality of concentration, focussing not in a point but in a plane, finding one's centre in the very opposite of centre. To enter such a realm not only imaginatively but with exact thinking—giving the several forms of thought the value that properly belongs to them in this domain—we must be

able "to think the extensive intensively and the intensive extensively." The words are Rudolf Steiner's.

If then a realm of this planar character really exists, finding expression in the phenomena of living Nature, the material body of a living creature will be able only to reach out into it. Matter will have to use its properties in such a way as to deny itself, in a manner of speaking, bringing to manifestation what is the very opposite of matter. Among the fundamental properties of matter are concentration about a point and movement of that point along a line. Matter will thus have to rise or in some way detach itself from massive Earth, its particles moving along lines which branch or ramify in such a way as to expand into a surface—to simulate the unbroken unity of a plane or of a plastic surface in its planar aspect.

This is precisely what we behold in the plant, for so the leaf comes into being as a material form. The watery sap rises through the veins, which branch and ramify as if into a pre-determined planar surface, and by repeated anastomosis sustain and supply the intervening cells, making the delicate and continuous expanded leaf-forms. The limitations of matter will enable it to do this only up to a certain boundary. Physically speaking, only a tiny portion of each plane will be made visible. Yet in the gesture and in the play of forms and forces it will be revealing. To the unbiassed eye it will tell its story. For such is Nature; in the most delicate ways, to the aesthetic sense she reveals the truth. Her phenomenon, as Goethe said, is theory, if only we can find it.

We have suggested that there is real significance in the hollow space enveloped by the unfolding leaf-buds at the growing-point of a vegetative shoot, or again by the petals of a half-opened flower. We have applied the geometrical picture of a sphere enveloped by its tangent planes. But we have now to look deeper. What will be the essence of such a sphere? What kind of forces will be prevailing in and about it? What kind of function shall we attribute to the centre or ideal focus there within it? Here once again, modern geometry will lead us forward, if with courage and imagination we take its thought-forms with us in our perception of surrounding Nature. For this geometry not only sees the *surface* of the sphere formed of its points or of its tangent planes. The very presence of the sphere gives rise to an all-prevailing relationship of points and planes throughout the space in which the sphere is hovering.

This relationship is in the nature of a polarity—in the mathematical and also in the Goethean sense of the term.

To every point within a sphere there will be found a corresponding “polar plane” outside it, and to every point outside, a plane that traverses the inner space. The “polar plane” of a point on the sphere’s surface will be the tangent plane at that point—a picture we have just been describing. To points farther in towards the centre belong planes farther out towards the periphery of space, and vice versa. The points and planes as they move inward and outward follow the simple numerical law of inverse proportions. This leads to the conception that the infinitely distant periphery of space is indeed a plane, containing all infinitely distant points. Even as there is one innermost centre where all internal points will come together, so there is one *infinitely* distant plane into which all distant planes, as they go out into the infinite in all directions, will ultimately merge.

It appears, therefore, that a given sphere not only has the dual aspect of its outward and visible form, in that it can be formed of points or of planes alternatively. It has a far more mobile and organic function extending throughout the whole of space. It generates an all-pervading polarity of point and plane, wherein the innermost corresponds to the outermost, the most contracted to the most expanded. According to this polarity, the radial and outward movement of points or pointlike entities from within the sphere will suggest the hovering inward of planes or planar entities from the infinitudes of space.

When we contemplate a sphere from this point of view, we shall no longer say so categorically that the space within is of finite volume, while that without is infinite and measureless. Rather shall we be ready to alight in one or the other direction according to the problem in mind. For physical matter it is quite true that the space within the sphere is finite; a given sphere will contain only a finite quantity of matter, according to its volume. The space without, on the other hand, containing the “plane-at-infinity”, is infinite. This is because physical matter is at home in the space of Euclid, of which the plane-at-infinity is a determining factor. In the space of modern projective geometry however—or in the different kinds of space to which it can give rise—it is quite logical to conceive a sphere that is filled, as it were with “planar substance”, from without inward, a sphere into which “planar forces” may pour from the periphery of space. To such a sphere we have not

to apply the metrics of Euclid. It is only for the latter that the outer space is categorically infinite, while the interior is of finite volume. Even the very concept of a measured volume may not apply.

A geometrical space is a pure form of thought beheld in the eye of the mind. The spatial concept which enables us to penetrate with understanding any of the phenomena of Nature evidently bears relation to the ideal realm to which these phenomena belong—the realm which they make manifest to our senses. Euclidean geometry has been our guide in penetrating to the ideal reality of the phenomena of inorganic Nature. Another kind of geometry will provide an essential key to the phenomena of life, where inorganic matter often seems to rise beyond itself, and where the characteristic spatial forms and gestures are so very different.

To return to the question from which we took our start: What is the nature of that intangible sphere or hollow space of seeming emptiness above the growing-point of the green shoot, or in the hollow chalice of the flower?

We are suggesting that even as the phenomena of inorganic matter belong to the space of Euclid, the infinitude of which is an infinitely expanded sphere or “plane-at-infinity”, so the phenomena of life reveal, intermingled with the other, a polar opposite type of space: a space for which the infinite is innermost instead of outermost—a single point at the very heart of the living entity instead of an infinitely distant plane. Into such a space the “planar forces” of the Universe will spend themselves. In the region of the “infinitude within”, where there is very little matter or even none at all, that which is “more than matter”, the life which indwells the form, will be great. Here the created form will arise as though coming into being from an infinitude of life as yet unborn, in physical volume minute at first, yet vast in terms of ethereal vitality. Vivid and tender in its young life, as the leaf grows older and less vital it attains to greater physical perfection, and in its form bears witness to the planar world from which it emanates.

We have now to form some conception of the “planar forces” which will be prevailing in this other form of space. This will be the type of force of which Rudolf Steiner often indicated that before long it should become known to science. It may be called “negative gravity”, or “active buoyancy”, or simply “levity.”

With this, our thought will come to meet the mysterious phenomenon of the upward growth of plants, which for the Earth-planet as a whole is the primary manifestation of all life. It is to this day a vexed problem: How is the sap able to rise in the trees in spring-time, even beyond barometric level? We need not assail the various theories which have been put forward to account for it—osmotic pressure, capillarity, molecular cohesion. It is far more important that the quality of the thought-picture to which we shall be led in this “ethereal” realm is directly akin to the phenomena we see, just as the quality of pure thought in mechanics is akin to the visible form—beautiful for this very reason—of an engineering structure, such, for example, as a suspension bridge.

We shall indeed describe these forces very naturally as “ethereal forces”. Their formative activity will obviously be related to their dynamic quality. The individual form in which a living body grows will be very largely determined by their specific distribution. We referred to them just now as “planar forces”; this is explained as follows.

In the physical aspect of matter, not only is each material body point-centred, but the mutual forces between bodies act from point to point; so we have various centres of force—centres of gravity, electric and magnetic poles, and so on. In a word, we have not only geometrical but dynamic centres. The typical forces of the physical-material world act along lines from point to point. Joining two points, geometrically speaking, there is always a single straight line; if there is a mutual force between them, it acts along this line. Likewise in the ethereal or planar spaces: any two planes have a line in common. If they are parallel, or if one of them is the infinitely distant plane, their common line is infinitely far, like the celestial horizon in which the Earth’s tangent plane meets the sky. The mutual force between two planar entities of the ethereal spaces will act about their common line, tending to draw them together, which means away from the infinitely distant point of the ethereal space to which they belong. The outcome will appear in physical space as an outward soaring, an expansion. In quality, however, the expansion will not be like the outward-thrusting force, say, of the fragments of an exploding shell; it will be a *drawing* outward—a with-drawing, we might literally say—with the character of suction.

We will suppose now that the Earth-planet as a whole is ethereal as well as physical. The planet has not only its field of gravity;

it has its field of levity also. It is not merely made of inorganic matter. Earth as a whole is a living entity; the single plants that grow upon it are like the organs of a larger, more differentiated organism. Or, to describe it in the more anthroposophical language, the Earth has not only its physical body; it has its “ethereal body” also.

We gain a perfectly clear picture of what the levitational field of the planet will be like if we imagine that the “point-at-infinity” of the ethereal space is at or near the centre of the Earth, and that the archetypal and most potent “plane of levity” is in the infinite sphere of the Heavens. We make this dual co-ordination: at the very place where the main centre of gravity of the physical forces is located, there is the infinitude—as it were, the ideal void—of the ethereal; while far away in the Heavens, in what for physical space seems like the infinite void, there is the primal source of the ethereal and planar forces which draw all other planar entities upward and outward, away from the centre of the Earth. To put the two, mutually interwoven thoughts side by side:—

the main centre of gravity of the physical forces is also the point-at-infinity of the ethereal space,

and the main plane of levity of the ethereal forces is the plane-at-infinity of the physical space.

In this light we can understand the function of the leaves of plants. They are the “planar organs” which the Earth puts forth—through which the physical, watery matter of the Earth is able to enter the field of these ethereal forces from the vast spheres of the celestial light. The whole quality and picture of the upward growth of plants accords with this idea. Born in the region of the plant’s individual ether-sphere—where an ethereal infinitude hovers within the hollow space enfolded by the young and budding leaves—the leaf becomes a planar organ, essential to the living processes both of the plant itself and of the Earth as such, whose very nature it is to bedeck itself with leaves. So long as it is living, the leaf will hover in the air and light, as the young leaves do in the first days and weeks of their fully outspread maturity. Later it will begin to curl and shrivel, fall to the ground, and disintegrate into the myriad particles of the dark Earth. But before this happens the leaf performs miracle after miracle before our eyes. Hovering outward and upward it offers itself to the air and to the light that comes to it from the expanded Heavens. It is as though, plane that it is, it tries to return to its true home, the archetypal plane in the celestial periphery of space.

The detail of this conception involves many problems. ItW have to learn to understand how the physical-material substance is received into the field of these ethereal spaces; to quote the wece known book, *Fundamentals of Therapy*, by Rudolf Steiner and Il-Wegman, how it is able to "withdraw from the forces that work upon it as from the centre of the Earth and enter the domain of other forces—forces which have, not a centre, but a periphery." Also we have to adapt our thinking to a realm where there is not merely one single space, given rigidly and once for all, but untold numbers of formative spaces. For an "ethereal space" of this kind will have its innermost "infinitude" wherever there is a seed or focus of new life. The latter may either be within the watery substance of a living body, or it may be freely hovering in the light-filled air, its presence indicated only by the leaf-like organs which enfold it, as in the higher plant.

How does this sun-like sphere above the growing-point of each single plant endow the Earth-planet as a whole with the leaves to which it has given birth, so that the life and growth of myriads of plants is integrated into the one great process whereby the Earth in summer-time reaches out and receives into itself the ethereal forces of the Heavens? And when the merely vegetative phase of the plant's life is culminating, by what mysterious change in its relation to this sunlike ether-sphere does the plant undergo the metamorphosis from leaf to flower?

In our recently published book¹ we have tried to enter into these questions more fully, describing in greater detail the different phases in the life of the flowering plant from this point of view. Certain it is that when thought and imagination are once awakened to the character of these ethereal spaces, the world of plants places them visibly before our eyes. The plants will help to shew mankind the way out from the rather dark and material phase of science—out into the coming age when science itself will tell how the creative archetypes work in towards the Earth from the celestial realms. What we thus learn from the world of plants will gradually transform also our physical science and our whole cosmic outlook.

¹ *The Living Plant and the Science of Physical and Ethereal Spaces.* A study of the "Metamorphosis of Plants" in the Light of Modern Geometry and Morphology. By George Adams and Olive Whicher. Published by the Goethean Science Foundation, Clent, Stourbridge, Worcs., 1949. (Price 8s. 6d., postage 6d.)

WHAT IS A FARM?

CARL ALEXANDER MIER

"DJEMJDID was a king . . . 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." In these words (from which the title of this Annual derives) Rudolf Steiner describes an old Persian legend. Hidden in them is a reference to the beginnings of agriculture: to the days when for the first time man faced the Earth as a task, when he began to take an active interest in her, and realised his ever-growing dependence upon her for his physical existence.

Centuries and centuries have gone by; we no longer experience our tasks on earth in the way of King Djemjdid, and our imagery has changed. But man's "acting upon and transforming the earth" continues. He does so as engineer and builder, as politician and planner, as farmer and gardener. Agriculture is just this "acting upon and transforming external nature" for the purpose of food production; indeed, for enabling man to exist on earth.

Man has most certainly shouldered the task given him thousands of years ago. F. Osborn, in his book *Our Plundered Planet*, and W. Vogt in his *Road to Survival*, have recently brought up to date the alarming picture drawn before the war by Jacks and Whyte in *The Rape of the Earth*, a picture of the earth's resources recklessly exploited and its fertility drained away. How could this happen? Through the centuries our knowledge of nature has increased and extended—in the last few hundred years at a staggering rate. Why is it that this knowledge should have led, on balance, to a scene in which destructive influences are so widely at work?

The fundamental reason is that human consciousness has changed, leading to a new relationship between man and nature. We who live to-day in the middle of the twentieth century look out on the world with different eyes, form different concepts which in turn lead to different actions from those of our ancestors, even a few centuries ago. This is not a question of valuation, of calling the

old better and the new decadent, of hankering after the good old days. But unless we realise that a change has occurred in human consciousness, and that this change is responsible for new practices, we shall never understand the real reason for that revolutionary movement in agriculture which is often called the Organic (or Humus) School.

Nor shall we—and this is perhaps even more important—find our way with any certainty among the various plans and proposals to which this new movement has given rise.

An historical inquiry into the development of western agriculture would show that the entry of the scientist into the sphere of the farmer has been the logical and unavoidable consequence of the awakening of modern human consciousness some four or five centuries ago. It was certain that the scientific approach would not halt before the human activity which represents the oldest conscious contact of men with nature.¹ When speaking of this impact of science on farming, we are apt to think chiefly of fertilisers. We should not forget all the technical inventiveness which has gone into the making of machines, from plough and cultivator to bulldozer, from grass-cutter and binder to combine harvester, from hoe to 'Flying Mantis', the helicopter used for pest control. We must not forget, either, the sphere of animal nutrition and breeding; of farm economics, and so on. It is the modern mind which is responsible for present-day farming, not just the academically trained scientist. How otherwise could it happen that new ideas, new inventions, new processes are understood and applied with such rapidity by farmers and gardeners who often had nothing to do with their development, who are not scientists, but who are children of the modern age which takes as fact only what is accessible to the senses? Examples of this are milking machines, tractors, artificial insemination, pest control by means of hormones, etc.

It is characteristic of modern man that he has this supreme confidence in the material world, but has lost his awareness of the world of creative spirit. This inability to see matter and spirit in perspective is the price man has had to pay for the "conquest of nature"; for a knowledge of the physical world which makes possible the utilisation even of atomic energy.

¹ It would be rewarding to examine also the contributions which farming has made to science (in the form of facilities, observations, problems, etc.), for to-day the reverse direction is stressed almost exclusively.

These things must be said if we are to understand where the farmer stands to-day. Never before has he had at his disposal so much assistance in the form of advice, technical resources, powerful machinery. And yet, never has he had such *real* difficulties to cope with, especially if he is a farmer who wants to be "modern"; who wants to make full use of what his time can give him, and to play his full part in our modern age. His bank balance may be all right, and the accounts of this or that department. But there is an element of disquietude in modern farming, of restlessness, at bottom even of uncertainty; a lack of confidence in the very basis of the farmer's work, which is bound to undermine the stability of the whole structure of farming. By no means every farmer is aware of this because there are so many "obvious" reasons for crop failure, for labour difficulties, for gluts and shortages. There are so many scapegoats in the guise of government and financiers, of wicked trade interests and stupid political parties, of world trends and trade agreements, of weather and all the rest of it.

But there are also farmers who, for some time past, have been uneasy, realising that something fundamental is missing when they go the whole way in applying scientific thought and advice. To the extent to which they themselves are masters of their craft, they can make full use of what research stations and colleges advise, because they can digest the information and adapt it to the conditions and circumstances of their own farms. But they are aware that there is a certain tension; that our modern world-picture lacks something—a something which cannot be easily grasped and defined.

During the second quarter of this century these doubts, these uncertainties, these criticisms, have become so strong that a movement has grown up which is out to bring radical changes into modern agriculture. There has been no individual leader; there is no single banner under which this movement rallies. Indeed, it is most difficult to find a positive common denominator for all its components, or even a neutral one. An immense literature—books, pamphlets, and periodicals—has arisen, covering every conceivable aspect of human life in connection with the earth and its use by man. Behind all this searching lies a deep longing for harmony, for an equilibrium between man and nature, accompanied by varying degrees of readiness to go to the root of the problem.

Food and money reformers, scientists and amateurs, theorists and practical farmers, and many others, have contributed to this revolutionary movement. Some want to put everything right by changing our money or the structure of agricultural prices; by being vegetarians or by abandoning the use of so-called chemical fertilisers. Others stress the need for a new social order, and point to the glories and balance of feudal times, when certainly some members of human society were better off and had a fuller life than is possible to-day.

But before we can hope to arrive at a proper judgment of all these efforts, we should begin by inquiring about man himself, and the state of consciousness which leads him to this or that behaviour. Only if we can find a new basis for human thinking and human action can we hope to develop a system of agriculture—of dealing with the earth—which is more than an antidote of limited range and effect against this or that evil, disease or misuse.

I have said that modern agriculture was bound to take on the forms it assumes to-day, since they are the expression of a world-picture in which man as a spiritual being has no place; in which the spirit is no longer recognised, because for the last few centuries man's consciousness has been quite deliberately directed towards the world accessible to the senses, to methods of investigation which take measurement as their essential basis. But measurement, applied generally to earth and universe, changes all our perspectives: man shrinks into insignificance in a world expressed merely in figures, described merely in terms of substances and physical forces. Perspectives change still more as we venture into space and every year brings new and staggering revelations of stellar distances no longer expressible in miles. We have to measure them by the speed of light and we talk of millions of light-years. Such distances pass human imagination, though for purely abstract and intellectual orientation they may be very useful and even necessary.

Inevitably this new outlook is reflected in the farmer's changed attitude to his craft. With the introduction of measure, weight, and number as the only legitimate criteria of human knowledge, he was bound to turn his attention more and more towards the substances of plant and soil. Where he still sought explanations that lay beyond his fields and farm, science could not help him to understand the connection between earth and universe which

had been so living an experience for his ancestors, not many generations ago. The earth had become truly a "speck of dust" in a vast galaxy, and all experience of a living cosmos was lost. No wonder the farmer confined his interest more and more to what he could see and weigh; and precisely those farmers who were leaders in their craft welcomed all that science could give. They came to certain conclusions and adopted certain practices, and—I must repeat—these are consistent. They are the logical result of a world-picture from which the spirit has been banished, and in which there is no longer any place for man as a spiritual being.

What are the results of this new outlook? Great progress has been made in crop-production as far as quantities are concerned, but quality has not always kept pace. The costs of production have increased, and to-day they include large sums for combating insects and other pests. In the realm of animal husbandry the picture is essentially the same: quantitative increase, but dangerous instability of health and fertility. We learnt recently that animal diseases cost this country £60,000,000 a year in loss of production. And in many parts of the world the very foundation of the farmer's life is threatened by the expansion of industry and encroachment by the towns, and especially by soil erosion due to mismanagement and greed.

Socially, too, the future of agriculture, at least in the West, has become very insecure. There is a continual drift of young men from the country to the towns, and those who stay on the land approach their work with an industrial mentality, as far as working hours, etc., are concerned. Hence the farmer requires more and more machinery and is forced increasingly to industrialise his farm, and to put more capital into it. Yet the basis for such a tendency is inherently unsound. He becomes linked more intimately with a money-market which is ruled by industrial rather than by agricultural principles, and so is exposed to the effects of policies and fluctuations which he cannot control.

Some readers may wish to know much more about these issues. There is a vast literature in which all the real and alleged misdeeds and failures of modern farming have been collected, not always very critically. Very rarely are they seen as the necessary outcome of man finding himself in a world in which he has no place as a human being—no place as a being of body, soul, and spirit. For

it was man's destiny to lose knowledge of the spirit, so as to regain it in freedom and out of his own spiritual activity.

It is at this point that we must ask how to make a start with that fundamental re-orientation which alone can help mankind in general, and farmers in particular, to overcome the present impasse. Merely to replace "inorganic" methods of manuring by "organic" ones is not good enough, unless the choice is based on a real and new understanding of life as we see it revealed in soil and plant, animal and man, weather and stars, and in nature's rhythms of growth and decay. We can witness to-day rather painful attempts to justify the replacement of chemical fertilisers with compost and rotted organic material (they are by no means identical): painful because the language and arguments used spring from exactly the same substance-bound approach as has led to the present situation. The essential weakness of many aspects of the "organic school" is shown in this use of the same jargon, tinged now with a certain degree of inconsistency. There are notable exceptions; but we must realise that in the "organic school" we meet a queer mixture of motives and methods.

We should not ignore, either, the strong movement of present-day agricultural science towards paying greater attention to the humus-content of the soil, and to organic principles in farming. It would be fascinating to analyse this development, which in many cases amounts to a change of front, and we can foresee the day when orthodox science will use most of the arguments which are nowadays the prerogative of the "organic school". Where will the latter be then unless it seeks and finds a much deeper and stronger foundation than can be derived merely from the mistakes and weaknesses of other methods?

More will have to be said about this later; but it may be easier to find our way through all these various approaches if we start with one—usually called the Bio-Dynamic—which quite consciously seeks to enable the farmer to act with clear knowledge of what he is doing, and of the purpose of his work. The technical methods which spring from this approach must be viewed as part of a distinctive philosophy. This makes it hard to describe in a few words what those who have received the stimulus for their work from Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy are aiming at. They are impelled to work on a much broader basis than that of "using compost",

or of "not using chemicals". To understand this, let us see how Rudolf Steiner began when he gave his Agriculture Course at Koberwitz in 1924.

He spoke of the earth as a living organism, part of a living cosmos. If we are to enter into these ideas, our thinking must become stronger and more mobile—not in any obscure or mystical sense, but by following Rudolf Steiner's clearly formulated advice as to method and training. We shall then see that he sought to lead us beyond our present limited knowledge; that Anthroposophy expands our horizon. If ever a philosophy did justice to what our senses teach us, it is Anthroposophy; but the findings of our senses are supplemented by strenuous thinking, and together they lead us to a new and wider knowledge.

All this may sound terribly abstract, as though it had nothing to do with farming. And yet just here lies the point of departure from present-day habits of scientific research and farming practice.

This living cosmos around us, and the earth below our feet, represent the two great polarities behind all the phenomena of life; from the cosmos come the forces of the periphery, streaming in towards the centre; from the centre, earth-forces radiate outwards. While these latter are widely known to us in the form of gravity, electricity, &c., those from the periphery, entirely different in character, are manifest in growth and buoyancy and many other phenomena characteristic of the organic world. Rudolf Steiner calls them etheric or formative forces or life-forces. (Cf. G. Wachsmuth, *The Etheric Formative Forces in Cosmos, Earth and Man*). George Adams has shown how the modern mathematician can approach the realm of these peripheral forces, and how he then finds himself coming ever closer to Goethe's way of understanding nature—the way which was further developed, and carried from the plant kingdom into the sphere of animal and man, by Rudolf Steiner.

We shall never understand life by means merely of the centrifugal earth-forces. We must extend our view into this realm of the cosmic forces, and then many a phenomenon which stands before us as a puzzle, or as an isolated fact or problem, will fall harmoniously into place as part of the tapestry of nature which, in all its varied manifestations, confronts the farmer day by day. Astronomy and geology, chemistry and botany, take on new light and colour, and become much more accessible to the farmer.

Let us make it clear that this is not a question of going back to a pre-scientific state of knowledge. It means that we learn once

more to trust our senses when observing plant and soil and their interplay; and we find that the facts supplied by analytical science fit usefully into the picture which we gradually build up.

The farmer who proceeds in this way will study life in terms of *process* rather than of substance. To-day we talk with ease of potassium, phosphorus, nitrogen—but how clear is our knowledge of these substances? How many of us have done the laboratory work which would familiarise us with their characteristics and appearance? But it is possible, without academic study, to go a long way in studying plant life *dynamically*—that is, to see the plant growing between the forces of “gravity” and “levity” (buoyancy), and to observe in the plant how life expresses itself through the laws of metamorphosis. An abstract plant without soil and heaven does not exist (hydroponics notwithstanding); neither does soil exist without plants and the heavenly spheres surrounding the earth (whether we pay attention to these or not). These cosmic influences are not vague and general; we can study their specific and particular manifestations in connection with sun, moon, and planets. We are only at the beginning of this knowledge, but the investigations so far made, in the laboratory and on the farm, have given encouraging and helpful results.

All this can become a serious study, as serious as chemistry or botany as taught in schools and colleges to-day. For its advanced stages, laboratory work is required, but for the initial steps all that is needed is that degree of open-mindedness and perseverance which should be found in any searcher after truth.

This study of life in terms of processes opens up great possibilities of assisting plant growth, and of setting corrective influences to work where conditions of soil and weather have brought about abnormalities, such as attacks by pests, diseases, and so on. But once we have begun to understand the life in soil and plant, we shall always take care to keep our treatments in the realm of life—that is, to work on the basis of processes (preferably of a rhythmic nature) rather than of substances. Solid substances, in the form in which they are subject to ordinary analysis, have in a way fallen out of the process of life.

For the treatment of soil and plants, Rudolf Steiner indicated certain “preparations” which are based on the living plant, its contact with the living soil and its connection with a living cosmos. Spiritual Science—the science of the spirit—will never find itself

at variance with true Natural Science—the science of nature—for nature is the *manifestation to the senses of the spirit*. It is not something fundamentally different, though in the realms of nature and of spirit different laws prevail. We shall not find it surprising, therefore, that we can interpret some of the effects of these preparations in terms of bacteriology and homoeopathy,¹ although ordinary chemical analysis may not reveal their true nature. Their uniqueness lies not in their composition, but in the way in which they are made, and in the conceptions which make us choose these particular substances and the particular methods of preparing them. Their use opens up a fundamentally new approach for the farmer.

A few words must suffice to indicate their nature. Six of them (known as 502–507) are used for the treatment of manure and compost. They are made from plants which are enveloped in certain animal organs and exposed for a period to seasonal influences in the soil or the atmosphere. The contact with animal organs is of the utmost importance if we are to understand the ultimate effect of the preparations in establishing a balance between the earthly-physical and the cosmic-etheric forces. To attempt to make these preparations without the animal organs shows a complete lack of understanding of the principles involved.

The plants—yarrow, dandelion, chamomile, nettle, valerian, oak-bark—were chosen by Dr. Steiner for the specific contribution each could make to the composting process. He also showed the way to an understanding of the necessary part played by animal organs in the creation of the preparations. Just as there is a far-reaching difference between vegetable compost and farmyard manure, so do the finished preparations, when they have undergone a kind of digestion in the animal organs, differ essentially from their plant ingredients.

To explain this fully, we should have to explore the new approach to zoology which spiritual science opens up. All that can be said here on the subject is that in the animal kingdom we encounter a third principle which lifts the physical-etheric activities of the plant to a new level. This typically animal principle, retained in the animal organ used as a sheath, is needed to convert the plant substances of the preparations into carriers of the fully-developed processes required by plant and soil.

¹ The term “homoeopathy” is used here for its bearing on the effects of minute quantities and high dilutions, rather than for its use of the principle “like cures like”.

The true function of the preparations (and we should see in them really *one* treatment given by means of six ingredients) is to harmonise the fermentation in manure and compost, so that the compost may promote a balanced growth of the plant. The preparations have a stimulating influence, setting in motion humus-forming processes in the soil; they also enable crops grown with their aid to assimilate various substances which chemical analysis shows to be present in healthy plants. The researches of Dr. E. Pfeiffer have yielded valuable clues to an understanding of the preparations in terms of substances and bacteriology; but it would be misleading to take these findings without reference to the wider implications which are always essentially involved.

Two further preparations (500 and 501) are applied directly to soil and plant respectively. They are made from cow manure and finely ground quartz crystals, the substance in each case being packed into a cow horn and matured during certain seasons of the year. Before application they are stirred thoroughly in water and then sprayed on soil or plant. They help the plant to settle in the ground, to become a "citizen of the earth", and later to find its true goal in the sphere of light.

Only the barest outline of practical techniques has been given here. A considerable literature about them already exists; much has still to be investigated. But enough has been said to show that quite practical steps are taken to meet the needs of the plant, even though we understand the task of manuring as "making the soil alive", rather than as replacing certain substances which have been taken by a previous crop, or are lacking in the first place.

In this direction lie the answers to questions often asked: "Can an organic farm produce food on a commercial scale? How will it get enough natural manure for its total requirements?"

The first answer is that the bio-dynamic approach enables the most complete and economical use to be made of every kind of organic material available for manure. Further, it sees the manurial process as qualitative, not quantitative.¹ The idea that fertility depends on an arithmetical system of returning to the soil the same quantity of substance as is taken from it, or the chemical equivalent of the substances consumed, shows a failure to grasp the principles of bio-dynamic farming.

Rudolf Steiner's methods, which aim at enhancing the "life" of the soil, do not so much draw on reservoirs of substance as enlist—through strictly practical techniques—the activity of cosmic-earthly forces. Working not only biologically but dynamically, they open up possibilities which go beyond any purely quantitative forecast.

"If only Steiner had given a cut-and-dried system of manuring, we could present it neatly in a few formulae and write a textbook on it, and then these methods could find their appropriate place in the wider variety of farming methods, new and old." How often one hears this said! But in fact this kind of textbook cannot properly be written. The methods indicated by Rudolf Steiner are intended for men of to-day; they are thoroughly practical; but they cannot be understood or fruitfully applied if they are torn away from the conceptions behind them. And the point to emphasise in this connection is that the farmer, although he cannot alter the climate or soil-situation of his farm, and often cannot do much to change the lay-out of his fields and buildings, *can* always start trying to change and enlarge his outlook. How far he will go depends on his abilities and circumstances. But once he embarks on this adventure of placing the utmost confidence in his own observation and thinking as the basis of human knowledge, he will find there is no realm, large or small, which is not illuminated and shown in fresh perspective.

The several kingdoms of nature, for example, stand out in new clarity. One sees how the mineral kingdom is the sole source of physical laws, and yet is formed out of forces coming from the remotest distances. The plant kingdom reveals itself in a duality of physical substances, permeated, shaped, and sustained by etheric formative forces. (This living quality it shares with the higher kingdoms of animal and man). In the animal we have an essentially new element, the inner life of emotion: the soul. The principle at work here manifests through the very form of the animal, in that clear and distinctive contrast between inside and outside, which we do not find in the plant. Nutrition and digestion are new phenomena not present in the plant, or at least present in quite different forms. Finally, there is the human kingdom; it has much in common with the animal, but as the bearer of self-consciousness it must be recognised as a separate kingdom. To-day man is looked upon merely as a higher animal; and this view is so deeply ingrained that these

¹ The qualitative aspect of human nutrition, as distinct from the quantitative, is a related subject which has an important bearing on world food supplies.

few sentences can do no more than draw attention to the radical difference between them. For closer study, Dr. H. Poppelbaum's book, *Man and Animal*, should be consulted.

The practical consequences of this difference are considerable: man's contribution to nature is quite unlike that of the animal. Man does not belong to the cycle of nature in the same way as does the animal; to a considerable degree he has emancipated himself. Food consumed by man undergoes different processes from those which prevail in the animal's digestive system, and from this it follows that the excrements of man and animal are of different value as manure, quite apart from their different composition.

In its manure the animal contributes something to the farm which is unique and indispensable (cf. what has been said about the making of the preparations), but human digestion is such that the food substances are destroyed much more thoroughly, and human excrement is found to be rich in pathogenic organisms. A more detailed study would show that human excrement is not only not useful, but actually harmful when used in the growing of food for man and beast. Its place in the cycle of nature would be rather for such purposes as enhancing fertility in afforestation schemes. Observation has shown that where sewage is used—admittedly, perhaps, in abnormal concentrations—for manuring vegetable crops, the plants show distinctive weaknesses which would otherwise be attributable to lack of light.

Man's contribution to the land lies in a quite different direction. What distinguishes him from the animal is that he has a consciousness of self: that he has an immortal spirit; that his actions can and should be valued on moral grounds. Many people feel vaguely that in past epochs, when this view of man prevailed, there was more harmony and wholeness in social life. And so in the present revolutionary movement in agriculture, we often find a hankering after the past. But although these pictures of a feudal estate, with village greens and maypole dances, may have beautiful and inspiring elements, there is a great deal of sentimentality in them, not to mention a dangerous leaning, sometimes, to "blood and soil" of infamous memory. We must face the fact that we have lost our connection with many of the old ways of life. They are by no means to be rejected out of hand; the point is to discriminate among them, using whatever in them still has sustaining power, but not allowing ourselves to become dependent on tradition and imprisoned by it.

We must draw inspiration from the future, so that our descendants may find a form of social life, and also a form of agriculture, which they will create for their own lives, guided by their own initiative and their own recognition of the needs of the time.

The weakness of this longing for the past is seen in those who advocate organic manuring because it seems to express a certain wholeness, but who cannot connect their aspirations with the existing stage in the evolution of mankind. We find in their writings much loose thinking, mixed with sentimental pleading for a type of farming dominated by hand and horse labour. Now there are very sound arguments for such labour in certain cases, but most of the motives of this "back to olden times" school are wrong and out of date. Men have changed, and it is no use pretending that our connection with our work is the same as that enjoyed by our ancestors. The machine has become a necessity; and indeed it is precisely on a mixed organic farm that the labour problem becomes most acute, on account of the multiplicity of jobs. We must learn to develop a degree of judgment which will enable us to decide where machines can and should be used, and where and how they are hostile to healthy living. To lay down a dogmatic rule that the machine is bad in agriculture, is as dangerous as the modern over-emphasis on machinery which turns agricultural shows into industrial exhibitions.

With these last points we have moved into realms where everything depends on man, and on a true understanding of his nature and his task. We must recognise that man is an integral part of farming. It is man who isolates a certain area and calls it a farm; who—if he is a good farmer—works with and not against nature to produce food. But in so doing he cannot help interfering with nature to some extent, and he must know how to take account of this interference so that he may balance the damage he brings about. This is the point where he needs moral judgment.

However, the farmer is given great opportunities of assisting nature, even of "intensifying" her life. Although establishing a farm means a certain interference with nature, the proper development of a farm, harmonising the farmer's various demands on land and plants, all works towards the creation of a new organism. A farm managed in accordance with the true laws of nature (allowing for the difference between inorganic and organic) takes on the charac-

teristics of an organism in a very real sense. An area of land devoted to a single product such as fruit or sugar-beet or poultry, importing everything it needs in the way of fertilisers or feeding-stuffs, and selling all it produces—such a piece of land is more like a factory than a farm; it is certainly not an organism. The true organic farm is a living, balanced relationship between soil, plant, animal, man, and cosmos. It has a self-contained individual life—even a personality, for no two farms are alike—and something like a circulatory system through which life and substance flow continually to its interdependent organs.¹

The true organic farm creates food for man out of earthly depths and cosmic heights, out of the free interplay of these two poles: and this is the only food able to offer true nourishment to body, soul, and spirit. If such a farm is a genuine organism, it will quite naturally reach a high degree of self-sufficiency in manures and feeding-stuffs; though complete self-sufficiency must not become a dogmatic postulate. It is only through man that a farm can attain to such a condition; and only then will it be worthy of man. Human dignity finds its counterpart in reverence for the living earth.

The organic movement has been here described as a revolutionary one. All revolutionary movements are in danger of becoming stagnant, with the revolutionaries turning into the guardians of a new tradition. Avoidance of this danger depends on the new tradition carrying with it a creative impulse, so that revolution turns into evolution and never stands still. The organic school in agriculture can make an essential contribution to the re-shaping of human society if—but only if—it looks for a positive foundation, and is not content to remain merely a protest against orthodox ideas. Since this re-orientation must start with man, and not with the technicalities of method, we may see in Anthroposophy, the knowledge of man, a basis for that integration of human life with farming which is lacking to-day, and is longed for by so many.

¹ This may help to show why it is not possible to "run an experimental plot on the Steiner methods", as is sometimes suggested. No experimental plot fulfils the conditions of balanced organic life which are implicit in the methods.

TWO POEMS

OWEN BARFIELD

THE MERMAN

A FAIR maiden sailed forth on the deep sea for to fish,
She laughed loud and she sang loud as the wind thrummed in the shrouds

And the same sound, from boats round of her friends, answered her wish,
And the waves clashed in the deep, dashed on the rocks, washed on the shore.

They called out as they trawled, shouting aloud, Hoy! for glee
And the fair maiden hauled hard on her catch: presently
The small fish and the large fish in the hold heaped she did see,
And the waves clashed in the deep, dashed on the rocks, sighed on the shore.

Now why, salt young fisher maiden, long long do you stare,
Then peal out into loud laughter, peal out like bells?
Like a great hulk, oh, flopped, sulking, an old Merman there!
And the waves clashed in the deep, dashed on the rocks, washed on the shore.

She's placed knife for a strange guest on the white cloth at home,
And the moon waxed, the moon waned, the suns rose and fell:
"To my warm couch, old Merman, you ne'er ne'er shall come!"
And the waves clashed in the deep, dashed on the rocks, sighed on the shore.

"I, storm-bred, in your warm bed knew no wish to be,
"But your home bright with the gold light was a right fair country,
"And to drink all of your sweet small treble voice mocking me."
And the waves clashed in the deep, dashed on the rocks, wailed on the shore.

TO THE OLD ADAM

(in middle age)

If you were the first in this carriage,
That gave you no right to be rude!
By heaven! you tiresome old man,
Can't you see you intrude?
Just hovering on in your corner,
Regardless of how you annoy,
Stale garbage that used to seem wondrous
When I was a boy—
How you 'might have done this and the other'
And that 'would have been very fine'
And 'white were the women, by Gad, sir,
And red was the wine!'
Now I've plenty to do on this journey—
I've no time to fritter away—
I've a book I shall scarcely get finished
By reading all day. . . .
You'd much like to know where I got it?
Well, I got it, while you were asleep
(And snoring away like a pig),
From a man with some sheep.
This is really too much, Sir, I'm *reading*!
I don't *want* to hear of your plan!
Take your hand off my wrist, if you please,
You disgusting old man!
Oh, now you look hurt—well, I'm sorry!
It's true there was no need to shout:
We seem to have stopped at a station . . .
For God's sake get out!

THE SPIRITUAL GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE*

EMIL BOCK

(i) *Jordan and Judaea*

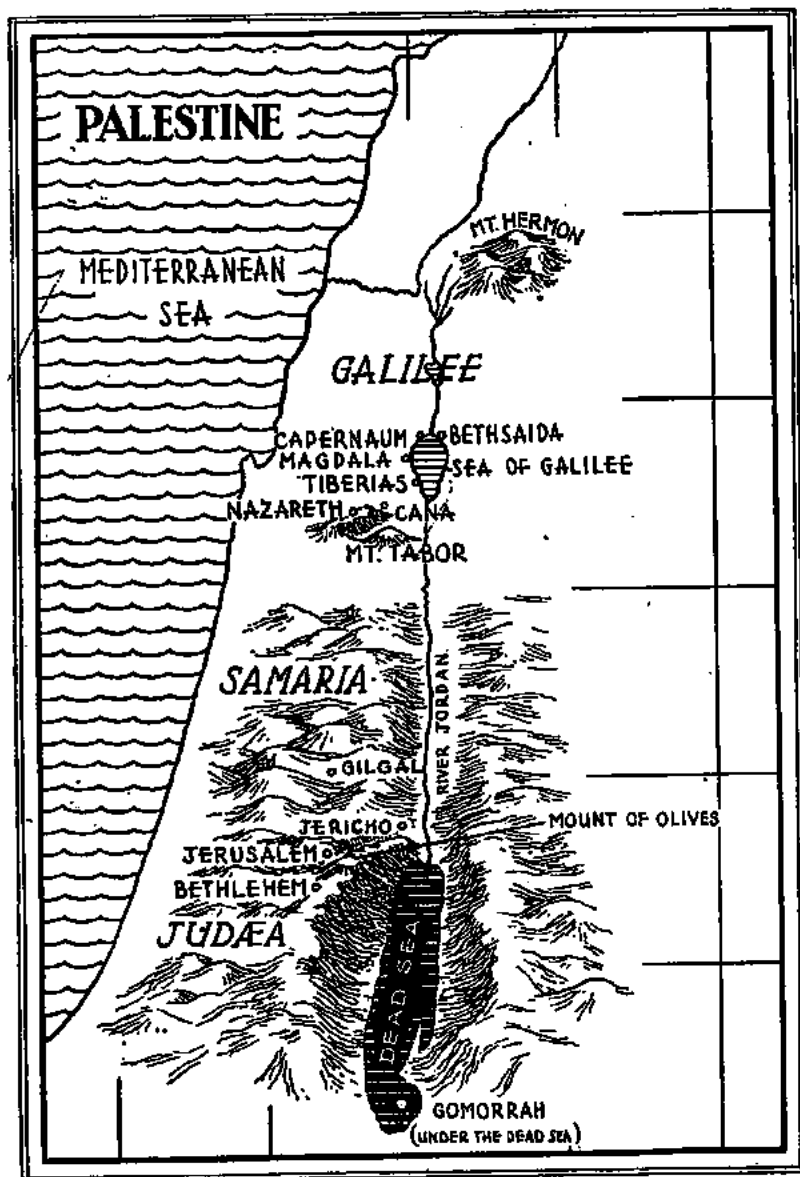
THE Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea, the lowest region of the earth's surface, are a meeting place for different worlds. Viewed from east to west, the river separates two epochs. Away to the east, the style of architecture bears the mark of the ancient orient. The country west of the Jordan, the scene of Biblical events, faces towards the modern world. The Mediterranean, which carries a breath of Homeric Greece as far as the coast of Asia Minor, with Ephesus and its other Greek cities, instils a European temper into Palestine.

In its course from north to south, the Jordan traverses two landscapes which seem like precipitations of two fundamentally different supersensible spheres. Just as human life at the gate of birth issues forth from the sources of light, from the miraculous sphere of pre-earthly existence, and at death empties itself into the austere region of fire, of inexorable trials and testings, so the Jordan flows out of the Sea of Galilee and the heavenly Galilean landscape, to empty itself at last into the Dead Sea, in the midst of the burning, almost uncanny, wilderness of Judaea.

The miracle of Galilee is the lifting up of the soul to the youth-giving sources of cosmic life. The riddle of the Dead Sea, 1,300 feet below sea-level, lies in the sub-earthly breath of scorching heat that rests upon the land. Death speaks in the wilderness of Judaea, but not only of the end of earthly life in cold; death speaks also in the language of beyond the Threshold, the language of cosmic wrath and judgment.

On the road from Jerusalem through the mountainous wilderness towards Jericho and the Dead Sea, we see clearly that this mountain

* From a series of articles first published in *Die Christengemeinschaft*, the journal of the Christian Community in Germany, and reproduced with the permission of the author. Translated by Dorothy Lenn.



range of magical death owes its origin to widespread volcanic catastrophes; and the coral reefs which are occasionally thrust in among the valley heights make us realise that this country must have had a very different appearance long ago. The Bible stories of the time of Abraham, too, presuppose that at one time the banks of the Jordan were endowed with inexhaustible fertility. The terrible cataclysms of nature, which the Old Testament describes as the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, brought the country down out of the fruitful, etheric, heavenly spheres into the lowest depths of earthly deadness and numbness. The earth itself became a pillar of salt, as the story of Lot's wife tells us. The high salt-content of the Dead Sea is an expression of the process of hardening and crystallisation which has entered into the earth there.

Thus from the very earliest times the scorching breath of death from beyond the Threshold, which streams over the Jordan and the Dead Sea from the wilderness of Judaea, has been felt as an expression of Divine judgment. In that region men felt themselves to be near the fiery region of the Last Judgment. The Fall of man has found there its topographical expression.

But while the landscape reminds us of the great cosmic Fall, at the same time it preaches in forceful language the need for that transformation of the senses whereby man's gaze will again be lifted towards the heights. This is the country where John the Baptist appeared with his cry, "Change your ways of thinking!" The wilderness of Judaea and the valley of the Jordan near the Dead Sea—that is John the Baptist's setting.

The parable of the Good Samaritan tells of the man who journeyed from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves. It is not easy to form a conception of the rugged immensity and dereliction of this stony passage through the wilderness. The old road passes over the Mount of Olives. From the summit, more than 2,600 feet above sea-level, one looks down on the one hand towards Jerusalem and the majestic platform of the Temple site; on the other to the wilderness of Judaea, which in undulating alternations of mountain and valley sinks at no great distance into the sub-earthly depths of the Dead Sea. One can see the Dead Sea far away below. At sunset there is often a violet-red glow over the desert mountains and the heights beyond them.

Terrifying glimpses into deep ravines are often vouchsafed to the traveller from Jerusalem to Jericho, which lies at the foot

of the mountains of the wilderness and at the commencement of the Jordan valley steppes, only 330 feet above the level of the Dead Sea. The landscape must be rather like that of the Californian canyons; again and again the mountains are cut by immensely deep gorges. Yet here and there—one has to diverge from the main road to see this—in contrast to the ash and lava beds left by great volcanic outbursts, one comes across a last remnant of the old nature imbued with life, where far below in the gorge winds the silver thread of a brook.

In many of these valleys it is surprising to see monasteries and hermitages nestling under the precipitous slopes, gleaming white against the rock. Here a significant light is thrown upon the history of religion. To-day these monasteries are inhabited for the most part by Greek monks; but on these same sites there have probably always been monasteries right back into pre-Christian times. At one time the Essenes had their centre and their settlements, very like monasteries, in this very region of the Dead Sea. Living as an esoteric movement in this utter wilderness, they strove through strict discipline of soul, and through the cultivation of the ancient wisdom, to prepare for the turning-point of the world and for the coming of the Messiah.

John the Baptist, even if not himself actually an Essene, was in close contact with the Order. He visited its monasteries and took part in its efforts towards the transformation of the senses. Perhaps he may even have dwelt in just such a hermitage as may be seen to-day clinging to the rocky slopes. We have to think of Jesus of Nazareth, too, as visiting and becoming familiar with the world of the Essenes and of the Baptist in that Judaean wilderness near the Dead Sea, before he allowed Himself to be baptised by John.

If you follow the road from Jerusalem as far as Jericho and look back from the insignificant ruins of the old city towards the mountains, you see that the summit of the nearest mountain is covered with a long row of buildings. You recognise once more the gleaming white of the rock monasteries. This is the Mount of the Temptation, the place where the Tempter approached Jesus and challenged Him to make bread out of stones. It is the peak from which the Tempter showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world. Thus, before Christ began to work among men after the Baptism in Jordan, he remained for the significant forty days within the sphere of

influence of the desert, in the landscape of the Essenes and of John, deliberately seeking the sphere of the testing of His soul.

In full harmony with this landscape, which as the ashpit of a submerged world brings to expression the cosmic Fall of the earth and of humanity, is the strip of the River Jordan, where the Baptist preached and baptised, and where the Baptism of Jesus Himself took place. Only a few grey-green bushes and undergrowth form a scanty border for the muddy, sluggish stream. There is no refreshment in this landscape; here, too, the weary breath of the dying earth-existence prevails. The flowing water arrests our attention only by contrast with the death of the landscape. We need only climb a few steps up the muddy hill to see the great salt crystal of the Dead Sea gleaming in the sunshine. Everything which took place here had to be wrested from the sub-earthly, magical power, of death.

Here Jacob wrestled with the angel. Here Joshua led his people across the Jordan and set up the twelve stones of the circle of Gilgal. When Jesus of Nazareth betook Himself to John at the Jordan, He must have been completely filled with the heavy burden of humanity's need. What the landscape of the place expresses, that His soul was, until at the sounding of the heavenly voice a higher power entered into Him.

The banks of the Jordan are the threshold of two worlds. To come from the far side has often been experienced as a fateful crossing over into a realm where the demands of the future were waiting to be met. Jacob crosses the river on his return from his ancestral home in Babylonia; out of the ancient world of heavenly dreams he struggles through into the world of waking day. Joshua leads his people out of the wilderness which separates them from the decadent spirituality of Egypt into the land of their future mission. And all the striving of humanity in the past towards the threshold of its trial was crowned with fulfilment when the Christ Being gave Himself up to earthly incarnation at the Baptism in Jordan, to implant in the dying earth-existence a seed of new life.

(ii) Galilee

Perhaps more strongly than anywhere else on earth, the Sea of Galilee awakens in the traveller an impression of the super-sensible, heavenly origin of creation. When we travel from Nazareth through the mountains of Galilee, suddenly far away below we

see the full extent of the blue basin of the lake spread out, crowned in the background by the snowy peaks of Mount Hermon, bordered in the foreground by the gleaming white houses of the city of Tiberias. Gazing on the lake, we really feel that we have reached the goal, not only of our journey, but of a whole stage of our life.

Both lakes of Palestine, the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee, lie far below sea level—the one 1,300 feet, the other 650 feet—yet the contrast in scenery surrounding the two could not be greater. As against the Sea of Death, and the solemnity which follows death, we have the Sea of Life and the sphere of pre-earthly beauty. This is at the same time the contrast between Judaea and Galilee.

The dual nature of these two districts, one in the north and the other in the south of Palestine, is not merely earthly and geographical; behind it is concealed the duality of two different states of consciousness. Especially in ancient times, when the soul of man was inwardly more dependent upon nature, the consciousness of the inhabitants of Galilee must have been fundamentally different from that of the people of Judaea. And since even to-day this mystery of the transmutation of consciousness still weighs heavily upon us there, we can well imagine that in Biblical times it exerted a powerful influence upon men.

The New Testament events in Judaea take place in quite another sphere from those in Galilee. It is only in appearance that the life of Jesus passes in harmonious alternation between Judaea and Galilee, upon the same level of earthly happenings. In Galilee the world has not yet quite become earth, whereas in the wilderness of Judaea and around the Dead Sea, it has become more earthly than the earth.

In Judaea took place all those events in the life of Jesus which one can sum up in the word *Incarnation*. In Judaea lie the three places which indicate the stages of Christ's Incarnation—Bethlehem, the place of His human birth; Jordan, the place where occurred the Incarnation of the Christ-Being in the man Jesus of Nazareth; and Golgotha, the place of the skull, the place of the crucifixion, which was the consummation of Christ's becoming man.

In Galilee took place all those events which manifested the glory of Christ. There the cosmic superabundance of Christ's Being, beyond the sheaths of the man Jesus of Nazareth, revealed itself in word and deed. If we understand only Judaea, we understand only the man Jesus. With the understanding of Galilee we have at the

same time a clue to the distinction between Jesus and Christ. In the country where cosmic, super-earthly forces are weaving and working, we begin to have some perception of the cosmic super-earthly nature of the Christ, who during three years ensouled the man Jesus. Just as in Judaea there are places which indicate the stages of the Incarnation, so in Galilee there are places which mark the unfolding of Christ's glory, the etheric supersensible secrets of the Christ-Being.

One of these places is Nazareth, the scene of the childhood of Jesus upon whom the glory of the Christ shone. The miracle of childhood is unveiled and illuminated by the higher miracle of the childhood of Jesus, which took place here. The other place is Capernaum, the town on the shore of the Sea of Galilee which is called "His town." We may regard Capernaum as the centre of the district within which the miracles of Jesus were performed. Christ's miracles are to be understood only through the secret of the etheric Christ, through the secret of His glory. The miracles could come to pass in Galilee, because the landscape of Galilee is in itself a miracle.

The world of the Sea of Galilee has a singular effect upon the soul. If one visits Tiberias first—and this city is the only one in Galilee which the modern fashion of hasty travel allows tourists to take in—one is at once subjected to the scorching subterranean heat of the low-lying country. The lake reveals only one pole of its being, and the more we have been delighted by our first sight of the lake from above, the greater is our disappointment at what we now experience. The hot springs of Tiberias and its fever-breeding climate are an expression of the one pole. Moreover, the town of Tiberias was never the scene of New Testament events. At that time it was quite a young Roman settlement, a worldly town with a bad reputation. Having been colonised solely with alien and homeless people, it was an extreme example of Galilean folk-mixing.

But if we leave Tiberias and go on to Magdala and Capernaum, the other nature of the lake becomes more and more apparent. Its marvellous etheric freshness and livingness (which is the reason why it can change its appearance in a surprisingly short time) now hold the balance increasingly against the oppressive, sweltering heat. And on the site of ancient Bethsaida, which we reach shortly before Capernaum—Bethsaida, the scene of the miraculous feeding and the walking upon the water—the two natures of the lake act

upon us with such equal power that we feel we have truly reached the focus of the events of Christ's life in Galilee.

The soul which surrenders itself to the influence of nature in this place is, on the one hand, as it were lifted out of the body by the ripe, super-earthly forces of summer, and on the other marvelously refreshed, as if by the waters of life itself. The soul hovers with the whole landscape between heaven and earth, and is transfused by that world of pictures in which the earthly becomes the transparent vehicle for the superearthly, and the superearthly seeks to pour itself out and embody itself in the world of things.

Here we come very near to the consciousness of the disciples. It was certainly not by chance that almost all Christ's disciples were men of Galilee. (Judas was from Judaea). Three of them, Peter, Andrew, and Philip are expressly stated in John's Gospel to be from Bethsaida, and are mentioned by name in his account of the miracle of the feeding which took place there. As Galileans, the disciples were predestined to feel and perceive the etheric being of Christ in the man of Nazareth, and to experience the "glory", the radiance of the revelation, in Christ's words and deeds.

It is out of this consciousness of the disciples, which lay near to the imaginative world, that we have to understand the Gospels, especially the first three Gospels. On the shore of the Sea of Galilee we penetrate deeply into the sphere of the Gospels, and understand that the Gospels do not primarily describe external geographical facts and incidents, but that they bring about a living interpenetration between earthly and super-earthly, and make physical events alternate with etheric processes, and processes of the soul.

Contrary to the views expressed in the theological literature of the last century, we realise in Galilee how difficult it is to create a real picture of the external course of the life of Jesus. Strange as it may sound, the man Jesus is actually harder to reach than the cosmic Christ-Being. In the fruitful quietude of the Galilean lake, remote from the world, we come, as it were from afar, to a picture of how that quiet little group of disciples may have wandered along the shore or over the mountains, gathered round their 30-year-old Leader, who was certainly one of the youngest of the group. Not only for hours, but for days, He would go on His way in silence, till some question, or some encounter by the way, caused the cosmic power and glory that was in Him to burst forth into flame, out of which His words and actions would then flow.

The essence of what we call the miracles does not consist in the external physical course which they took, but in the outpouring of revelation, the effect on consciousness which accompanied them. It was for this reason that, in describing the marriage at Cana, which, as the first of the miracles has its scene expressly laid in Galilee, the Gospel of John adds the words *et manifestavit gloriam suam*—"and manifested forth His Glory." Again, we do not in the least understand the miracle of the feeding if we see it only as a physical occurrence. It is the revelation manifested in the event, in inner harmony with the character of the landscape, which gives the scene its content. Thus we can also understand why the story of the walking upon the water follows immediately. In this the series of etheric occurrences associated with Christ in Galilee reached its culmination. The disciples now behold in all His overwhelming greatness the Being whose glory they had already surmised. In Galilee we are always in a certain way hovering between heaven and earth, and this happened in a special measure to the disciples in that night when they beheld Christ walking upon the water.

The transfiguration upon Mount Tabor marks the close of the Galilean events associated with the Christ. Now the glory of the etheric Christ is fully unveiled before the waking, day-time sight of the three chosen disciples. From this time on we are told: "They went up to Jerusalem." The scene of Jesus' life is transferred from Galilee to Judaea. The miracles cease. The far greater miracle of death and resurrection begins.

In Palestine all the important towns have their sacred mountains. Jerusalem has the Mount of Olives—Jericho the Mount of the Temptation. The sacred mountain of Nazareth is Tabor, the Mount of Transfiguration. Upon this town, lying on the heights of the Galilean mountains, Judaea seems to cast its shadow. When we quit the town for the plain we have first to pass some gloomy, precipitous mountain ridges which seem quite alien to the Galilean landscape. These are the heights from which the people of Nazareth wished to throw Christ down. Behind these gloomy mountains, however, there comes into sight another mountain, which seems to express some marvellous secret through its shape alone. Mount Tabor, with its rounded top, stands by itself, isolated, in the Galilean plain. All that had come to pass in the lake country reached its fulfilment upon the summit of this mountain.

When Jesus had come down from the mountain, with the three disciples who had seen Him in His etheric form, He spoke these

significant words to the twelve: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." The three who had been with Him had experienced how the mountain vanished, and the view into the supersensible lay open to them. Jesus spoke like words to the disciples about the power of faith to remove mountains after they had passed out of Galilee into Judaea. Just as the first saying had Tabor as a background, so the second had the Mount of Olives. These words were spoken at the momentous entry into Jerusalem which formed the prelude to the Mystery Drama of Golgotha.

Shortly after this, Christ once more ascends to the top of a mountain with His three chosen disciples. He leads them up the Mount of Olives. Again they experience how the mountain which had obscured their view vanishes from sight. This time they do not see the transfigured form of the Christ, but they look into the apocalyptic future of the world. The Christ speaks to them of the mysteries of the future, and out of the darkness of great cosmic battles, and of worlds going down in destruction, the secret of His second coming appears before their awakening souls.

It is not easy to form an adequate idea of the mighty change that this going up to Jerusalem meant for the souls of the disciples. They are suddenly transplanted from the supersensible realm of imaginative vision into a landscape in which hard contours everywhere prevail, a landscape upon which death has everywhere left its mark. The dream-like consciousness of the disciples, which had been so near to heaven, falls into a tragic impotence which increases until it culminates in the great denial before the Mystery of Golgotha.

In Galilee, Peter had been able to answer the Master's question with the words: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." But after Peter's confession in Galilee comes his denial in Judaea. Peter's consciousness breaks down. Actually he no longer knows where he is or what is happening. In Judaea the Christ, after the experiences of Mount Tabor, had tried on the Mount of Olives to awaken apocalyptic vision in the disciples. But the illumination of their consciousness on the Mount of Transfiguration in Galilee was followed by loss of consciousness in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the night of the institution of the Last Supper. The disciples, who had been able to behold the miracles of Galilee, were not there when in Judaea the Christ hung upon the Cross.

But then there comes a moment when once more a ray of light falls upon their darkened souls. It happens when the Risen One reveals Himself to them. To know the difference between Judaea and Galilee will prove an important key also to the Mystery of the Resurrection. Christ had told the disciples beforehand that He would show Himself to them in Galilee as the Risen One. And the women who were the first to see the Resurrected One on Easter morning were instructed to tell the disciples that He would go before them into Galilee. The disciples did not then go into Galilee in a geographical sense, but they experienced the great miracle of a new and higher Galilee in the midst of Judaea. The landscape of life was transplanted into the country of death, along with the etheric form of the Risen Christ.

The most beautiful and intimate spot to be found in Jerusalem is (or was at the time of my visit) the little-frequented grove on the summit of the Mount of Olives, tended by Greek monks, which bears the name *Viri Galilaei* (Men of Galilee). It is up there that the disciples are said to have seen the Risen One, up there that after the experience of the Ascension, the figures in white raiment are said to have announced to the disciples: "Ye men of Galilee, . . . He will come again, as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Even now the tradition exists in Jerusalem that this grove, over which a higher peace broods, represents Galilee in Judaea.

To draw attention to the mystery of the landscape which enshrines the Resurrection of Christ is to point out the eternal validity of these contrasts outside the realm of space. Humanity to-day has reached Judaea. The great forgetfulness of super-sensible existence which has laid hold of men's souls to-day corresponds to the failure of the disciples' consciousness. With the experience of the risen and returning Christ there is implanted in the Judaea of present-day humanity a higher Galilee, present everywhere; and along this inner way we shall learn to find again, in all parts of the earth, the miracles of the Galilean lake.

A THIRD WAY IN ARCHITECTURE

KENNETH BAYES

RUDOLF STEINER'S legacy to architecture appears to be slight, and in architectural circles in this country his name is almost unknown. A few buildings designed by him at Dornach in Switzerland, photographs and a model of an earlier building that was destroyed by fire, a few lectures—this, on the face of it, is his contribution. The knowledge that it all belongs to a short period during and soon after the first World War, when Dr. Steiner was also very active in other fields, may increase our admiration for the worker but not necessarily for the work. We are left with the question whether the architectural *quality* of the work merits serious attention, whether the forms have anything of value to say to us.

The architect who begins to study Rudolf Steiner's buildings finds that his two major works, the original Goetheanum and the present one which succeeded it, are similar apparently only in their purpose, in their main axial symmetry and in having forms which are strange. But in general appearance, how different are these two buildings! The first built largely of wood, warm and living: the second in stark, forbidding concrete; the first with its two interpenetrating domes, serene and friendly on the hilltop: the second with high, fortress-like walls.

Turning to the subsidiary buildings of this Dornach group, the houses and the workshops, we find them nearer sometimes to the first Goetheanum and sometimes to the second; and, interesting though these other buildings may be, the feeling remains that in the two Goetheanums is to be found, if anywhere, Steiner's significance for architecture.

But to extract the significance from these two enigmatic buildings we must turn to Steiner's teachings.

In his published lectures, Rudolf Steiner suggests a new interpretation of the architecture of history and indicates the basis for a new style for to-day. This is not just another aesthetic, a new abstraction.



Above:

A
Frank Lloyd Wright
house,
Fallingwater,
Pennsylvania.



On left:

Le Corbusier:
Swiss Students'
Hostel, Paris.



The First Goetheanum



The Second Goetheanum

The new interpretation and the new style are deeply connected with Steiner's insight into the nature of Man, and with his conception of the cosmos—and they can be properly understood only in relation to these.

Many will find it difficult to accept the idea that architecture has any connection with such questions. The abstract quality of human thinking during the last few centuries has led to the grouping of conceptions into isolated compartments. This specialisation has made possible the particular kind of knowledge with which we abound to-day, but has also deprived human beings of their wholeness.

There are two conceptions underlying Steiner's work which are vital to this kind of understanding of architecture. The first is that man is essentially a spiritual being, both in origin and in destiny, who dwells for periods of time in a physical body on earth; the second is that human consciousness on earth goes through evolutionary changes in the course of time.

These are by no means generally accepted to-day. Natural science, quite rightly finding that the human body has evolved from simpler forms, assumes that this is the whole story—that evolution has taken no other course. Rudolf Steiner's teaching is that there has been a spiritual evolution "downwards"—a gradual descent of the spirit into bodily incarnation—as well as an organic evolution "upwards". Further, we find that from the time when human beings first appeared on earth, this descent of the spirit into closer union with its material vehicle has continued, and is reflected in the evolution of human consciousness.

Human consciousness has become sharper and clearer, acquiring an ability to perform feats of precise scientific calculation and technical invention which were impossible for it in earlier periods, but at the same time its range has narrowed; there has been both a sharpening and a shortening of focus. To put it briefly—in proportion as man has extended his knowledge of, and his power over, his earthly environment, he has suffered a contraction of his spiritual faculties.

At the beginning of history, man lived on earth with little awareness of the nature of physical substance, but deeply connected with the spirit. Since then the balance has gradually changed: we have exact knowledge of physical substances, but we are—

usually—asleep in the spirit. And now, in this age of power and fear, this “age of anxiety”, the hour has come for man to reawaken by conscious endeavour his spiritual faculties and to bring them under that conscious control which in earlier epochs they lacked. The need is for a marriage between spiritual intuition and the clear concepts of the intellect: this was the aim of Rudolf Steiner’s Anthroposophy, or spiritual science.

That, briefly sketched, is the background and pattern against which architecture must be considered if we are to understand it in relation to man himself. We have to see his evolution, not as a straightforward progression from the simple to the complex, from the primitive to the civilised, but as a gradual change in emphasis between the spiritual and the physical in his consciousness. It is impossible to grasp the significance of the various architectural styles except in relation to the particular stage of human consciousness characteristic of the period. Equally, it is impossible to understand modern architecture except against this background of evolution.

We can see in the geometry of each succeeding style the stages of man’s incarnation and the development of his individual ego from the group consciousness. One may say that the task of the Egyptians was to learn to draw nearer to the earth, to bring the soul deeper into the body, and to enter into the significance of death. Thus in the Egyptian style, the first of the “historical” styles, the architecture is massive and heavy with earthly forces—the rock tombs were in the body of the earth itself. Of all shapes the square or cube is the most earthbound—the most solidly planted on earth—and the experience of this quality was necessary to the Egyptians. But the initiates, who were also the leaders of the people, knew that men were not yet prepared for the full measure of inner experience arising from the completely visible square or cube. Thus the square appears in the pyramid, but where it is invisible—as the shape of the ground-plan which is expressed in elevation, not as a square, but as a triangle, with its apex to the heavens. Again, in the temples, with their massive walls and pylons, the shapes are rarely quite rectangular, but are tapered—their converging lines on elevation eventually meeting in the heavens, on plan leading to the inner chamber of the initiate who alone, through his more advanced development, can already experience the significance of the cubic shape of this inner sanctuary.

The keynote of Greek times is balance. Life on earth is in harmony with life in the spirit. Man has come to terms with the earth, and can, for the first time, accept the rectangular form, although in the pediment of the temple we still find the triangle, and in, for instance, the doorway of the Erechtheion, the tapering walls. But the Greeks had no need to enter the temple; it was the dwelling place of the Gods. They performed their service to the earth on the land, and looked towards the temple with the confident knowledge that the Gods were among them. The whole land was the church, with the temple as the altar. Thus the Greek temple was a sculptured unity to be experienced from without.

Not until the next period, the Roman, is man sufficiently incarnated in the material substance of the earth to be able to erect the cubic shape and enter into it—not only to enter into it but to pass through it. For the Roman triumphal arch was, as it were, cut through a massive cubic block, and in passing through it the Caesars expressed both their personal triumph and the advancing mastery of their people over the material world.

In early Christian architecture, for the first time the church was built for all men to enter. The Greek harmony and balance had gone; instead, under the influence of Imperial Rome, there was the need to withdraw into a sanctuary away from worldly affairs. Everyday life became segregated from worship, and the long struggle back to the spirit had begun. In the basilican church the Greek temple was turned inside out; the columns—upright man—are found inside the building, and architecture became “sculpture from within”. The walls enclosing the dwelling place of the God became the chancel for the altar.

In the Gothic cathedrals we see manifested a further stage of man’s return to the spirit. The architectural forms transcend the earthly; the cleavage between the outside world and the precincts of the cathedral becomes more marked. The very structure itself, with its flying buttresses and delicate tracery, seems to spurn the forces of gravity. The interior is dimly lit; the splendour streaming in through stained glass windows is like the radiance of heaven flowing down into the darkness and perils of life on earth.

Then the pointed arch and the spire of the Gothic gave way to the dome and the rectangle of the Renaissance, with the revival of the antique. It seems, perhaps, as though the Gothic impulse over-reached itself in its flight from the earth and was too impatient

to return to the heavens, but the Renaissance turned back and plunged deeply, perhaps too deeply, into the experience of the physical.

This sketchy review of the historical styles has taken a form which must not be read as a plea for symbolism in architecture. To discern, after the event, how the development of man has been expressed in architecture is very different from suggesting that man has deliberately chosen one form rather than another in order to express his development. Looking back now, with an intelligence awake to the historic changes in consciousness, we can see why some forms have been right for one age and others for another age. If we still look back with the materialistic intelligence of the last century we shall explain the changing styles either by the climatic-geological-structural analysis of Sir Banister Fletcher, or according to some arbitrary aesthetic theory. But neither the rational analysis nor the personal aesthetic are fully convincing to the mature man of to-day, who looks for a new basis for architectural evaluation which will satisfy the deepest human needs.

Where do we stand to-day with regard to the development of man in relation to building forms? Let us return again to the significance of the cube. During the Renaissance period—and for want of a new impulse this holds good almost up to the present day—the cubic or rectangular shape was the main form of building; but it was adorned with Classic mouldings and orders which, although long since dead, retained the semblance of a connection with the Golden Age of harmony and balance. Then there came a time when man felt he had no more need of the support of the past and could stand alone on the earth, sustained by his own efforts and his own intelligence. The Orders and mouldings were seen as the dead ornament that they had become. They were stripped off—and what remained? The stark, unadorned cube—and the “modern movement” in architecture was born.

The simple square which the Egyptians planted on the earth as the plan of the pyramid was now projected as a plain square on elevation, too. The massive, block-forms of Egypt found new birth, but this time as fully-fledged cubes without the tapering walls. The new movement flourished in its most extreme form in Germany during the nineteen-twenties, but it had its roots in the latter half of the last century and it belonged to the whole of the West.

It was just at this time, towards the end of the nineteenth century, that man had reached a stage of consciousness on earth where he was cut off, to an extent that had never happened before, from a knowledge of the nature of the spiritual world—he began, indeed, to doubt its very existence. At the same time he was supremely confident that his knowledge of the structure and behaviour of matter made him independent of his past heritage, both earthly and heavenly. It was at such a moment—and one feels it could have been at no other—that the modern movement began: and it was in the earth-bound, “cubist” form that it found its expression.

Thus the modern movement in architecture, and by that is meant the negative impulse of rejection, the “when in doubt leave out” philosophy, belongs essentially to the close of the nineteenth century. It was an honest statement of man’s barren spiritual life.

What will be the sequel to this architectural purge? It will be an architecture which will attune itself to whatever the sequel may be to nineteenth-century materialism. It would seem that this is proving to be on the one hand a sinking into an even deeper materialism; on the other, a return to a knowledge of the spirit in freedom and full consciousness. Those who believe that only the latter path will save mankind and the earth from chaos must find and create a new architectural style which will express the spirit in a way that is right for this age, and thus also be a means whereby man can find the spirit.

Here particularly is there the danger of symbolism, mentioned earlier. It would be disastrous to try to express spiritual truths by means of particular architectural forms! But if such truths live within us, we shall, in creating, produce forms in which they will have being. They will not be forms which express the spirit symbolically, but forms which themselves contain “inner forces of growth.”

Two main streams can be discerned in contemporary architecture to-day: they will become increasingly separate as time goes on.

One of these continues, although in a very modern guise, the trend that is fundamental to Rome and the Renaissance. It contains the impulse which thrusts man further into the grip of materialism at a time when he should be emerging from it. It is grounded in logic, and confines itself to “things that can be known.” It relies

on new systems of construction for creating new shapes. Its basic form is still the cubic, but now often incongruously raised into the air on legs, denying its earth-bound nature. It glorifies the machine and delights in the "manifestations of the power and will" of the straight line and the right angle. It is succoured on "cold reason".

Students of architecture will already recognise this impulse as the one whose spokesman and leader is Le Corbusier; the famous slogan of his earlier days, "the house is a machine for living in", is still expressive of his attitude. The genius of Le Corbusier penetrates deeper than he himself sometimes realises. He says, for instance, of the nineteenth century, that it was "the most astonishing period of preparation known to history . . . we know that an era of creation is about to commence." This indeed is true, but one feels that the spiritual impulse which entered earthly evolution at that time and which *was* the preparation for the twentieth century, will depend on the man who has intelligence enriched with spiritual warmth, rather than on Le Corbusier's man "who is intelligent, cold and calm", and thereby "has grown wings to himself." This is the call to those who can accept no knowledge or experience beyond the boundaries of the intellect.

The other main stream continues the impulse of the Gothic, inasmuch as it is successful in expressing the spirit in its forms. It has the significant difference, however, that whereas the Gothic builders were able to create out of their direct experience of the spiritual world, this modern school draws its inspiration mainly from the manifestation of the spirit in nature. It expresses kinship with the earth by building horizontally, close to the ground—"out of the ground into the light"—and using materials as much as possible in their natural state. It abhors the city. It is romantic; vehement in its missionary zeal—"the thrilling search for reality." It rejects the domination of the machine, although using it where of value. It re-asserts the supremacy of free human beings, working in community towards a common purpose. It insists on the essential correlation of the arts with manual work.

Thus is developed the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright, and of the many followers whom he has inspired by the eloquence of his words, his rich personality, and his buildings.

These two figures, Le Corbusier in France and Wright in America, represent the two polarities of contemporary architecture. Their own architecture is not always an extreme example of their

own outlook; there are architects, some of whom may not even acknowledge their debt to Wright or Le Corbusier, who are more fanatical exponents of the two creeds than are the teachers themselves. But the writings of both Wright and Le Corbusier have a forceful enthusiasm, and styles perfectly attuned to their particular messages, which unhesitatingly proclaim them masters of the two streams.

In the buildings of Le Corbusier, there is a strong poetic element, but it is a poetry, not of human values, but of speed and power. One can feel that the subtle intervention of a slight curve in a wall, or the dramatic contrast of a rough stone wall against the clean line of steel or concrete, are not given for themselves, but serve only to heighten the sense of the machine-precision of the building as a whole. The geometry which underlies all Le Corbusier's work is the old Euclidean geometry which does not belong to this age. Le Corbusier introduces a kind of humanity into his designs by using a module which he has devised, based on the proportions of the human figure: but it is an arid humanism which can be found only in measurement.

Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture shows less licence than his writings: his feeling for building materials imposes its own discipline. This is not to say that his buildings are staid and respectable; on the contrary they are versatile and exciting, but as Le Corbusier is controlled by logic and mathematics, Wright is kept in check by the qualities of his stone or wood or concrete, and by the nature of his site. Wright's style, which is far more widespread in America than in Europe, uses to the fullest advantage the natural beauty of the site, and many of his houses are situated in positions that, even for America, have particularly dramatic surroundings—the desert, the mountains, the plains, the rushing stream—in the mood of which and from whose very essence Wright's forms seem to grow.

What is Rudolf Steiner's place in this picture? It would seem that he occupies a central position between the two poles, not in the sense of compromise, but in showing a way of architectural development which will satisfy the deepest needs of modern man without domination from either extreme. This will be increasingly evident as the two streams become more separate and defined. His is the way between the temptation to worship, and so fall a victim to, the machine, and the temptation to take refuge from modern civilisation in idyllic dreams and romantic illusions.

Steiner's architecture is seen in the forms of the two Goetheanum buildings, which, though built from the same impulse, are entirely different in form. From all practical points of view one might expect the buildings to be similar; they have the same purpose to fulfil, the same site from which to grow, the same climate to withstand. There is certainly the very important difference in the materials used, wood in one case and concrete in the other, and this naturally results in a different expression. But it is not a sufficient reason.

Perhaps we may draw near to an explanation if we see how, in addition to these practical considerations, Steiner created forms that were in accordance with the strivings and destiny, as he knew them, of the people who would use the buildings: a functionalism, as it were, at a deeper level than that to which the word is usually applied in architectural criticism.

In this sense, we may feel that the first Goetheanum was designed deliberately in a style which belongs to the future, and that its forms speak to us in a language which demands the effort of a conscious response such as we are now only beginning to find possible. It was both an inspiration and a challenge to the anthroposophical movement and to the world. But the destructive forces of the present overcame it. It was burnt down, almost certainly as the result of deliberate incendiarism, on New Year's Night, 1922-3.

The second Goetheanum, in its material and form, was the reply to this onslaught, and also perhaps in some way to the terrible upheaval of the Great War which had intervened between the conceptions of the two buildings. In choosing concrete, the most inorganic, the most dead of all building materials, Steiner, one feels, is deliberately taking the living forms into that realm which is most hostile to them, is attacking the enemy in his own stronghold and at the same time making use of that stronghold for the preservation of forms which could not endure in the more living and vulnerable material of wood. The forms which he has used for this building belong also to the future, but to the more immediate future when the spirit must be able to withstand severe attacks from the materialistic world. Where the forms of the first Goetheanum are plant-like, those of the second have the enduring quality of rock (the enclosing shell protects the space which once held the more potent wood-forms) and look out on the world with the strength and calm which are born of knowledge.

By the side of every truth there appears a falsehood which bears the semblance of the truth, a shadow which gives the illusion of being a repetition of the substance. They "appear to be alike, but beware, and confuse them not"; there is an abyss between them. This applies equally to architectural truths as to any other and it is necessary to be ever watchful for this "ghostly lover".

For instance, the plant and mineral forms in Steiner's architecture must be distinguished from the nature forms of other styles. Here is no naturalistic copying such as permeated the *Art Nouveau* movement; here is no connection with forms born from sentiment or vague feelings. Nor is it a matter of incorporating within the architectural scheme carefully placed areas of planting, as in the contemporary cliché of the interpenetration of house and garden, where the division between the two is as indeterminate as possible. We may feel that all these impulses grow out of man's need, in this age, to permeate architecture with the forces of nature; but they do not achieve it in an architectural way.

In his forms, on the other hand, Steiner attempts to explore organic creation itself. "Through devoted study of the organic, creative processes in Nature," he said, "you may endeavour to reach the possibility of shaping such organic forms, and of shaping the whole into one organic form, without infringement of the dynamic laws of architecture." The forces of nature can be truly understood by man only if he comprehends—as Goethe first discerned—how they work through metamorphosis. If these forces, then, live strongly enough in us, we may create living forms which are themselves a metamorphosis of natural forms and are also architecturally true. This inner connection with nature is both more subtle and deeper than, say, a feeling for the contours of the earth or the use of natural materials, however desirable these may be in themselves.

With the aim of retaining a relationship with nature, when within a contemporary building, there is a widespread use of the glass wall. This aim, in itself a good one, is achieved by a method which is a negation of architecture—by the attempt to eliminate the building altogether at this point, for even the glass in its framing is usually made as inconspicuous as possible. In the first Goetheanum, we feel that Steiner achieved the same effect, but by means of the architecture itself. The solid walls were so permeated with living form as to let free the spirit into the universe outside. "The walls in

ordinary buildings are enclosing walls." (Rudolf Steiner said this before the glass wall had made its appearance). "... No wall in Dornach is so thought of; the walls are formed in Dornach, so that they are in a sense *artistically* transparent, so that when one is inside the building one does not feel oneself closed in. Every wall opens itself, so to speak, through the artistic motifs, to the whole wide world, and one enters this building with the consciousness that one is not in a building but in the world; the walls are transparent." These walls were no imitation of nature; they allowed no view of nature; but they were the essence of nature.

Side by side with this opening out towards nature, we find in contemporary architecture an intense feeling for the importance of space itself within a building, and for the aesthetic effect of the interplay of one space with another. The walls are important no longer as shapes in themselves but as a means of enclosing space; the building is conceived as a three-dimensional unity rather than as a series of two-dimensional surfaces. This is a big step forward, perhaps the most important that modern architecture has made from the Renaissance attitude. But still the planes which form the boundaries of space—the floor, walls and ceiling—have little sense of real relationship to each other *because they are not themselves formed by the space which they enclose*.

Frank Lloyd Wright approaches this conception of the unity of floor, walls, and ceiling, when he speaks of the need for modern architecture to become plastic in form. He says that the space within a building "can only be expressed and liberated by plasticity", and that this plasticity must be found "not only in decoration and ornament but in the whole building."

It is, however, necessary to go a step further, and to realise space as full of living forces from the cosmos which can, through creative man, actually mould the enclosing surfaces to their own living forms. Then will a truly plastic architecture arise, such as we already see in the two Goetheanum buildings and in some of the houses at Dornach.

Frank Lloyd Wright, with his ideal of an organic architecture, is a powerful force in the struggle against the old geometrical style which reappears in modern dress. The new dynamic¹ style of Steiner's

¹ As both Steiner and Wright have called their style "organic", I have here taken the liberty of calling Steiner's architecture "dynamic", as it appears to me to complete the trilogy of "static, organic, and dynamic" as applied to Le Corbusier, Wright, and Steiner.

architecture, however, takes us further and deeper to such an extent that we enter a new realm; but we may find a connection with Wright if we see it (to adapt Mr. Owen Barfield's phrase) as Romanticism in architecture come of age.

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TWO POEMS

HAROLD EDWIN BRADING

THE TWISTED SWEETNESS

'Tis odd that I, who felt not fitter,
nor knew my appetite at fault,
should find, now, all I eat is bitter,
and all I drink is salt:
as if some saddening touch of Time, mingled with meal and malt.

If 'tis a taste got from long thinking
of old dead husbandmen, 'tis fit
that my mouth should feel drawn when drinking:
that where my teeth have bit,
all has a tidal tang of earth, a taste of tears in it.

They sowed themselves. 'Tis their to-morrows
we reap to-day. The millstone tears
not corn, but centuries of sorrows:
a chiliad of cares.
The crops this earth of England grows, they are not ours, but theirs.

As if their souls had stirred the stubbles,
and they had used their hearts to hew;
had set for wheat their human troubles,
and sown for rye, their rue;
their hopes as hops: that we should taste sharp bread and bitter brew.

In summer when the grain ranks serried,
it rises like green sword-blades set
in battlefields where boots have buried,
and watered with their sweat,
a thousand years their formless dreams, that never flowered till yet.

The autumn comes, and comes the binder;
in every sheaf, each ripe corn-spear
lifts like a spirit in reminder
that risen dreams lie here.

... A twisted sweetness holds my heart: I know the dead are near.

FAREWELL

WARM the deep-strawed stable,
with harness hung on beam,
in winter nights at Ancton
when I racked up my team.

Frosts on the ponds crinked whitely;
keenly the brash wind blew,
when I tied up my lantern
and tedded down the two.

Starrily in the rickyard
glittered the hoar-white stacks,
when I heaved out the hay-wads
and rove them in the racks.

And always there ashining,
ere shot the bolts for night,
four eyes in farewell lifted
in the last lanternlight.

ON THE THRESHOLD: A STUDY IN MENTAL ILLNESS

by T. GLADSTONE

WE are living in an apocalyptic age. Looking out into the world around us we see the crumbling of the old social forms and the growth of vast States with dictatorial powers over the smallest details of the lives of their inhabitants. Their ever-increasing power over the individual is asserted through methods of torture refined by the latest scientific discoveries, and "Crimes against Humanity" have become a new legal category. All the resources of scientific discovery in physics, chemistry, and bacteriology are being applied to the production of weapons capable of laying waste whole continents. In the background, becoming ever clearer, is the spectre of famine.

If we become capable of looking inward into the human soul with an equally candid and objective gaze, we meet again evil forces of great intensity. More and more people seem to become helpless in the grip of violent passions and animal instincts; young people are unable to find their way in life, become restless, dissatisfied, and even suicidal. A new sense of exposure to hostile spiritual forces is growing up.

Sans cesse à mes côtés s'agite le Démon:

Il nage autour de moi comme un air impalpable—

is becoming the common experience of humanity, rather than that of an isolated pathological genius.

All this is the expression of a failure. Humanity is standing at the threshold of the spiritual world. The facts of the spiritual world are bursting in upon us, and if we can develop no concepts to grasp them with, we are as helpless as the new-born baby in face of the facts of the physical world. The concepts needed to

meet this new situation have been given in the teachings of Rudolf Steiner, but so far only a small minority of human beings have accepted these teachings, and this minority has failed to carry them out into the world in a sufficiently decisive way. One way in which this finds expression is the steady increase in mental illnesses, which sets a tremendous problem for society.

What are some of the fundamental experiences at the threshold and how can they help us to understand mental illness? One of the first of these experiences is the meeting with the Guardian of the Threshold, the double or lower self as it is variously described. This is an experience which has been hinted at throughout the ages. Bulwer Lytton's novel *Zanoni* contains a remarkable account of it, and Shelley makes the Earth say:

*The magus Zoroaster, my dead child,
Met his own image walking in the garden. . . .*

The legend of the Student of Prague describes how the student's reflection steps out of the mirror and leads an independent existence. Rudolf Steiner, however, was the first to give a clear and definite account of these strange phenomena. He describes how the good and evil characteristics of a person form themselves into an independent spiritual being which detaches itself from him and becomes visible the moment he crosses the threshold of the spiritual world—"and in future, whenever thou dost act or think wrongly, thou wilt straightway perceive thy guilt as a hideous demoniacal distortion of my form." The individual becomes aware of all his weaknesses and defects of character in an entirely objective way, and great courage is needed to meet what is often a terrible experience.

If this has not been prepared for by a thorough training in self-knowledge, one of two things may happen. The individual may be overwhelmed by the spectacle and fall into a state of depression in which he believes himself irrevocably lost or damned. The biography of the poet William Cowper provides a remarkable instance of this kind of illness. On the other hand, the individual may refuse to face the fact of his own lower self. He then becomes "imprisoned by the double" and feels that he has had a wonderful experience in which all the secrets of the universe have been revealed to him. He becomes tremendously elated and over-confident, being quite certain that he is a genius or great individuality. In an extreme form this produces the illness known as acute mania.

Thus one great group of mental illnesses, forming the so-called "manic-depressive" insanity, is seen in an entirely new light when we realise that it results from a failure to meet this experience of the lower self in the right way. A proper training in self-knowledge, and fearlessness in facing one's own worse qualities without self-deception, will act as a complete prophylactic against this form of illness. The meeting with the Guardian will then result in a true estimate of one's own worst qualities and the taking of steps to counteract and overcome them. It will result also in the ability to distinguish between the objective spiritual world and everything proceeding from one's own personality.

Any successes which psychoanalysis has been able to claim have resulted from an improvement in self-knowledge. Unfortunately, however, the method chosen to bring this about has serious disadvantages. One of these is that the attempt to disclose the patient to himself is made by getting him to pour out his life-experience to the analyst without any restraint. This leads to great weakness, so that if the double is raised he is unable to face it and falls into one or other of the conditions mentioned above. It may also lead to a most pitiful dependence on the analyst and to such self-absorption that all other topics cease to be of interest. In addition, the predominantly sexual interpretations of the analyst often lead to great absurdities. There are many pitiful dupes who have lost all interest in life after years of analysis and are still searching for the infantile experiences which are supposed to be the cause of their sufferings and have really never existed at all.

A second fundamental experience of the Threshold is the division of the personality into three. Ordinarily the three soul forces of thinking, feeling, and willing work into one another almost automatically—a thought is usually accompanied by a definite feeling which leads on to a definite impulse of will. At the threshold of the spiritual world, these three soul-powers diverge and become much more independent. It is then possible to have a thought unaccompanied by any feeling or impulse of will. Impulses of will may arise for which no adequate reason in the life of thought can be found.

In the majority of people one or other of these soul forces is more highly developed than the others, and if the Threshold is reached in this condition, the preponderant soul-power will run riot, leading to a personality which may be that of a cold loveless thinker, retired from the world and more or less incapable of action, or a man of

unbridled will who rushes from one excess to another without the restraining influence of thought, or an emotional sentimentalist incapable of thinking clearly or acting effectively.

A proper training will develop each soul-force to the highest degree and bring about balance and harmony between them. The individualised soul-forces then act as organs of higher knowledge. If on the other hand the Threshold is reached by a very unbalanced person, the illness known as schizophrenia may result.

This very serious group of illnesses takes many different forms which are by no means clearly defined, but the symptoms are all to be traced to this separation of the soul-forces. Thus one of the commonest symptoms is the loss of normal feelings. Thoughts are unaccompanied by feelings, and the patient may be quite indifferent to those who were formerly nearest and dearest to him. He often appears to retire from life altogether—he may take to his bed and refuse to get up without being able to give any reason for it. The normal will-impulses do not accompany his thoughts. Or a world of thoughts may be developed in which the patient lives alone, without any connection with the daily life around him. In other cases feeling may develop without any relation to thinking or willing. Such patients may become hilarious, lying in bed roaring with laughter for hours on end, and it may be quite impossible to discover what is amusing them; or clouds of depression may hang over them for weeks, and—unlike the true case of depression, who will tell you that he has lost all his money or has caught a terrible disease—they can give no reason for it.

In other cases, acts of will occur for which no reason can be found and which are unaccompanied by any feeling. Overwhelming impulses arise independently of thought. These account for many of the more horrible criminal cases. Such criminals cannot tell why they have committed their crimes, and they are unable to feel normal remorse.

As humanity as a whole, impelled by its own development, approaches the Threshold, more and more of such illnesses occur, and the question arises how they are to be tackled.

One of the most important prophylactic measures lies in a thorough reform of present educational methods. Our present educational system lays much too strong an emphasis on intellectual ability. The examination system acts as a forcing-house for this.

It used to be quite common for clever children to take the School Certificate examination at the age of 13 or 14. This is now being checked, but the introduction of an examination at 11 years to decide whether the child is worthy of a general education has completely negated this reform. This one-sided forcing of intellect is continued at the University, where those who take their studies seriously can scarcely avoid becoming mere machines for absorbing knowledge. It is therefore hardly surprising that it is just among the most brilliant students that the incidence of schizophrenia is particularly heavy.

Among the most important educational concepts brought forward by Rudolf Steiner, there are two which are interrelated. One of these is that the soul life is related to the whole body, not merely to the nervous system—the life of thought being connected with the nervous system, that of feeling with the rhythmic system, which includes heart and lungs, and that of will with the limbs and metabolism. The other concept is that the soul-forces of the child during its incarnation into the body are at first used to build up the bodily organs, and only when these have reached a certain stage of perfection do the soul forces become free again and fully capable of use as such.

It follows from this that a premature development of certain capacities will cause damage to the organs, as the forces which should be concerned in developing them are withdrawn too soon. These damaged organs will then in turn form an imperfect instrument for the expression of the soul. Thus the forces which are used in memory become free only at the age of seven. Prior to this the child should not have its memory overtaxed. Those which are used in forming intellectual judgments become free only at the age of 14, and so on. If we take account of these varying periods of life in education we shall do much to prevent damage to the organs, which may later show itself as mental illness.

If artistic activities and training of the will play a large part in education, we shall be preparing the development of a properly balanced and harmonious individual who will be most unlikely to become mentally ill. If doctor and teacher unite in their observation of the child, they will be able to watch over and seek to correct abnormal tendencies at the earliest possible stage. These may show themselves as actual psychological abnormalities, or merely as a tendency to certain types of physical illness. The teacher will be

just as perturbed at the abnormally clever child as at a wild and thoughtless one. He will have to develop a subtler sense for the condition of his pupils: for instance, he will have to discern whether the Ego is too deeply or too lightly incarnated in the body. In the former case, his teaching will need to be more pictorial and descriptive; in the latter, he will need to introduce a stronger conceptual element into his teaching.

If we now turn to the developed case of mental illness, we may ask what is being done for such cases and what could be done? In the field of treatment there have been striking changes in the last few decades. Until recently little was attempted beyond care of the physical health, the giving of sedatives and rather primitive attempts at occupational therapy, usually in the form of wood-work for the male patients and knitting for the female. Within these last decades, however, certain drastic forms of treatment have been developed.

One of these is electrical shock therapy. A high-voltage current is passed through the forepart of the brain, and this produces an epileptic convulsion. A course of such treatment has the effect of making depressed patients more cheerful. The dramatic change in mood has had a misleading effect on psychiatrists, who imagined they had found a panacea and tried it out on every conceivable kind of case. In one military hospital the apparatus was simply brought round to every bed and the treatment given to each patient with or without his consent.

Although there is this change in mood, the result is anything but a true happiness. The brittle elated mood soon passes away and further treatment becomes necessary. Much damage is done to the brain and there is a deterioration in character. Undesirable traits, which could formerly be suppressed by the patient, now make their appearance unchecked; there is also confusion and loss of memory. The treatment causes a moment of intense horror and agony, and although this is quickly lost in the unconsciousness which follows, many patients have an increasing fear and even terror of the treatment, and often have to be dragged forcibly to the place of execution.

A further development is the operation of leucotomy. This consists in boring holes on either side of the skull over the forepart of the brain and passing in a rotating blade which completely cuts

up the white matter. It is claimed for this treatment that incurable mental patients are sometimes rendered sufficiently well to leave a mental hospital and resume a comparatively normal life. There has, however, been an increasing tendency to apply the operation in earlier cases. Quite young people of 18 or 19, who have had a nervous breakdown, have been subjected to it, and even cases of hysterical refusal to eat, which usually yield to firm persuasive methods. An unpleasant feature has been the forcible application of this method to certified patients who have had no say in the matter. Consent has been given by the relatives after a tendentious account of results by the doctors.

This leucotomy procedure, also, has some very undesirable results. Some of the patients have developed permanent epilepsy; others incontinence of urine or faeces; others have become completely demented; and yet others have died under the operation. Where the operation is claimed to be successful, there is often a marked deterioration of character. The person becomes irresponsible and lacking in normal social sense. Comments by relatives, such as the following, are quite often made: "Before the operation one could always appeal to his better self—now he does not seem to have a better self to appeal to." In other cases, relatives may feel that the individuality is a completely different one—they can hardly recognise the person they used to know.

It is clear that methods of treatment are now in use which are not understood by those who use them, and can have the most terrible results. How could one reform the treatment of mental patients and achieve results which would clearly demonstrate that such methods are unnecessary?

One of the first essentials is the reform of the whole of the social circumstances under which mental patients are treated. The average mental hospital is a vast barracks where anything up to 3,000 patients are confined. The doors of every ward are locked. There is a clash of keys, suggesting a prison atmosphere, every time a doctor or nurse enters or leaves them. The windows are barred. Patients in every stage of illness from an early nervous breakdown to complete and hopeless insanity are herded together. The ceaseless walking up and down of patients behind the glass doors reminds one of the aimless swimming up and down of fish in an aquarium.

The type of nurse, especially of male nurse, is often quite wrong. Many male nurses are army reservists who, having barely finished their time in the regular army, are unable to find any other work to do. Such men have no idea how to treat mental patients other than by the crudest forms of military discipline. To give an example—one patient who had been troublesome and difficult and had sometimes attacked other patients was forced to sit on a small chair all day. Whenever he got up, he was simply forced to sit down again. This had been going on for 20 years. Is it surprising that he was demented? A good deal of bullying occurs, and even mocking of patients simply for fun. If there are any complaints—of course the patient is mad; he was deluded. In fact, the chronic mental patient is a product of the present type of mental hospital.

The social organisation of such a hospital is very rigid. At the top is the medical superintendent. Beneath him come the assistant doctors, then the nurses, and finally the patients.

To reform this state of things, smaller hospitals taking not more than 100 patients are needed. In fact, they should not be called "hospitals" at all but "re-education centres", or "rehabilitation centres." The aim of these centres would be to receive patients into a truly social atmosphere and re-educate them for ordinary life.

The mental patient is a social outcast; he can no longer be coped with by his relatives or by society. The type of treatment he receives now is the outcome of fear. Society fears him, his relatives fear him, doctors and nurses fear him—because they see themselves in him, or that part of themselves which they refuse to recognise. And to protect themselves from this fear, they have to adopt a rigid rejecting attitude, which puts a steel wall between them and the patient.

A change of attitude towards the patient is therefore a first necessity. Once it is realised that what appears in the patient in an exaggerated form, is present to a lesser degree in every human soul, it will be possible for those who care for mental patients to develop a new sense of kinship with them which would make the continuance of the present system impossible.

One change which would foster this would be to encourage a much closer co-operation between doctors, nurses, and other therapists caring for the patient. Weekly meetings could be held, when one or two patients would be discussed by everybody who

came in contact with them. This would throw light on the case from every side, encourage co-operation and enable a start to be made in studying the deeper spiritual aspects behind the manifestations of illness.

Occupational therapy would have to be enormously extended, so that a wide range of different activities was available. Work is one of the most important curative agents in mental illness, and one of the chief questions would be to find the right type of work for each case.

Another point of great importance would be the development of the arts as curative agents. Painting and drawing, modelling, eurhythmy, voice and speech exercises would be carefully chosen to suit each case. For instance, certain colours have a distinct emotional and physiological effect. Dark shades of blue and green would have to be avoided in depressed cases, whereas in over-elated cases they have a beneficial effect.

Again, many nervous cases, especially those lacking in self-confidence and grip on life, have great difficulties with speech—swallow their words, lisp, or are unable to speak out properly. The new form of speech exercises given by Rudolf Steiner can react on the mental health of such cases in a remarkably healing way. Eurhythmy, the new art of movement introduced by Rudolf Steiner, is based on the gestures which originally accompanied the sounds of speech. It has already been developed most successfully along purely artistic lines, but it has also a curative side which has been worked out in great detail. Creative forces of the Cosmic Word are concealed within the sounds of speech, and when these are released by Eurhythmy, they can have a far-reaching curative influence. In modelling and carving, the creative forces of the body can be released, purified and strengthened.

Each case would have to be carefully studied in the effort to discover any underlying physical illness. Recent articles in the medical Press have emphasised the heavy incidence of physical illness among mental patients, but something more than this is meant here. The intimate relationship of mind and body calls for a close investigation of the physique of mental cases in new and finer ways. The new techniques of crystallisation and capillary dynamolysis seek to reveal abnormalities in the etheric or life forces. Much research could be carried out on the body fluids of mental cases to elucidate this finer pathology.

In many ways the present age is favourable to improvements in the treatment of mental cases. The former apathy has given place to intense interest and study, and the need for reform is acutely felt. The tragedy is that all this new interest and research is taking place along purely materialistic lines. A materialistic-mechanistic attitude towards the soul can lead only to destructive effects, and we are witnessing these to-day in shock treatment and leucotomy. They afford a new method of interference with the inner shrine of the individual—the inner centre of will and character. The more finely, the more successfully, these techniques are developed, and the more intimate the knowledge of the functions of the higher nerve centres becomes, the greater the future dangers for humanity.

The exploitation of these techniques by unscrupulous dictators of the future presents terrifying possibilities, no less than the blundering employment of them by persons unable to assess their results on the finer capacities of soul and spirit, even with the best will in the world. We have to oppose this development by new techniques of pure healing—healing in which use is made of educational and spiritual forces.

Equally important is the development of that new social attitude which can flow only from spiritual-scientific knowledge. Recently I went over a newly-built mental hospital where every possible care for the comfort of the patients and staff had been taken, even to the point of luxury. But in the new palace, the old type of staff with the old attitude were there in force, giving an extraordinarily incongruous effect.

All efforts at improving material conditions will be a failure unless a complete transformation of those caring for the patients takes place—a transformation possible only as the result of a living application of Spiritual Science. If this were achieved, then a stranger stepping over the threshold of such a home would at once read in the atmosphere the words, "Take hope into yourselves, all ye who enter here."

MEDITATION AND TIME

ADAM BITTLESTON

EARLY in the seventeenth century, not long before the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, a book was published in Germany, *The Chymical Marriage of Christian Rosenkreuz, Anno 1459*. It describes in vivid, sometimes terrible, sometimes drily humorous pictures, a spiritual pilgrimage. Almost at the beginning, the venerable man who relates his own experiences describes a dream that came to him during the night following his summons by an Angel to set forth on his journey to the Marriage.

He finds himself in a dark tower, with many other miserable prisoners, who struggle in their helplessness and trample on one another. From far above, an anchor is lowered among them again and again; and each time a few are able to grasp it. Those who hold fast to it can be raised into the light, and freed.

If we read on in *The Chymical Marriage*, though the details are often mysterious, the general sense of the pictures gradually becomes clear. An outstanding man is being described, who is conscious of that kind of spiritual need which is becoming familiar to us to-day. He is aware of the cleavage between external observation and traditional faith, and of the unresolved diversity of impulse which we see as marking the sickness of our civilization. On his journey he is seeking the lost unity of Man; he succeeds, and yet at the last it seems as if he is thrown back into failure again, and must wait.

The dream expresses his situation at the beginning. In his confused mind countless impressions and impulses struggle with one another. He feels that it must be possible to be drawn free of this confusion: and he is able to grasp and hold the anchor-rope.

There are many people to-day, more than are evident, who know that to pray or meditate every day is necessary, if they are not to remain in hopeless conflict with themselves. Often they have begun to pray or meditate as an experiment, without committing themselves in their own minds to any particular view of the world, or to any definite expectation about results. After a time,

they find clear confirmation that the soul of man needs such withdrawal from immediate external concerns, although it can often seem desperately difficult to achieve. At first, it may be enough to be able to say: This works! But presently many great questions arise. What is one really doing? Where can the best advice about the inner life be found? What is the relation between meditation and prayer?

We are offered a good deal of advice to-day about meditation, and a general view of the world in which it has a central place, by the Western popularizers of the Vedanta philosophy. Some of these assert that their teaching is common ground, shared by Christian and non-Christian mystics. Again, among some who stand quite definitely in the Christian tradition, there is to be found the consciousness that only by the renewal of meditation can Christianity regain authority and effectiveness. But these regard the Vedantists as ignoring, or rejecting, essential elements of the Christian tradition, which distinguish it from Eastern thought. Above all, they point out that the modern Vedantists, rejecting the doctrine of the Incarnation, regard the world open to the senses as fundamentally subordinate and unreal, in a way that the Christian cannot do.

The distinction to be made by the Christian about this is not altogether easy. He has to agree that there is a great deal of illusion in our picture of the world about us. Truly we look on *Maya*. But this, he says, is due to the Fall of man into sin, which corrupts our senses and our power of thought, and thereby our whole picture of the world. And God has given us the task of knowing not only His ultimate Being, but His creatures that are around us, with a knowledge that overcomes illusion.

The historic meaning of this difference is described most impressively by Toynbee in his *Study of History*. He says that the human soul, when it becomes aware of living in a declining civilization, makes certain characteristic forms of response. It may try to take a flying leap either back into the past, or forward into the future. But Archaism and Futurism, though they may have noble qualities, produce in the historic process only "a troubling of the waters with a violence that brings no healing."

Fortunately there are other alternatives, and Toynbee calls these Detachment and Transfiguration. "The conclusion that the

only way of life which solves the problem of life is to detach oneself from life" can be expressed in a great range of tones, in clear beauty, or in cynical bitterness. Among those who express the mood of Detachment, Toynbee includes Stoics and Epicureans, the Bhagavadgita and Hinayana Buddhism, Macbeth and A. E. Housman; and we can add the modern Vedantist. We find here in general an attempt to release the soul from everything that binds it to the world of the senses, and to unite it with another realm, that of true being—or with absolute nothingness.

Is not some such purpose *always* implicit in the practice of meditation? Or is there another way, that attempts to raise the soul into a spiritual world, without abandoning the world of the senses as worthless? Toynbee says: There is still the way of Transfiguration. Here the soul gives its allegiance to an invisible Kingdom—but in service to this returns with loving labour into the visible world. Thus a real answer is provided to the problem of a declining civilization. For every task that is fulfilled, even if all its external results are swept away, has an abiding significance for that Kingdom, in loyalty to which it is performed. And on earth it may prove to be a seed of a new civilization, growing up secretly amid the decay of the old.

Detachment by itself has something heartless about it, of necessity. Even though the philosopher may come back into the dark cave, to comfort those condemned to watch the flickering shadows—he feels himself as *leaving behind* the sun-illuminated realm of true reality, and must not let himself be overwhelmed by pity and concern. But the Christian can feel that the Divine reality bears him company, and is at work within him, when he returns; not simply revealing its power, but sharing his pain.

Every time we try to meditate, even for a few moments, there is present in us some conviction—of which we may not be quite aware—about the relative value of the world we are seeking, and the world we are trying to leave. This can be realized particularly clearly when the meditation *ends*. Are we then *only* withdrawing from the attempt to reach a better condition, and accepting a worse one? This would be the mood of the modern Vedantist, or of any disciple of Detachment, if he were quite consistent. But in reality he is not heartless, or free from other links with the sense-world; and his doctrine divides him against himself.

Has then the Christian a complete answer—a passport, as it were, that will take him across the frontier and back again without question? If we examine many Christian teachers of meditation, both medieval and modern, it becomes increasingly clear why the present-day Vedantist can claim that in fundamentals they are in agreement with him. For in language, in methods, and in spirit they are often too much pupils in the school of Detachment, too little prophets of Withdrawal-and-Return. When, in the later Middle Ages, men spoke of the “Chymical Marriage”—as compared with the “mystical marriage”—were they looking for a spiritual path which would redress this balance, by giving to the sense-world redeeming understanding and love? And how far does there exist to-day a fully Christian school of meditation?

It is worth while to take up and consider from this point of view the work of Rudolf Steiner. At first the student may get the impression that Rudolf Steiner’s writings have not very much to do with the inner life. There is a great deal about cosmic history, and about those elements of man’s being that are accessible only by supersensory perception; comparatively little about prayer or awareness of eternity. In such books as *How to Attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, and in one chapter of his *Outline of Occult Science*, Rudolf Steiner does indeed give detailed, comprehensive advice, from the very beginning, about spiritual development. But he makes clear that this is not meant to be taken by itself; the path he is describing includes the study of the Anthroposophical cosmology as a whole—the detailed results of spiritual research.

A reader, looking for help in the practice of meditation, may make a natural objection, on lines something like this: “Even if I were able to suspend judgement about the correctness or falsity of these detailed results, they would inevitably tempt me into discursive thought, and put mental screens between me and spiritual reality. And they are just as much concerned with externals as are the results of ordinary scientific research, though they are far less certain and exact.”

Meditation has the purpose of liberating the soul both from tyrannies that press in from the outer world, and those that arise from its own depths. So far there can be agreement; though there is difference, as we have seen, about the meaning and use of this liberation. From the point of view of the student of meditation, then, any mass of information which is offered him must be tested

to see whether it can really serve these first aims. Knowledge *may* prove only a burden to him. We can see knowledge increasing the tyranny of the outer world, if it consists of detailed facts which do not warm the whole mind, but are accepted as a more or less foreign element in it. A language that we are learning remains just in this sense “foreign” to us until we feel the deep appropriateness both of words and construction, and find that our experience of the world is enriched because we know that they make their special contribution to its naming.

Knowledge is the enemy of meditation unless it helps to bring about for us an encounter with some living being or organism, with which we can be united in sympathy. But knowledge which does this may be a most potent aid. For to meet the outer world in sympathy lifts us out of self-absorption; and when the outer world loses its strangeness, it ceases to be tyrannous.

Scientific knowledge rarely brings about such meetings; this is one of the greatest tragedies of our time. The researcher himself has some feeling of adventurous encounter with the mysteries of the world. But for one who has this experience, a thousand accumulate information which lies in their minds like a stone. For the sake of objectivity, methods of research which produce this kind of information have been preferred before all others for the last few centuries; and the illusion has been cultivated that these are the only reliable means of knowledge—though both common sense observation and philosophic thought tend to disprove this. We constantly rely in human relationships on more direct means of apprehension; and philosophically we can see that the traditional scientific methods involve a drastic process of abstraction—of great practical value for certain purposes, but involving a loss of reality—from the fulness of our immediate experience.

Rudolf Steiner was very often concerned to describe, from many points of view, the historic value and the spiritual limits of Western science. And again and again he showed that the results of his own research, though he regarded this indeed as an extension of the scientific method, must not be taken into the mind in the passive, accumulative way to which we have become accustomed.

When we are confronted with writings that claim to contain the results of spiritual research, the first question to ask is not “Is

this true?" but rather something like this: "Can we make our thinking flexible and imaginative enough to grasp what is being said at all?" It is meaningless to consider the truth or falsity of propositions which we are unable to think. The more we can conceive them, the more we begin to feel that our spirit is moving in a realm of self-sustaining truth, if they are indeed drawn from a healthy source. Here error is not simply a failure to fit thoughts to facts; it is the expression of falsity of purpose. The results of genuine research will show their fruit by bringing about a healthy transformation of the thinking of those who receive them with sufficient activity of heart and mind. They will lead through paradox into reconciliation with the Divine ordering of the world.

In the course of the cosmological history in the *Outline of Occult Science*, the coming into being of Time is mentioned as an event in the development of the universe. We seem to be confronted by a violent contradiction: a description of events which "happened" before Time. If we do not allow ourselves to become irritated, we begin to see that the whole description is only superficially a record of events following one another in bare time-sequence. They have indeed to be described at first in this way. As we go on we find that it is fundamental for Rudolf Steiner's view of the world to regard our every-day ideas about Time as mistaken or profoundly incomplete. The "Time" that we ordinarily believe that we know is a particular example of *Maya*; an illusion.

One of the clearest expressions of this is to be found in the last Whitsun lecture of Rudolf Steiner's life, which throws much light back on the rest of his work. We do not experience, he says, as earthly men in our ordinary consciousness, the *reality* of Time. We take hold of it only in spatial terms, through movement—whether that of the heavenly bodies, or of things on earth. To grow into the rich, qualitatively varied life, which Time truly is, means a growing out of the ordinary consciousness.

A great deal that Rudolf Steiner offers for the development of the spiritual life has the intention of helping us to feel ourselves within the living rhythms of time, in a way comparable to the experience of music. In the familiar rhythms of day and year, for example, infinite wonders are to be found, if we are prepared to open out our personal, private Time and share in cosmic Time. The advice given by Rudolf Steiner to meditate upon a seed, or upon examples

of the processes of growth and decay, can be understood from this point of view. Here we are led into the qualities of time by particular things that are before us. But the great, detailed cosmological descriptions have the same purpose, from another side; they are to awaken in us a sensitivity towards long periods of cosmic time, which work on into the present.

When man is appalled by the endlessness of time, he is looking at it as one estranged from its meaning, facing a bare, grey, empty continuation—as Macbeth does at the end, estranged from the world by unacknowledged guilt, unable even to mourn the wife of whose death he has just heard. Time thus regarded seems both a merciless thief, and a bore. But if the illusion we ourselves have made is taken away, Time is revealed as the great Preserver. Our illusion about Time, Rudolf Steiner says, consists just in this: that things appear to pass away. In reality all things abide. (It is remarkable that in England Dr. A. P. Shepherd reached similar conclusions, on philosophical and psychological grounds, in his book *The Eternity of Time*). But the Past is not frozen, and kept in a cosmic museum. It is sifted and transformed, and finds its way in part into Eternity.

Confronted by the *apparent* characteristics of Time, men have thought of Eternity as consisting essentially in the absence of these characteristics—as Deathlessness, as Immutability. In this way there is a danger of forming the barren picture of an Eternity for which no real intercourse with the time-process, no capacity to give or to receive, can be imagined. Plato gives an energetic warning against this picture in *The Sophist*. The "stranger from Elea" asks: "But for heaven's sake, shall we let ourselves easily be persuaded that motion and life and soul and mind are really not present to Absolute Being, that it neither lives nor thinks, but, awful and holy, devoid of mind, is fixed and immovable?"

A conception of Eternity that stands in naked contrast to the conception of Time leads naturally, in meditative practice, to the mood of Detachment. It seems that we must grow utterly detached, in order to share in an Eternity that has no need at all of the temporal. The failure of Christian teachers to preach Withdrawal-and-Return convincingly, is largely due to ideas about the nature of God, in which this difficulty is not overcome. Particularly the philosophers of Christianity, much influenced by Aristotle, have declared that in God's perfection there can be no place for suffering or need.

Through the work of Rudolf Steiner we are helped to form ideas about a realm of being which is indeed exalted above Time, but which stands towards Time in a positive relationship, both giving and receiving. On the one hand, this Eternity seeks in love, and out of the necessity of its being, the realm of the temporal, manifesting its own nature in the qualities of the rhythms of time; on the other, that essence of temporal events which is true and worthy is carried over into the Eternal, just as the Greeks conceived the heroic life as lifted into the realm of the stars.

Such conceptions are native to Christianity, where it has not been strapped into the rigidities of philosophic thought or weakened by the influence of Eastern asceticism. A beautiful example can be found in the use, by the original Greek books of the New Testament, of the words *Zoe Aeonion*—generally translated “eternal life”, but meaning literally the Life of the Ages. The writers of the New Testament did not think of eternity just as the soul’s experience indefinitely continued. “Ages” were then not merely periods of time, but spiritual beings, personal and definite, belonging among the ranks of the heavenly hierarchies.

This is made explicit by some of the Gnostic writers; but it is also wonderfully indicated in the Revelation of St. John, where the characteristic events of successive periods of time are shown as brought about by the deeds of Angelic beings. An “Aeon” is the Spirit of an Age, and the “Life of the Aeons” is not just life in the periods of time formed by them—which is shared indeed by all living creatures—but Life with the heavenly beings, whose manifestation is time, but who belong in their essence to eternity.

We find ourselves in Space, side by side with other men, with all that lives, and with the apparently lifeless. In this world of space we accumulate knowledge. But the relationship of being side by side in space is the barest conceivable relationship, that which has the least to do with meaning. In the spirit, relationships are determined by essence; in space, the wheat and the tares can share the same field, saint and evildoer and Laodicean the same railway carriage. Space offers spirit a sphere of activity in which are unique conditions for the development of freedom. But there is the tragic danger for man, living in the world of space, that he may lose the capacity to think in any other than spatial terms.

Again and again, between 1900 and his death in 1925, Rudolf Steiner spoke and wrote about the significance of the Mystery of Golgotha. In the Whitsun 1924 lecture, mentioned above, he speaks about the Christ in a way particularly relevant here; as the Redeemer, through Whom souls threatened with the loss of everything which could raise them beyond the experience and understanding of space, might enter into the meaning of Time, and thereby be prepared for the awakening of their eternal being.

In the Cross is manifest His sacrifice of Himself into Space, sharing with man that agony of banishment, in which human freedom is to grow. He conquers death “after three days”—filling the wilderness of empty Time, marked out by the circling stars, with the heart-beat of Resurrection. And working in the individual soul, He teaches us to look through the rhythms of personal destiny, and see behind them cosmic rhythms, in which the spiritual beings are at work.

Man cannot easily achieve the bearing with which to meet the spiritual beings. As he is to-day on earth he would be, in such a meeting, alternately proud and abject—as Faust is before the Earth-Spirit. The meditative life within which Christ can work prepares man to cross the Threshold into the spiritual world, and to return, with the right bearing. Until he is prepared, he needs the screen of illusion. He has to learn to hold his soul steadily through the flow of time, moving between the polarities which weave the soul’s life—between triviality and greatness, between hostility and affection, between weakness and strength, between loneliness and community, between pain and joy. He has to learn the language of the spiritual world—and to accept in full his tasks in the world of space. Then what he knew as meditation, and what he knew as prayer, begin to flow together, in that conversation with the heavenly beings in which man finds peace, without losing purposefulness.

BETWEEN SEA AND LAND

E. L. GRANT WATSON

I WAS walking this morning with two companions on the sea sands when the tide, some two hours from the full, was coming in. The day was calm, and little waves came lapping gently, repeating their monotonous, though never redundant messages. In some places they had invaded slight depressions on the ribbed sand, forming small landward-curving bays and pools; in others, they were for a while held back. My two companions were young women, the sum of whose ages lacked 15 years of my own. We walked for the most part in silence, yet in communion with each other and with the sea and sand, thinking our thoughts. I did not guess at theirs; I hardly knew what were my own, but gradually, imperceptibly, as we went further along the changing margin that the waves made, a vague feeling grew in me—I will not call it a thought.

How strange that we should have these discrete bodies that appear so separate and which register sex and youth and middle-age! Our larger selves are not within these forms. Such selves reach beyond limit, are perhaps diffused in many lives, are extended in space, interpenetrating each other, yet holding some gleam of individual existence, counting birth and death as the rise and fall of waves lapping a shore already ridged and moulded by an earlier tide.

Into this life between birth and death our true selves are *contracted*, are under the sway of some necessity to be contained in these our bodies, and assume their forms: an imprisonment perhaps—the doors of the prison closed, or opened only when we are released in love or death?

The waves came gently to land, and later I felt as though I had glimpsed something beyond the semblance. Into that region of death—if the word death can express that transcendent state of being—into that region I had passed, and I asked myself: What would I have found had I been able to go further? Paradise of the five rivers, and in Eden man and woman who had not yet fallen into life as we now know it?

Book Review

RUDOLF STEINER'S EARLY LETTERS

Briefe von Rudolf Steiner, Volume I. (Selbstverlag, Marie Steiner: Dornach, Switzerland).¹

LASTLY, if you should really be so kind as to send the eight collars I mentioned, may I ask you to send them by letter post. . . ." Rudolf Steiner's *Autobiography*, published many years ago, gave us the skeleton of those early years in Vienna and Weimar, but the volume now before me goes far to clothe it in flesh and blood. It is in stiff covers, of a reddish brown shade, light and pleasant to handle and to read; and the bold gilt lettering on the front describes it as *Briefe von Rudolf Steiner*, while the back assures us that it is a first volume. How many are to follow, I do not know. This one covers the years 1881 to 1891, when Steiner was between the ages of 20 and 30, and includes (besides a dozen other plates) six photographs of him at various ages from 15 onwards.

It was a very happy thought that prompted the editors, Herrn Frobose and Teichert, to preface the collection of letters with an autobiographical lecture or address delivered by Steiner in 1913, which covers in a really fascinating way the whole period from his birth in 1861 to the year 1893. For not only does the lecture give us a view of those first 20 years, which the letters do not touch, but it also illuminates a great deal in the letters themselves. Add to this the admirably compiled, and admirably full, notes at the end of the book (Herr Picht, the compiler, seemed to know exactly the sort of thing that one reader at all events would want to be told) and you have, altogether, a book which it would be difficult to praise too highly. One lays it down almost with that sense of having "lived with the people" that one gets from a first-rate novel.

Was it Emerson who declared that "an institution is the lengthened shadow of one man"? However this may be, there is certainly one man of whom anthroposophists can hardly know too much and of whom many others will be glad to learn something from this

¹ Obtainable from the Rudolf Steiner Bookshop, 35, Park Road, London, N.W.1, or from the Rudolf Steiner Book Centre, 54, Bloomsbury Street, W.C.1. Price 24/-

little volume. This is not to say it is an easy one to review. I doubt if a collection of letters ever could be. For a review is a work, if not of art, at least of craftsmanship, and ought to have some form. But the sort of thing that comes into the mind a few days after putting down this book is not any considered judgment, or any will to relate it adroitly with other landmarks in the world of letters, but rather a tangle of isolated impressions.

The temptation is almost irresistible to lean back in one's chair, in the comfort of dressing-gown and slippers, and expand into reminiscence:—The Specht family, where he had been employed as a tutor and into which he seems to have been virtually adopted by mutual affection. "Write me soon," he writes to the eldest son, Richard, in October, 1890, "even if only a little. Everything interests me." And, to the boy's father and mother on Christmas Eve:—"This evening I expect you will all be round young Hans's Christmas Tree, as always on this day. I feel a bit melancholy, when I think of it, and of how often I have shared this beautifully happy hour with you." Richard Specht himself, with his literary aspirations and his *Danae*, and his lyric poems which Steiner criticised in the detailed way that is alone of any use to a young writer. Midnight arguments on *Hamlet*; the deadness of Weimar; and the intolerable boredom of the work there, once his real task had been accomplished; the watch that he had not the heart to alter back to Weimar time on his return from a flying visit to Vienna. Rudolf Schmidt's adored dog *Bajer* (mentioned at least once in every letter to Schmidt), whose photograph, he assured its master, stood on his writing desk and reminded him, for complicated philosophical reasons, of Fichte. A Steiner who "cannot read a line of *Bahr* without smoking—the cigarettes during a *Bahr* book cost just about as much as the book, or a bit more." That earlier glimpse, from the first few letters and one of the plates, of a rather solemn young undergraduate—and, all else apart, education is a solemn business, when your parents have perhaps starved for it. "You have enough, you have taken Cyane into your heart; there she lives on, her image suffices you, and *that* you can share with your friend . . ." or "I am seeking a quite definite goal, the knowledge of the truth."

And then, from the earlier years, the odd characters of the local worthies, the happy anecdote of the Station Doctor (in itself, surely, an odd institution) and the Pointsman; and the picture-book (movable of course) which was mainly about the adventures of an individual

called *Staberl*, who was "a 'Mitteiding' between a *Kasperl* and an *Eulenspiegel*."

It was this picture-book which young Rudi had retired into the waiting-room (for his father was a station-master) to look at when he beheld the apparition of the suicide, which is also described in his *Autobiography*. I sometimes think that this dead woman, imploring the mere baby that he must have been to "try, both now and later, to do all you can for me," came gradually to stand in Rudolf Steiner's mind for the entire human race. Did he, if later he was ever tempted to falter, go back to that memory and draw from it the strength that compassion brings?

"My love for philosophy is as great as my complete indifference to literary criticism (*Literaturgeschichte*), and I am as strong (*tuchtig*) in philosophy as I am weak in literary criticism," he wrote to Frau Specht in 1891; and there is passage after passage in these letters revealing how, though his heart was open to many friends, its ruling passion was philosophy. Many people have found it a dry, if not a forbidding subject, but not he. He would have maintained with the second brother in *Comus*, and from the bottom of his heart:—"How charming is divine philosophy!" For he had that best of all incentives to an eager and receptive reading—a quarry. "I have a thing to say—but how to say it?"

Most young people find some difficulty in realising that thinking is itself an object which can be thought about; and many of them never succeed in doing so, though they may talk about physical processes and call them thought. But Steiner had had from infancy this direct experience of a world of consciousness—an "inner space"—in which things happen as they do in the world of outer space. He knew that thinking is no mere tissue of abstractions, not because he had imbibed or constructed a theory of it, but because he had *tasted* thinking. What he longed for was the power to utter forth his empirical knowledge in the terminology which was the current coin of philosophical dispute. At the university, therefore, he was not a bewildered pupil in a schoolroom, but a dexterous workman brought up without tools and now suddenly introduced into a tool-store; and he walked to and fro in the world of philosophy selecting his precision instruments one by one, unhurriedly.

"Though it is tacked on to Goethe," he wrote of his book *Grundlinien einer Erkenntnistheorie der Goetheschen Weltanschauung*,

"I admit quite frankly that my main object was to make a contribution to the theory of knowledge, and not at all to the study of Goethe".¹

For the like reason—because the *taste* of thinking, as immediate experience, had accompanied the exercise and preceded the theory of it—Steiner was attracted by psychology hardly less than by philosophy; and this is important. Philosophers who are not psychologists and psychologists who are not philosophers are fairly common; but it is rare to find the two equipments combined in a first-class intelligence. And yet—since Kant—how important they are to each other! Without psychology, what is left for philosophy except the barren rocks of logical positivism? Without philosophy who shall save psychology from the swamps of enthusiastic oneiromancy?

To watch, in these letters, the steady growth to maturity of Steiner's objective idealism is both a rewarding and a heartening experience. At least it is so for those who feel at home neither with the godless humanism nor with the godly materialism which confront each other across the arena of non-Marxist twentieth century thought. Spirit, says the one, is nothing but a name for a refined co-ordination of the responses of a temporal personality to an environment in which it is itself an accident. Spirit, says the other, is a state of grace; mere knowledge may amuse the weakness, but is irrelevant to the prospects, of an immortal soul. But for Steiner the phenomenal world is created and momentarily determined from a world of spirit, to which man, in his knowing, has access. There he may find his own eternal individuality, one of many, and distinct from all others. He would be wholly free only if his earthly personality were wholly determined by that eternal; and morality, or goodness, is the energy of that freedom.

One of many. It is clear from his letters that, for all the excitement of the chase, Steiner was not merely combing the philosophers and psychologists for materials with which to construct his own edifice of thought. Rather he set up his tabernacle in each one and made it a habitation for the ark of his quest. In a letter to Rosa Mayreder (November 30th, 1890) he distinguishes the kind of disagreement that is due to mere misunderstanding from the kind that springs from a difference of spiritual constitution or orientation (*Geistesrichtung*). He loved other men's *Geistesrichtungen* for their own sakes; because they were *other men's*. "I am thirsty," he wrote to the same lady a few months later, "—for human beings."

¹ Letter No. 6, to Friedrich Theodor Vischer, November 25th, 1886.

It seems to me, after reading this book, that in this last respect we can hardly follow him too closely. If the shadow of the one man is so broad, it is because the skirts of doctrine were never drawn tightly about him but allowed to flap freely in the winds. I would have his disciples follow him most rigidly in this putting off of all rigidity—however one-way the traffic in comprehension may at times appear to be. *Alles interessiert mich*—there is a charity of the mind, as well as of the heart, and in the war of understandings coals of fire are, in the long run, the armour-piercing projectiles. But in the short run, to the few (or not so few) who have in the depths of their being the anthroposophical *Geistesrichtung* and are withheld only by misunderstanding, I would have them say, as Steiner himself said to Rosa Mayreder in the same letter of November 30th, 1891:—

"I beg you *urgently* to let me know what kind of doubts you still feel about my . . . arguments. I will answer *at once*; for, just because I know well that your *Geistesrichtung* fully accords with my own, every difference of opinion alarms me."

OWEN BARFIELD.

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