

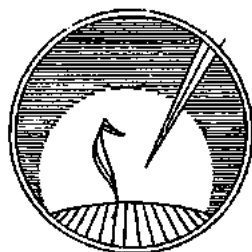
The Golden Blade

1981

The Golden Blade

THIRTY-THIRD (1981) ISSUE

LOVE	<i>George Herbert</i>	4
EDITORIAL NOTES	<i>A.B.</i>	5
<i>THE GRAIL MYSTERY</i>		
THE DECLINE OF GREECE AND THE MYSTERIES OF THE HOLY GRAIL	<i>Rudolf Steiner</i>	13
THE FISHER-KING	<i>Chrétien de Troyes</i>	24
A NOTE ON CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES	<i>Marie-Alice Cartwright</i>	31
IN QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL	<i>Ursula Grahl</i>	33 ✓
THE TRIALS OF PARSIFAL	<i>Francis Edmunds</i>	43 ✓
THE TEMPLE OF THE GRAIL	<i>John & Doris Meeks</i>	52 (✓)
GRAIL MOUNTAIN AND GARDEN OF MARVELS	<i>Hugh Hetherington</i>	62 ✓
WOLFRAM AND WAGNER	<i>Eileen Hutchins</i>	68 ✓
ASSIA TURGENIEFF	<i>Jacob Streit</i>	76
COUNSELLING AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT	<i>Adam Bittleston</i>	82
<i>TWELVE SONNETS</i>		
THE COSMIC MAN	<i>Maurice Branch</i>	95
<i>A WORLD IN CRISIS</i>		
A CONSULTATION ABOUT THE FUTURE	<i>Charles Davy</i>	101
THE CRISIS IN THE WORLD ECONOMY	<i>Daniel T. Jones</i>	106
AUTISTIC CHILDREN	<i>Lotte Sahlmann</i>	122
TELEVISION'S PRISONERS	<i>Faith M. W. Hall</i>	129



Anthroposophy 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 aim of this Annual is to bring the outlook of Anthroposophy to bear on questions and activities which have relevance to 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".

COVER DESIGN BY DANA PRAGER

Edited by Adam Bittleston and Jonathan Westphal
Rudolf Steiner Press, London

£2.25

Printed in England by Charles Clarke (Haywards Heath) Ltd.

Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
If I lack'd anything.

"A guest," I answered, "worthy to be here:"
Love said, "You shall be he."
"I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
I cannot look on Thee."
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
"Who made the eyes but I?"

"Truth, Lord; but I have marr'd them: let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."
"And know you not," says Love, "Who bore the blame?"
"My dear, then I will serve."
"You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat."
So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert (1593-1632)

EDITORIAL NOTES

WHEN he was on Iona, St. Columba sometimes spoke to his brother monks of events that were happening far away in Ireland, or perhaps in Italy. After days, weeks, or months, confirmation would come that these events had happened as the Saint had said. They might concern a fairly small group of people, for instance a difficult birth to a woman whom Columba could name, or many, for example a natural disaster. The monks do not seem to have been very surprised that Columba could do such things; but one of them did venture to question him. Columba asked the monk to keep silence about the matter while he himself still lived; and then said: "Some there are, though very few, to whom Divine grace has granted this: that they can clearly and most distinctly see, at one and the same moment, as though under one ray of the sun, even the entire circuit of the whole world with its surroundings of ocean and sky, the inmost part of their mind being marvellously enlarged."

These words came to us through the biography of Columba, who died in 597 A.D., by St. Adamnan, 9th Abbot of Iona, who was born in 679. He was a very careful biographer, and memories in those days, particularly those that concerned the holiest men and women, were much more reliable than ours today. So it is reasonable to think that his description of the Saint's power, and the explanation given for it, are close to the facts.

Today many millions of people share in the power which can bring before them events all over the world as they happen. What television brings before us is indeed a picture deprived of many qualities which are very significant in the event itself; particularly most of the subtler qualities of atmosphere and feeling, which may be very intense for the actual participants. Jerry Mander, in his remarkable book, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, describes how very much is lost in the television representation of a marsh (which many people might regard as being rather uneventful). He even suggests that the viewers might well know considerably less about marshes after the viewing than they did before. Unfortunately, television has a very strong power to convince viewers that what they are seeing is identical

with the reality, and it requires a certain activity of mind and soul to perceive how great the difference must be.

When Columba was aware of such distant events in moments of vision, he always brought to them the depth of compassion which he showed to people who came to him on Iona or met him on his journeys. When television or the other media bring to us their version of events remote from us in space, it is often very difficult for us to feel what these events really mean. This applies particularly to statistics; two or three people whom we know who find it difficult to find a suitable job may well influence our feelings much more than the knowledge that there are 18 million unemployed in the developed countries, and that this figure will almost certainly rise. What extreme poverty, or racial strife, or the systematic repression of freedom, mean in great regions of the world we can generally begin to imagine only through a few particular examples, of which we may somehow come to hear—perhaps not through the media at all but through people we meet. And yet there is no going back; once we have become citizens of the world we cannot limit ourselves again to the affairs of the village—though these were experienced not so very long ago in a way that was often much richer, and nearer to reality, than all that comes to us through the media.

Somewhat we must form pictures of our globe as a whole. It is no use trying to cram everything into one picture; but we can try to see what is happening in economic life, for example, or in the field of human rights, or to plants and animals, over the whole earth. Such pictures will of course be very sketchy and generalised; but without something of the kind the flood of events makes us simply bewildered. Later in this issue Daniel Jones makes a determined attempt to help us to understand the origins of the world economic crisis, and the directions in which there might be some hope for its solution. Because the matter is so vital and so complex, we may try to give a very much simplified picture here of the present economic situation, by way of introduction to what follows. We see great regions of the world where the average family has too little to eat, high rates of disease, a short expectation of life, and a high birth rate. It can afford very little in the way of manufactured goods. These may be called the needy regions; “developing countries” is a little too optimistic, for in some of them the average standard of living has hardly improved in recent years,

and some are at times threatened with famine. Most of them have a small affluent, or very affluent, upper class. On the other hand, we see regions where the average family has one or more cars, colour television, good medical care, a long expectation of life, too much to eat, and a low birth rate. It can afford long-distance holidays. But such regions are afflicted by high unemployment, high inflation, and often by poor or bad industrial relations. Between the needy and the affluent regions are what may be called the middling regions, which are definitely moving towards affluence in this sense, impelled either by government direction or free enterprise. From this point of view India and much of Africa are needy regions, West Germany and much of the United States affluent, Russia and Brazil middling.

The affluent or nearly affluent countries are at present deeply puzzled; they do not know what has gone wrong with their economies. As Daniel Jones shows, they have enjoyed a remarkable period of growth in which they were aided by the Keynesian analysis of money and by favourable circumstances, including the possibility of exploiting the needy and lower middling countries. But the Keynesian analysis has perhaps something in common with some medical procedures widely used in recent years, which have astonishing immediate successes but show unwanted side-effects over a longer period. For absolute non-economists, it may be said that Keynes believed in having a lot of money about. His methods *alone* may lead in the long run to chronic inflation, high rates of interest, and the very unemployment they set out to overcome. The monetarists, of whom the British Government at the moment of writing are devoted pupils, want to cure this situation by putting Keynes into reverse, as it were, and having less money about. But this is not as simple as it sounds; and at the present the invalid is getting very much worse. In one way or another, as Daniel Jones shows, the affluent countries are trying to solve their problems without taking into account the world as a whole, without realising that the middling and needy countries are part of the same problem.

Among the steps which ought to be taken are really massive gifts from the affluent countries to help the relatively undeveloped regions, just as Marshall Aid set the European economy on its feet after the Second World War. It is really absurd to think that they could not afford this. The very resources which they are at present

wasting—their unemployed and part of their steel-producing capacity, for instance—would to some extent be absorbed by this. It would of course be important that this aid was used to develop “appropriate technology” (Dr. Schumacher came to prefer this expression to “intermediate technology”, which sounds like something provisional, a poor substitute for large-scale technology, which he came to regard as almost harmful in every way). It would also be necessary to have real associations of producers and consumers (not governments, but people directly concerned) to watch over prices, both of food and commodities in general, guided by global thinking. The Brandt report goes some way in this direction.

But every move to solve the world economic crisis is hindered, it could perhaps be said bedevilled, by factors which come from outside the economic field. There are three armed doctrines which are competing for the world today. This competition is particularly evident in Africa. They are Islam, Communism, and what we may perhaps call Western Individualism. Most people today are aware of the dynamic quality of Islam; but there is very little understanding for it, outside its own limits. We only understand any religious movement, or indeed any human institution, if we see both its positive strength and its defects, its shadow. It is sure to have a shadow, just as each human being has what is called his double. In Islam we can respect its seriousness, its constancy in prayer, and its sense of brotherhood, for example. Those wishing to deepen their understanding can read the Koran itself, and for those with a Christian approach Rudolf Frieling's *Christianity and Islam* can be recommended. But in this context the shadows in Islam are particularly relevant. And the deepest of these, from the very beginning, has been its tragic failure to find the Christ. This is not just a doctrinaire conviction; anyone studying the life of Mahommed attentively can see it clearly expressed there. “God has no Son” is a central doctrine of Islam; the Christians in Mahommed's time did not bring him a living conception of what Divine Sonship meant, but only one frozen in dogma. And so the Koran describes indeed the mysterious birth of Jesus, and his ascension into heaven; but it denies the Crucifixion. This is a tragic fact in the whole history of mankind. And Islam is a closed system; it has the Book given from heaven, and nothing can go beyond it.

Communism has also a Book, the works of Karl Marx. These

spring from a burning sense of the injustices which the working class had suffered during the Industrial Revolution; great learning, and a mass of information about economic facts. But in their practical effects they have a deep shadow; they too claim absolute validity, and in practice deny the free spirit of man. Communist countries in general do not recognise the value of the living, developing spiritual life, from which the economic field can draw great benefits. While Islam does not find the Son, Communism does not find the Holy Spirit.

Both Islam and Communism have deep divisions within themselves, but Western Individualism is much more divided. It has no single Book; it includes what both Judaism and Christianity have become, without for the most part really believing in either. Its positive tenets are perhaps mainly concerned with liberty and the protection of human rights; liberty of speech and association, no legal penalties without open trial under known laws, and room for free enterprise in economic life. But the great convictions that were once at the heart of life in Europe and America have for most people died, leaving an inner emptiness.

The strength both of Islam and of Communism is in their definiteness. But this very precision, in matters with which they are centrally concerned, is also a source of weakness. They do not give enough room for the developing individual. Islam is strong through holding so firmly to a reverence for the Godhead which echoes relationships to the Ground of the World that were natural to man in the past. Communism is strong because it proclaims, and tries to enforce, a kind of social brotherhood which will only come about naturally in the future. The attempt to realise its economic theories in practice often results in a class structure more rigid than that of the West. The Individualism of the West has its strength in being really of the present, in corresponding with the present state of human consciousness. We are like Hamlet both in the penetration of our analysis and the confusion of our purposes.

In the West there is no direct political pressure upon the individual to hinder the growth of his spiritual life, or his association with others of like mind. But we are hindered by an almost boundless inner apathy; we prefer situations in which our souls can be as inactive as possible, for example looking at television—the average viewing time in the United States is given as four hours per day per head. Can we

imagine all the human creative powers that are left unused during this time—the possibilities of developing human relationships, of giving care and interest to the old, the disabled, and the emotionally or mentally disturbed, or of finding unused artistic capacities?

We cannot really imagine, though we can try to do so, the immensities of time left relatively unused, perforce by the unemployed, by choice by television viewers. But there are beings who are able, not simply to imagine what this means, but actually to perceive it. They are the elemental beings and the members of the heavenly Hierarchies. We are not able really to imagine what a Communist-dominated education means for the souls subjected to it; though it is possible to some extent to read the contrast between the happy faces of younger children and the disillusioned, frustrated faces of adolescents under such conditions. We cannot really imagine the diversion of spiritual and intellectual ability away from human needs into the devising of the most advanced weapons for nuclear and chemical warfare—but the elementals and the members of the heavenly Hierarchies observe it, and what it may mean for the future.

And yet the human soul desires everywhere to be creative, in free response to human needs, and free discovery of its own depths. Everywhere human beings are beginning to discover the wonderful heritage they bring with them from earlier lives on earth—though this may seem nonsense, heresy, or even mental illness to the powers under whom they live. But again and again this awakening reaches a moment when the human being feels no longer alone, even if there is hardly anyone with whom he can speak of his discoveries; when invisible companions begin to make themselves felt.

About eight hundred years ago a story began to become known in Europe, in beautiful and impressive form; the story of Perceval and the Holy Grail, which could quicken then, and can quicken now, the inner activity of the human soul. But it will do this only if we approach what we can learn about it with a truly seeking and questioning mind. The contributions about the mysteries of the Holy Grail in this issue of the *Golden Blade* are so diverse because their writers have done this; they have approached Perceval and Amfortas not simply as people in a story, but as alive in action and suffering within every human soul. (We have not attempted to impose a uniform spelling of the names of people and places, even within a single article; there does not appear

to be a good principle upon which a uniform spelling could be based. To begin with, Chrétien and Wolfram wrote in different languages and of course spelled differently. Very little effort seems to have been given to consistency in spelling names, in the 'vulgar tongues', in Middle and Northern Europe up to the end of the 16th century and even later. Shakespeare spelt his name variously, though never as we do!)

Nothing in this issue is meant primarily as an historical study; we hope that it can all be read as throwing some light on contemporary questions, as much as the articles on the world economic crisis and on television. (We can also look at the autistic children described by Dr. Sahlmann not just as people suffering from a grievous illness, but as manifesting symptoms which belong to our time as a whole, and to our own inner being.) But the Grail story is not only a wonderfully imaginative diagnosis of modern man; it can bring us a powerful impulse for building the future. When Rudolf Steiner described Parsival as the first Protestant (as Assia Turgeneff quotes him as doing) he was pointing, I think, at the activity in soul which gradually awoke in Parsival; the vigorous search for the meaning of Christianity which does not depend on external tradition.

Everything in the present world crisis depends upon the refusal of human beings to act simply as vehicles for mass emotion—upon the awakening of free activity in heart and mind. Those that are brought up as adherents of a particular religion, or of a particular social doctrine, have all within them the capacity to achieve independence, though this may be sleeping deeply, or beginning to awaken. Only in awakening consciousness can we achieve mutual understanding.

The present Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, gave a remarkable picture in his inaugural sermon. He compared present-day Christians to people exploring a maze and coming near to the heart of it, but finding that they had to go all the way out again without achieving full success. Outside they find people who are not formally Christians; and it is with them, and learning from them, that they can make a new attempt. But we shall do this only if we are not dependent on what we inherit from the past, but trust the free activity of the human mind, both in others and in ourselves.

Many people today seem to regard unemployment as if it were the result of a force of nature, like a volcanic eruption. But it is not. It is due to human mismanagement, and in particular to lack of ideas and

the misdirection of money. It could be cured by productive ideas and the availability of low-interest loan money, guided by human insight (not by government command) into the right places. But a free and creative spiritual life and economic insight are closely related. The late Dr. Ernst Lehrs, about whom we hope to write in the next issue of the *Golden Blade*, chose as motto for his autobiography a quotation from a Whitsun lecture by Rudolf Steiner (Berlin, 21st May, 1918):

We must learn to lead a life full of expectation.—It is necessary not only to believe in the spiritual origin of a part of our life but on the spiritual origin of our life as a whole.

“Our life as a whole”—including the economic and social events of the world and including the troubled conditions of body and soul in each human being; in everything creative or destructive spiritual powers work. The circling planets remind us; Saturn and Jupiter, in their three-fold Great Conjunction from January to July, 1981, tell us of the ancient wisdom which is to be reborn, transformed. The Dark Age, Kali-Yuga, has ended, though its shadows still haunt us. It lasted 5,000 years. Now we can go out, filled with expectation, from the flickering and deceptive lights of the city “spiritually called Sodom and Egypt”, bearing our little lamps, which are fed with oil gathered during our five or so incarnations in Kali-Yuga, into the great steady light of the new age.

THE DECLINE OF GREECE AND THE MYSTERIES OF THE HOLY GRAIL*

RUDOLF STEINER

I HAVE often spoken of the significant turning-point in history which occurred in the fourth century of our era. This was the time of the disappearance from European culture of that Greek wisdom whereby men tried to bring to light the depths and meaning of Christianity. The actual historical moment of this disappearance falls somewhat later, when the Emperor Justinian declared the writings of Origen to be heretical, destroyed the Roman Consulship and closed the Academies of Greek philosophy. The guardians of Greek wisdom were thus driven to the East by the onslaughts of European civilisation, such as it was in those times. That is one side of the picture.

On the other side there was the Mithras Cult, the aim of which was to indicate, through significant ritual, that man as a being possessed of soul and Spirit must rise above all those elements and principles which are an outcome of the interplay of planetary and earthly forces. The purpose of the Mithras Cult was to make man realise and experience his full manhood; in other words, to reveal to man his own nature and being. This Mithras Cult likewise disappeared from the scene after it had spread over the regions round the Danube and on into Middle and Western Europe. These two streams of influence—one connected with a definite Cult and the other with the life of thought and of knowledge—were replaced by factual narrations of the Events in Palestine. It was not possible for a Cult which would have recognised in Christ Jesus the Victor of all that man was meant to bring under his subjection in the course of world-evolution, or for a wisdom that set out to illumine the real mysteries of Christianity, to make headway in Europe. These two streams were superseded by the simple narration of outer happenings in Palestine. And the clear concepts of these Events which ought to have evolved were submerged in the flood of juristic thinking that was creeping over civilised Europe. The

* A lecture given in Dornach, 16th April, 1921.

inevitable result was that dogmas accepted by majority-resolutions in Church Councils were substituted for real investigation into world-mysteries.

This very fact indicates that a change of great and far-reaching significance in the development of Western civilisation had taken place in the fourth century of our era. All the influences which, originating in the East, had laid hold of civilisation in Eastern Europe, were forced back again towards the East. Only the increasing tendency towards abstract thinking in the Roman world could hold its own in the West, side by side with the attention that was now beginning to be paid to the external phenomena of Nature.

How living were the conceptions of the Gods among the Greeks, and how abstract these conceptions became among the Romans! Yet in the later period of Greek culture, ideas concerning the supersensible worlds were already depleted of life, compared with those which during the epochs of ancient Persian and ancient Indian civilisation were evidence of direct experience of the supersensible worlds. These early people, although their way of knowledge was purely instinctive, lived in communion with the supersensible worlds, just as people today live in communion with the material world. To the men of the ancient East the spiritual world was open, and the Beings of the spiritual world were beside them, just as we would say that our fellow-men are beside us today. It was out of this living, supersensible world that the Greek built up his system of thoughts and ideas. In the time before Aristotle, that is to say before the fourth century B.C., ideas were not derived by abstracting them from observations of the external world, but were born from the living, supersensible world, from a primeval power of vision. And these ideas were a quickening, warmth-giving power in the human soul, inspiring man with the necessary enthusiasm for building up his particular form of social life, in so far as he was able to experience them. One must not, of course, forget that this life of thought was denied to a large proportion of the Greek people, for slavery at that time was widespread. But the world that was really the bearer of Greek culture towered up into a realm of ideas, constituted by a veritable downflow of supersensible, spiritual powers.

In comparison with this, the Roman world—separated from Greece only by the sea—went over entirely to abstract thinking. The Romans

spoke of their Gods in the same, prosaic, unimaginative way as—shall we say—our modern scientists speak of the laws of Nature. And although this is an indication of the significant change of which I have spoken, we realise the scope and character of the change even more clearly when we study a factor in the life of soul which found only partial fulfilment in the course of world history and never reached maturity. Think for a moment of the tragic destiny which befell the ancient Greeks. After its finest flowering Greek culture faded away and in effect vanished from the scene of world history. For the culture that followed it in its own land was not a true successor of it. From out of their old thinking the Greeks produced Epicureanism and Stoicism, two systems which in fact represented the dawn of all later cultures. These systems gave expression to definite conceptions of life which in Western countries were to assume a much more abstract form. But even here, and even in the later Greek mysticism, we can discern the decline, the withering, of the old Greek culture.

Why did this Greek culture have to sicken and finally pass away? Therein lies a secret of great significance for world history. With faculties of vision which remained as a somewhat weakened heritage from the ancient East, the Greeks were still fully aware of the reality of man's being of soul-and-spirit. In the earlier period of Greek culture, every individual knew himself to be a being of soul-and-spirit who had descended through conception and birth from his true home in cosmic spheres and was called upon to act in accordance with impulses from the supersensible world. But even in its prime, Greece had a premonition of oncoming decline. The Greeks felt that full manhood could not be attained on Earth if man's eyes were turned only to the supersensible worlds. The Greek felt himself surrounded and pervaded by the powers and forces of Earth. Hence the ancient saying: "Better to be a beggar in the material world than a King in the realm of Shades". The ancient Greek still beheld the supersensible world in its shining glory, but because he was growing towards full manhood he felt also that this clarity of vision could no longer be maintained: the radiance of the spiritual world was fading from him and his life of soul was becoming ensnared in the things of Earth. Fear of death arose in him because he realised that life between birth and death might estrange the soul from her spiritual home. This undercurrent runs through the whole of Greek culture.

Men such as Nietzsche were possessed of true insight into these things. Nietzsche spoke of the times preceding the Socratic and Platonic period as the tragic epoch of Greek culture. For already in thinkers such as Thales, Anaxagoras, Herakleitos, we can discern a magnificent vision beginning to grow dim, although modern history makes no mention of it. There are many evidences of this fear of estrangement from the supersensible world and of life on earth leading only to Hades and the world of Shades. But the Greeks preserved something that appeared in its finest flower in the Platonic Ideas. Amid the onset of degeneration and decline, the Platonic Ideas light up as a final glow from the East, although they themselves were destined to ultimate death in Aristotelian thought.

The ego of man is losing itself in earthly life—this was a continual fundamental feeling for the Greeks. You will remember what is said in my book, *Riddles of Philosophy*, concerning the development of the Ego and the connection of the Ego with thinking. Thinking in turn was bound up in the days of Greece with the very act of perceiving the outer world. But because of this connection between thinking and the Ego-experience, the Greek felt his Ego not so much within his bodily nature as within the outer world, in blossoming flowers, in the lightning and thunder of heaven, in gathering clouds, in rising mist and falling rain. It seemed to the Greek that his own being provided no home for the Ego, and he felt: When I look out upon the world of flowers, *there* lives my Ego, blossoming with the flowers.

It was inherently not possible for this Greek culture to continue along a straight line of development. What would have happened if it had done so? Man would gradually have come to feel himself as an earthly, less-than-human being; his soul-and-spirit would have been experienced as something living in clouds and flowers, in mountains, rain and sunshine, and coming from there to visit him. If the development of Greek culture had continued along a straight course, man would have felt the Ego in its radiance drawing near to him in the evening, with the approach of sleep. But on waking in the morning into the world of the lower senses, he would have felt that earthly man is but the outer shelter of the Ego. Estrangement from the Ego would have been the inevitable consequence of an unbroken development of the fundamental temper or keynote of the Greek nature.

It was necessary that instead of escaping into Nature and the

Cosmos in the way described, the Ego should take firm hold within the inner constitution of man, within an organic being living on Earth. A powerful impulse was needed to bring this about. The characteristic of oriental culture was that while it laid sharp stress upon the Ego, precisely because of its teaching of repeated earthly lives, its inherent tendency was to alienate the Ego from man, to deprive him of it. And so it came about that the West, unable to rise to the heights attained by Greece, lacked the inner force to assimilate the wisdom of Greece in its full strength and allowed it to ebb away, as it were, towards the East. Neither was the West strong enough to receive the Mithras Cult, and it too passed back to the East. The West, by dint of the robust forces of man's earthly nature, was capable only of listening to purely factual narrations of what had taken place in Palestine, reinforced with dogmas laid down in the Councils. Europe had fallen under the sway of a materialistic conception of the nature of personality.

This is shown most clearly in the sweeping change which occurred in the fourth century of our era. Everything that would have been capable of bringing an understanding of the deeper truths of Christianity, and a ritual wherein the Christ Triumphant would have appeared, and not merely as a Figure overwhelmed by the burdens of the Cross, whose triumph is only to be surmised behind the shadow of the Crucifixion—all this passed away towards Asia. The reason was that in the West it was necessary for a firm foundation to be given to the Ego. And the robust forces indwelling the barbarian peoples of the North supplied the power which enabled the Ego to be firmly established in the earthly organism of man.

While this was happening in the regions around the Danube and somewhat to the South, there came over from the East—in forms different from those previously characteristic of Eastern wisdom—Arabic culture. Arabic thought and culture made its way over into Spain, and we see a fantastic intellectualism flooding over the South-West of Europe. It was a culture which in the field of art could achieve nothing beyond the arabesque and was incapable of permeating with soul-and-spirit the realm of organic life. Europe was engrossed on the one hand in trying to bring ritual into line with recounted facts, and on the other with a fantastic abstract wisdom which, filtered through a purely intellectual culture, came into Europe by way of Spain. Single individuals here and there were able to rise

above the level of factual narrations of the Events in Palestine and the fantastic intellectualism of Arabism. There were men—and there always are some—who realised: There is a Christian Mystery which had its origin on Golgotha, a Mystery which it is beyond the highest wisdom to fathom and which the deepest feeling is too shallow to portray in ritual and rite. And in these men there arose a great and significant Imagination—that the Bread of the Last Supper is to be conceived as a concentration of the power of the outer Cosmos, of the forces which stream down to the Earth from the Cosmos, permeating the Earth through and through and charming forth the vegetation—forces which have been poured into the Earth by the Cosmos and spring forth again from the Earth. The bread by which the human body is sustained was conceived as a synthesis of all these forces. And yet another Mystery, connected with that of the Bread, occupied the minds of wise men in Europe, piercing the clouds of obscurity which by that time were gathering round the traditions of antiquity.

This other Mystery, of Eastern origin, was grasped by individuals here and there. It was the Mystery connected with the Holy Vessel in which Joseph of Arimathea had caught the Blood as it flowed from Christ Jesus. Just as the Bread was conceived as a synthesis of forces from the Cosmos, so was the Blood—of which wine was merely the outer symbol—conceived as the extracted essence of the nature and being of man. Bread and Blood were taken as tokens of this World-Mystery by those wise men in Europe who, coming from hidden places of the Mysteries, had attained to a far higher stage of development than that of the masses of the European peoples, who were incapable of grasping anything more than bare narrations of the events in Palestine and whose scholarship, in the rare cases in which it was achieved, fell gradually under the influence of the fantastic abstractions of Arabic thought.

In these wise men there lived something like the fruit of oriental wisdom, already over-ripe, combined with European modes of perception and feeling. A realisation grew up among them of what they called the Mystery of the Grail. They said to themselves: The Mystery of the Grail is not to be found on Earth. Men have grown accustomed to the development of that kind of intelligence which is to be found in its highest form in Arabic thought. They have grown

accustomed not to look for the *meaning* of things in the outer world, but to be satisfied with hearing the outer world described merely from the aspect that is presented to the senses. They must be led to an understanding of the Mystery of the Bread—the Bread broken by Christ Jesus into that same chalice wherein Joseph of Arimathea caught His blood. This chalice found its way to Europe, but according to the legend was preserved by Angels in a region high above the surface of the Earth until the coming of Titirel, who built on Mont Salvat a Temple for the Grail, for this Holy Chalice enshrining the Mystery of the Bread and the Blood.

Thus it came about that in a holy sanctuary of spiritual life the wise men of Europe tried to pierce through the obscurity of abstract thought and factual narration to the Mystery of the Grail: the Mystery of the Cosmos, which had vanished with the disappearance of the old astronomical knowledge of the ether, and the Mystery of the Blood which had vanished with the disappearance of the old science of medicine. For the old science of medicine and the old astronomical knowledge of the ether had both fallen victim to abstract thinking.

This abstract thinking reached its prime among the Arabs in Spain at a certain period of time, and it was precisely in Spain that in the outer life of human beings the Mystery of Grail was not to be found. Among the Christians—narration of bare facts; among the Moors—fantastic intellect! High above the Earth hovered the Holy Grail, and the Temple of the Grail which enshrined the Mysteries of the Bread and the Blood was accessible only to those who had been endowed by the Divine Powers with the necessary faculties. It is not by chance that the Temple of the Grail should have been situated in Spain, at a place where, truly miles away from earthly actuality, thorny brambles barred the way to the spiritual Temple enshrining the Holy Grail.

And so from the life of feeling there was born the conception of the Holy Grail, of the Church Invisible and Supersensible which is nevertheless to be found on Earth, of an actual Presence, albeit concealed from those who took no interest in such things. In those old times the priests of the Mysteries went out into the world, moved about among human beings and, observing their auras, said: "Here is someone whom we must receive into the Mysteries." Individuals were picked out in this way: they had no need to take the initiative

themselves. The chosen ones were brought to the holy places of the Mysteries. This was around the eleventh and twelfth centuries of our era, and even the ninth and tenth centuries. But a time had now come when a certain human impulse had to be strengthened by the Christ-Power which had entered into Europe; the impulse that urges men to ask questions about the mysteries of existence. Nobody who went around in a state of sleepy indifference might approach the Grail. Only those—it was said—may penetrate to this miracle, to the mystery of the Holy Grail, whose souls are prompted inwardly to ask about the secrets both of cosmic existence and of the inner being of man. And so, fundamentally speaking, it has remained ever since. From about halfway through the Middle Ages men were encouraged to ask these questions, nor did any strong reaction set in until the first third of the fourteenth century. By that time, those who asked about the Mysteries of the Holy Grail had become fewer and fewer and inertia was creeping over the souls of men. Their eyes were henceforth directed to the outer forms of the life of human beings on Earth and to all that may be seen, counted, weighed, measured and calculated in the Cosmos. None the less, during the early Middle Ages there had entered into European civilisation the sacred challenge to enquire into the Mysteries of the Bread, meaning the Mysteries of the Cosmos; and equally into the Mysteries of Man, meaning the Mysteries of the Blood; and this challenge remained.

Humanity passed through the many different phases of all that the onset of materialism spread over the civilisation of Europe. Conditions in the civilised life of Europe were such that it was possible for momentous, stirring words to be uttered, even though they often faded away. Factual narrations of the outer Events in Palestine, Arabic interpretations of these Events, the Christian philosophy preserved in Scholasticism—all had significance for a certain period. But these influences were the offshoots of a far greater wisdom and deeper understanding of ceremonial which had now receded towards the East. Men turned deaf ears to the supersensible Mysteries of Christianity, to the Mysteries of the Holy Grail. Moreover, all the really significant voices—and they were by no means few in the early Middle Ages—were silenced by the ever-increasing dogmatism into which the Catholicism of Rome was falling. It was like a repetition of the fate which had overtaken the Gnosis.

It is not right to judge the period between the fourth and the thirteenth centuries merely on the ground that of the many voices which rang out with fervent, over-ripe sweetness through the otherwise primitive civilisation of Europe, only one has survived—the somewhat clumsy voice of a man who could not write but had a certain greatness: Wolfram von Eschenbach. He remained untouched by the dogmatism that had taken root in Europe and by the influences responsible for silencing those powerful voices which, amid strife and bitterness, called men to the Quest of the Holy Grail.

Those who challenged men to set out upon this Quest wished to appeal to the free spiritual activity of which the dawn was just beginning to break. They had no wish to coerce anyone or to deprive him of this freedom. They felt that the initiative to seek for the miracle of the Grail must arise from the depths of a man's own soul.

The free spiritual life which later sank from sight was, in essentials, greater than the influences which opposed it, although they too were not without a certain greatness. The spiritual path described by the servants of the Holy Grail was superseded by the earthly path to the physical Jerusalem in the East; the path to the Grail became the Crusades to the Holy Land. And when Godfrey of Bouillon set out to establish an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem, in opposition to Rome, and his cry, "Away from Rome!" rang out, his voice was less effective than that of Peter of Amiens, whose influence had a great deal to do with giving a materialistic interpretation of teachings which for the servants of the Holy Grail had carried a spiritual meaning.

Yes, this was one of the paths which came under the sway of materialism: it led to the physical Jerusalem not to the spiritual Jerusalem, where Titurel's Temple was said to conceal that which the Holy Grail had preserved from the Mystery of Golgotha. The legend was that Titurel had brought the Holy Grail down to earth from the clouds, where Angels had kept it during the age of Arabic thought and of factual narration of the Events in Palestine.

The age of materialism, however, did not even begin to ask about the Holy Grail. Isolated individuals here and there, living in a kind of daze and not, as Parsifal, in the light of wisdom, set out to seek the Holy Grail, but they did not understand how to ask the right question. The path of materialism, which began in the first decades of the fourteenth century, was preceded by that other materialistic path, of

which the journeys Eastward to the physical Jerusalem were an expression. The tragedy which humanity had to undergo and must still undergo, in order that by an inward realisation of its full import men may again become true seekers, was that the light which had once come from the East was not recognised as spiritual light. The spiritual light was rejected and in its place men set out to find a physical country. In the Middle Ages humanity began to seek the physical East after the spiritual East had been rejected at the close of the age of antiquity.

Such, then, was the situation in Europe. We have not yet emerged from it, for if we understand the cry that still resounds from the innermost hearts of men, we know that we are still seekers for the Holy Grail. The strivings of humanity—in the form first manifest in the Crusades—have still to pass through a metamorphosis and become a *spiritual* quest. We must still seek for that understanding of the cosmic worlds which will reveal them as the original home of the Christ. So long as these cosmic worlds are investigated only by the methods of modern astronomy, they can never be revealed as the home of the Christ, for He could not have come down to incarnate in the man Jesus of Nazareth from those heavens which modern astronomy can describe only by means of geometry, mathematics or physics, and observe only through telescopes. Nor can the incarnation of the Christ be understood with the knowledge of the physical nature of man that is obtained by dissecting a corpse and from the corpse deriving conceptions of the living human being. Among the Ancients, astronomy and medicine were *living* sciences. And our quest today must be for living astronomical knowledge, living medical knowledge. Just as a living astronomy will reveal to us a Cosmos permeated by that spirituality whence the Christ could descend, so will a living science of medicine reveal the being of man in a way that enables us to penetrate with understanding to the mystery of the blood, to those inner realms of the human organism where the forces of the etheric body, astral body and Ego are transformed into the physical blood. When we have grasped the mystery of the blood with the help of true medical knowledge, and the cosmic spheres with the help of a spiritualised astronomy, we shall understand how it was that the Christ could descend to Earth from those cosmic spheres, and was able to find on Earth a human body and blood in which to dwell.

To reach the Mystery of the Grail we must set out on the path to the spiritual Jerusalem, armed with the forces of head and heart, with all the forces of our manhood. That indeed, is the task of modern humanity.

It is remarkable how something which ought to come to pass acquires an objective existence in the flow of outer events. When it is not perceived in its true aspect, it takes on a material form. Just as Christians once flocked to Jerusalem, so are masses of the Jewish people now flocking to Jerusalem. This is a sign of yet another phase of materialism, indicating that what ought to be understood in spiritual terms by all branches of modern mankind is receiving a materialistic interpretation.

The time must come when it will be possible to experience in the right way once more the secret of the Grail. I have referred to this in my book, *Occult Science*: you will find it woven into the text, where the book speaks of all that ought to be sought on the path of spiritual science, and points to the imaginative picture we must form and make our own as with earnest spiritual endeavour and heartfelt feeling we set out to find the path to the Holy Grail.

THE FISHER-KING

CHRETIEN DE TROYES

PERCEVAL went on his way, but met no earthly or Christian soul all day long who could tell him what road he should take; and he prayed without ceasing to God the Lord, the Father of all, that He would suffer him to find his mother in joy and good health, if that were God's will. And he continued in prayer until he began to descend from a height into a valley below, where he came to a river. When he saw how deep and swift the water was, he did not venture to go into it, but said: "O Lord God, Almighty, if I were only able to cross this water, I would surely find my mother on the other side, if so be she is still living". And so he followed the river, going along its bank, until he came to a rock, the base of which was washed by the water so that he could not pass. And lo! he saw in the water a boat floating downstream. Two men were in the boat. Perceval stood still and waited; for he thought they would continue their journey down the river until they came to where he was. So they did, and stopped in midstream and dropped anchor. And the one who was sitting more forward began to fish, and he had hanging on his hook as bait a little fish, slightly bigger than a minnow. The young knight, being in trouble and not knowing what to do or where to find a means of crossing the river, greeted the men and asked them:

"Tell me, sirs, is there anywhere a bridge across the river?"

And the fisher answered him: "No, brother, so far as I know; nor is there any boat that is larger than this one in which we are, and which is after all not capable of carrying as many as five persons. For twenty miles upstream and for twenty miles downstream there is no place where a horse may ford the river, nor any ferry to carry one across, nor bridge".

"Then please tell me, for God's sake, where I can find lodging for the night".

And the fisher answered: "Lodging you will indeed have, and more than that. I myself will give you hospitality for tonight. Go up through that cleft that you see in the rock. When you are at the top, you will

see a house before you in the valley below. That is where I live, hard by the river and hard by the wood".

Perceval makes his way up the steep path until he reaches the top of the hill. Standing there, he looked all around him and could see nothing but the heavens and the hills.

"What did I seek here? Foolish gullibility. May God bring misery on the man who sent me hither, persuading me to take this path, and telling me I would find a house when I came to the summit of the hill! O Fisher,¹ who told me that thou art guilty of deep dishonesty if thou saidst that to me with evil intent".

At that moment Perceval saw, quite near to him in a valley below, a tower rise up. In all the way from here to Beirut you would not find so beautiful and stately a tower. It was square, of grey stone, and on either side of it were two little turrets. In front of the tower was the great hall, and in front of that was the gallery. The young knight dismounted beside it and said to himself: "I have after all been well and rightly guided by the one who sent me hither". And he praises the fisher. He stops calling him a liar and deceiver and betrayer, as soon as he has found a resting place. He rides up to the gateway and finds before it a drawbridge which is let down. He crosses it and four pages come to meet him. Two of them relieve him of his armour; the third leads away his horse to give it straw and oats; the fourth puts on him a new cloak, all of scarlet, then leads him to the gallery, and you must know that if you were to travel all the way to Limoges you would find none so beautiful as this. Perceval waits there until permission should be given for him to come into the presence of the lord of the castle. The latter presently sends two servants to fetch him, they bring him to the square hall, as long as it is broad. In the middle of the hall stands a couch. A noble lord reclines upon it; his hair is already partly grey, his head is covered with a sable cap, black as a berry, trimmed with purple and he is dressed throughout in this same colouring. He is leaning on his elbows. Before him a great fire is burning dry logs, brightly and ardently, between four pillars. Four hundred men could easily have sat around that fire, and each have had a place where he could feel the comfort of its warmth. The pillars are very strong for they support a chimney made of solid bronze, wide and high. The pages who have brought in the guest take up their places before their

¹ In French the word *pêcheur* (fisher) is homonymous with *pêcheur* (sinner).

lord, standing one on either side of him. The lord of the castle, seeing his guest approach, greets him and says:

"Friend, take it not to heart that I do not rise to meet you for I am not at all well".

"Make no mention of it, sir, for it troubles me not; be assured, as God gives me joy and good health".

The noble lord however is still troubled, and half raises himself, just as far as he is able, saying:

"Friend, come nearer and do not be afraid; sit down by me as I bade you, for that is my wish and command".

The young knight sat down beside him and the noble lord asked him:

"Friend, whence have you come today?"

"Sir", replied the youth, "I set out this morning from Beau-Repaire, as it is called".

"God help me"! exclaimed the noble lord, "you have had a very long journey today! I think you must have started out before the watchman sounded his horn for break of day?"

"He had already sounded prime!", replied the youth, "of that I can assure you".

While they were speaking, a page came in by the house door, carrying a sword which was hanging round his neck. He handed it to the lord of the castle, who drew it partly out of the scabbard, so that he might see where it had been forged, for this stood written on the sword. He saw also at the same time that the sword was of such good steel that only one possibility existed for the sword to be in danger of breaking—and that danger was known to none save to him who had forged and wrought it. The page who brought in the sword spoke these words:

"Sir, the blonde damsel, your niece, who is so beautiful, has sent you this gift. Never, near or far, have you seen one to surpass it. You are to bestow it upon whom you will; and my lady will be very glad and happy if it be used well and for a good end by him who shall receive it. He who wrought the sword made only three such, and he will die if he ever forges another like them".

The lord of the castle at once proceeded to gird the sword on to the young knight, who was a stranger there—yes, even this sword with its

costly belt. The pommel of the hilt was of the best gold of Arabia, or of Greece; the scabbard was of gold brocade from Venice. Richly adorned as it was, he gave it nevertheless to the young knight and with these words:

"Dear brother, this sword has been appointed for you and it is my will that you now possess it; gird it on and draw it!"

The knight thanked him and girded on the sword, so that it was not too tight. He drew it forth out of the scabbard, and then having held it before him for a little while, thrust it back again into the scabbard. And you may be sure, the sword suited him finely when it was hung at his side, and still better when he held it in his clenched hand. Without doubt he seemed as one who might well acquit himself as a hero in time of need. He saw behind him the pages standing around the fire, that blazed so brightly; among them he saw the one who guarded his weapons, and he handed the sword over to him, who took care of it for him. Thereupon the knight took his seat again by the side of the lord of the castle, who had shown him so great honour. The hall was filled with a bright light, than which no other candlelight was ever brighter.

While they were talking of one thing and another, lo, there came from a room a page bearing a white Lance, which he held, grasping it in the middle of the shaft. He passed between the fire and the two who were sitting on the couch; and all who were in the hall gazed upon the Lance and its brightly gleaming iron. A drop of blood formed on the point, and this red blood flowed right on to the hand of the page. The young knight who had newly come there, beheld this wonder. But he refrained from asking how it came about, for he was mindful of the warning given him by the one who had knighted him and who taught him that he should guard himself from talking too much; the young knight feared that if he asked about this wonder, he would be accounted mean and ignoble. And so he did not ask.

And behold, thereafter came two pages, who bore in their hands candlesticks, made of fine gold, worked in enamel. The pages who brought the candlesticks were themselves exceeding beautiful; and on each candlestick were burning ten candles at least. A lovely and noble damsel in fine apparel who came with the pages, was holding a Grail in her two hands. As soon as she entered the hall, there came with the Grail that she carried so splendid a brightness that the candles lost

their shining, even as the stars do, when the sun or the moon rises in the heavens. Then came another damsel who bore a silver salver. The Grail which went ahead was of pure gold; precious stones of diverse kinds could be seen on the Grail, the most costly and the most splendid that the sea or the earth can provide; for there can be no manner of doubt that the stones on the Grail surpassed all others. The two maidens now passed before the couch as the Lance had done, and then walked on into another room. And the young knight saw them pass and did not dare to ask who was served from the Grail; for all the time he carried in his heart the words of the wise man. "I fear that I might do harm; for I have heard say that although one can indeed be too silent, one can also speak too much." If he were to speak now, it might lead to good results, but on the other hand it might have evil consequences. He knew not which, so asked no questions.

The lord of the castle then ordered the pages to bring water and set the table; and the pages carried out the duties which they were accustomed to perform. The host and the young knight washed their hands in warm water. Two pages brought in a large, ivory table-leaf. History affirms that it was of one piece entire. They held it for a while in front of their lord and the young knight; until two other pages came in, with two trestles. The wood from which these had been made had two great virtues, so that the trestles were like to last for all time. For they were of ebony, a wood that, as everyone knows, can neither rot nor burn. Upon these trestles the table was then rested, and the cloth spread over it. How shall I describe the cloth? Not Papal legate, nor Cardinal, nor even Pope, has ever eaten from a cloth so white as that! The first course consisted of a haunch of venison, with fat, and hot pepper; clear wine was not lacking, with golden beakers to drink from; A page drew towards him the venison on the silver salver, carved the peppered venison and set slices before them on whole flatbread. And the Grail meanwhile went past them again. And the young knight did not ask who was being served with the Grail. He remembered always the wise man who had gently chastened him for speaking too much; he turned his heart to that old man and did not forget what he had said. He is however more silent here than is right or meet; for as each course of the meal is served up, he beholds the Grail being carried past—quite openly. He knows not whom it serves, and he longs greatly to know. But before I go away, he thinks to himself, I will

certainly ask one of the pages about the matter; I will however wait till tomorrow morning when I shall take leave of my host and of the whole household. So it is put off! And for the moment the knight betakes himself to the meal that is set before him. Tasty and costly dishes and wines are brought in, in great abundance, and set out magnificently on the table. It was in truth an excellent meal, and the lord of the castle was served on this evening with dishes such as only a king or earl or emperor generally has. And the young knight partook of all with him.

After the meal was over, they spent the evening talking together. And the servants prepared the beds and brought sweet fruits, costly and rare ones—dates, figs, nutmeg and cloves, pomegranates and digestive sweetmeats to finish. Ginger from Alexandria then *pliris arcoticum*, settling and effective. After that they partook of many kinds of drinks—negus, without honey or pepper, then mulberry wine and clear syrup. And the young knight marvelled at the wonderful delicacies that were quite unknown to him. At length his host said: "Friend, it is time now to go to rest. Let it not displease you that I go into my own room to sleep, and if it is agreeable to you, you may rest out here. I have no strength in my body, and so I must needs let others carry me". Four strong and agile servingmen came forward now from the room. They took hold by the four corners the quilt that was spread upon the couch, and upon which their lord was resting, and bore him out of the hall. Other pages remained behind and waited upon the young knight, doing for him all the service that was needful. When it so pleased him, they pulled off his shoes and undressed him and laid him to rest on costly white linen. And he slept till morning.

When he awoke, it was dawn and the household had already risen. But, behold, when he looked about him, he saw no one at all. He was obliged to rise up from his couch all alone, however inconvenient it may be, but when he saw it must be so, he got up, as well as he could, put on his shoes, without waiting for help, and went to collect his armour and weapons. He found them again at the head of the table where they had been set the night before.

When he had donned his armour, and was about to pass into one of the rooms, the doors of all of which he had seen standing open the night before, he was astonished to find them now all closed and locked. He called and knocked, beating loudly upon them. No one

opened to him, no one uttered a word. After a long while, he went back to the entrance door of the hall. This he found open. He walked down the steps, and found his horse ready saddled, with his spear and shield leaning against the wall. He mounted his horse and took a good look all round everywhere, but no servant, no squire, no page was to be seen. He went to the gateway, and found the drawbridge let down. For it had been left so, in order that there should be nothing to hinder him at whatever hour he should approach, but he should be able to ride over at once without delay. He thinks to himself; perhaps the pages have gone to the forest to check their traps, and therefore has the drawbridge been left down for their return; and he makes up his mind not to wait a minute but ride quickly after them and find out if one of them can tell him why the Lance was bleeding, whether it were on account of some pain, and tell him also whither the Grail was being carried. So he rode on through the gateway; but before he was quite over the bridge, he felt that his horse's feet were being lifted up! The horse made a great leap; and had he not done so, it would have gone ill with horse and rider too. The knight turned round to see what was happening. Lo, the bridge had been drawn up! He called, but there was no answer.

"Is no one there?" he shouted. "You, whoever you are who have drawn up the bridge, speak to me! Where are you, for I cannot see you. Come forth, that I may see you and ask you about matters that I long to know of!"

Speaking thus he was wasting his time, for none wished to answer.

Translated by Mary Adams

A NOTE ON CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES

MARIE-ALICE CARTWRIGHT

ALTHOUGH it is unlikely that the version of the Perceval story written by Chrétien de Troyes about 50 years before that of von Eschenbach is the original, it is almost certainly the earliest surviving account. Written with a good degree of sophistication, it contains in itself a wealth of profound reflections on the nature of man's role in society as both man and Christian.

Very little is in fact known about the life of Chrétien de Troyes. It has been deduced that he wrote his surviving works between 1150 and 1190. As his name suggests, he originated in the then thriving international market town of Troyes in the Champagne region east of Paris. Here he lived for most of his career under the patronage of the Countess Marie de Champagne, daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine. Under the influence of a court dominated by women, Chrétien wrote poems dealing with the courtly ethic of *fins amors* or courtly love, being one of its chief innovators in the north of France, and bringing the emphasis away from the fighting-man-orientated epic-style of such works as the *Chanson de Roland* (c.1100).

In keeping with medieval tradition, Chrétien did not seek to be original, but merely to tell an old story better than before—bringing in elements from many different sources, themselves part of a folk tradition whose themes could be traced back to biblical, classical and even oriental sources.

Most of Chrétien's poems draw from the organic body of folk material known as the *Breton cycle*. This is the collective term for a narrative tradition which drew together elements from the entire Celtic world, amongst which were tales of King Arthur and his knights, King Mark of Cornwall and Tristan and Isolde: age-old stories of princes and warriors living in far from princely conditions in a world where elements of the supernatural and Christianity were confusedly mixed. A crude version of the Perceval story has been found in the 13th century Welsh 'Tales from the White Book of Rhydderch' or *Mabinogion*, which illustrates well the type of material, probably oral, on which *Perceval* may have been based.

Li Contes del Graal or *Perceval* is the last of Chrétien's five Arthurian Romances, and was written presumably at the end of his life as the Gawain section appears to be unfinished. He wrote it whilst in the service of his second and last patron, the pious Count Philip of Flanders. Of all his works it is the most carefully structured and the most heavily underlaid with religious allegory. Each element, each character exists not only on a physical level, but for Perceval is a new psychological and theological confrontation which forms an integral part of his development. The Grail episode at the Castle of the Fisher King is the high point of his progress—a trial which he fails and for which he will make reparation before finally repenting and learning the truth.





IN QUEST OF THE HOLY GRAIL

URSULA GRAHL

WHEN first we become interested in the subject of the Holy Grail and begin to go in search of information, we make an interesting discovery: almost everyone whom we approach with our questions has heard of the story but nobody can tell us very much about it.

We have similar experiences when we consult the many books that have been written on the subject: they offer us a tremendous wealth of detailed and obviously significant knowledge, and yet, the more we absorb of this knowledge, the more we come to realize that we know nothing at all.

We begin to see that at one and the same time the theme of the Holy Grail seems to be close at hand and infinitely far removed. We feel quite clearly that it concerns us deeply, but whenever we reach out for it we find that it withdraws and becomes inaccessible.

These strange experiences—so we are told—have come to everyone who has set out on the Quest of the Holy Grail. Every available account of the story says that the seekers for the Holy Grail pursue their goal for many, many years. Often they are so close that they can almost touch it, but the very next moment they may find themselves further away from it than ever.

At the present time most people have gained whatever knowledge they may have of the subject from the well-known legends of King Arthur, from Richard Wagner's two operas, *Parsifal* and *Lohengrin*, and from the romances of the Middle Ages. From all these sources we certainly learn a very great deal, and yet the core of the subject tends to remain a deeply veiled mystery.

We encounter very interesting and moving accounts of many different versions of the story, but these versions not only complement one another—they contradict one another very considerably, too. While we receive innumerable fragments of the truth we are seeking, riddle is heaped upon riddle and the central question remains unanswered. Although some of the stories appear to be telling us quite

clearly and openly what the Holy Grail is, we still cannot fathom it because one story tells us that it is a precious stone, another that it is a platter, and yet another that it is a chalice. From further versions we learn that it is a flower-cup, an organ in the human body, a beam of light, a healing remedy, a draught of the water of life, a bestower of every kind of required nourishment, a constellation in the starry sky, a subconscious experience in the depths of sleep Moreover it has never yet been possible to determine the site of the original Castle or Temple of the Holy Grail. Many places in turn have been claimed to be the one and only location on earth where the lofty secret has been guarded.

If then we set out to trace the story historically and ethnologically we make another interesting discovery: the theme is found to be spread out all over the earth. While at some point of our investigations we had begun to understand that the story of the Holy Grail tells us of the sublime essence of Christianity, we now learn that very similar stories have appeared in pre-Christian times in connection with innumerable pagan sanctuaries all over the earth. The theme of the Holy Grail, in many different versions, appears to have a place in most of the great religions of the world.

Wherever we turn in our search, with every step we take, we encounter some of these greater and smaller riddles. How can we hope to solve them? How can we solve, above all, the riddle that the unique sacred vessel of the Holy Grail appears at the centre of so many heathen mystery-cults, and yet represents the deepest and highest mystery of Christianity?

Here and there from time to time we find a few steps of a stairway that appears to be ascending to our goal, but it breaks off in mid-air; or we find traces on the ground that seem to indicate a path, but after a while the traces become indistinct or end in a thicket, even as the traces of Kundry and of the Grail Knights disappeared when Parzival tried to follow them.

Undoubtedly all along in our research we receive the greatest help and guidance from Rudolf Steiner, but in the study of his work, too, we make similar interesting discoveries. In his books and lectures there are many passages where he deals clearly and comprehensively with certain aspects of the subject; moreover some of his pupils have worked hard at compiling all these relevant passages and their work is

of great help to us but still we do not find it easy to approach the mystery.

Slowly then it begins to dawn on us that the obstacles to our progress are not inherent in the subject but arise from our own immaturity. Increasingly now we feel called upon not only to expand the quantity of our knowledge but to alter the quality of our knowing.

A strange experience, repeated ever and again, brings this home to us: we happen to be re-reading a passage in Rudolf Steiner's works, a passage we had often read before and thought we had understood. All of a sudden now we recognize it for what it is. It is the answer to one of our burning questions. Desperately we may have needed this particular answer. Now we see that Steiner had formulated precisely and unmistakably what we needed to know. It was an open secret and we could have seen it, but obviously we were not ready to receive it.

We are made to feel very humble—but at the same time we are comforted and re-assured—when one day we discover that Rudolf Steiner himself patiently pursued his search for many years before he found the answers to some of his questions. (See Rudolf Steiner's "Christ and the Spiritual World and the Search for the Holy Grail"). We are then faced with the difficult task of curbing our impatience without losing the urgency of our quest.

Continuing then on our path we are led eventually to find the answer to another question that may have puzzled us for a long time. In Wagner's *Parsifal* the young boy asks "Who is the Grail?" Gurnemanz answers: "That cannot be said; but if you yourself are chosen by Him, the knowledge will surely come to you." And in the ninth book of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival* we read that Parzival, the lonely seeker for the Holy Grail, has experienced such despair that he has almost yielded to the temptation of abandoning his quest. Then the grace of destiny leads him to the hermitage of Trevrizent, and the meeting with this hermit becomes the turning-point in his life. Trevrizent goes even further than Gurnemanz in that he says: "No-one can ever conquer or even approach the Holy Grail except those who have been elected and named by Him."

The words 'elected' and 'named' may at times have tempted us to think that the fulfilment of the quest was a matter of predestination. If it was true that we were subject to an unalterable fate—so we were

tempted to think—we might as well give up the quest. But now we remember another passage that helps us further, a passage of fundamental importance in Rudolf Steiner's book, "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds: How is it achieved?" Here Rudolf Steiner states that no occult knowledge may ever be given to anyone before he has made himself worthy to be entrusted with it, but that no such knowledge will ever be withheld from anyone who has prepared himself to receive it in the right way.

From these passages we now learn to understand the secret that nobody, however hard he may strive, can come to the Holy Grail if he remains the same. All his efforts will be in vain when they are directed towards a 'conquest of the mystery.' The seeker's efforts must be directed above all towards the conquest, the transformation and perfecting of his own self. He must first of all try his very best to make himself ever more capable in dealing with the tasks of life and in serving the community of his fellow men.

Whenever a human being has reached the degree of maturity that renders him worthy of being chosen by the Holy Grail, his name will appear on the sacred vessel, and the call will then find him wherever he may be. Kundry, the messenger of the Holy Grail, will come to meet him, will summon him and will guide him to the secret place that through no effort of his own he could ever have reached.

The word "Grail" is connected with the Latin word "gradalis", from which again is derived the English word "gradual." Only "gradually," through strictly determined stages of inner development can we hope to come nearer to the mystery. The whole of the sublime truth is available indeed—everywhere and at all times—but our own nature obscures it and breaks it into fragments. Answers to our questions will often be given to us, but our own immaturity may prevent us from recognizing them. Now we can even begin to be grateful for the fact that the truth is so difficult to assess. The very efforts we have to make towards finding it help us to transform ourselves and to acquire the necessary degree of inner maturity. The moment we have—through our own efforts—achieved the inner victory, the outer realities of life tune in on it and, as if by magic, the truth reveals itself.

Gradually then, with the help of Rudolf Steiner, we become able to piece together the components of the story that we find scattered

through the literature of all times and all peoples. Some legends place the origin of the story far back into mythological ages, long before the dates of recorded history. This is true indeed, because the story of the Holy Grail is the oldest and most important of all earthly stories. Like a golden thread it runs through all the epochs of earthly history and tells us of the innermost secret of the whole evolution of mankind. This is inseparably bound up with the Coming of Christ, Who represents the Divine Egohood of mankind. The story of the Holy Grail is the story of Christ or, more precisely, the story of Christophorus, the bearer of Christ.

For the first time the full strength of the Divine Egohood was received into a human being when, at the Baptism by John in Jordan, Christ entered into the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Three years later, for the salvation of the whole of mankind, Christ performed His Deed on Golgotha. The Mystery of Golgotha is the central point, the core and essence of the earthly cycle of the evolution of mankind. This greatest event of earthly history had been carefully prepared through all the earthly ages preceding it. Moreover it had been cosmically prepared even in pre-earthly cycles of evolution. Through the Mystery of Golgotha Man was to be imbued with the Being of Christ, with his own Divine Egohood. Man, however, was not intended to receive his higher ego through a divinely ordained act of necessity. The way had been cleared for him to reach out for the fulfilment of his being through the freedom of his own Good Will.

For the sake of making this possible, Lucifer had been called upon to lead mankind into the 'Fall.'

We must not regard Lucifer as only an adversary power. He is indeed a mighty adversary power, but at the same time he is a great benefactor of mankind. To the glorious gifts of Lucifer mankind owes the splendours and achievements of all the great pre-Christian cultures and, above all, the possibility of attaining to freedom.

In ancient legends the name of the Holy Grail appears for the first time in connection with a 'Precious Stone' that fell from the crown of Lucifer, or, according to other versions of the legend, was struck from the crown of Lucifer by the Archangel Michael. From this 'Precious Stone'—so we are told—the Cup of the Holy Grail was fashioned, the Cup that was used by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper.

This jewel from the crown of Lucifer was no stone in the ordinary

sense of the word. The 'Crown' of Lucifer was the great circle of his hosts who served him as their master. Each 'Jewel' in this 'Crown' was a being, a servant, a follower of Lucifer. But one being, the most precious jewel in the crown, was different from all the other Luciferic beings. They were all imbued with great cosmic wisdom. This one being, the most precious jewel in the crown, had formed his wisdom into a vessel for the Love of Christ. He had made himself the servant of Christ and his wisdom was to embrace and contain the power of love. He was a being of high divine origin, both human and superhuman at the same time. We may regard him as the bearer of the full strength of the divine egohood of man received in freedom.

On earth, mankind was to be exposed to the further influence of the Luciferic hosts. The high being, who bears the name of the Holy Grail, accompanied the fall of the Luciferic spirits and of mankind. With them he descended into the earthly realm in order to protect, strengthen and sustain mankind in the struggles that were to follow. This high spiritual being united himself with the earthly destinies of mankind to help human beings guard their freedom, the most precious gift from Lucifer, while endeavouring to save them from falling prey to Lucifer's further temptations.

All along, through many cycles of pre-earthly and earthly evolution, this high divine being had prepared the way for the Coming of Christ. Three times before the Mystery of Golgotha could take place he had made himself the vessel in which Christ could dwell for a time so that impending dangers could be averted and the path be cleared for the further development of mankind (see Rudolf Steiner's lectures on the pre-earthly Deeds of Christ).

Throughout the pre-Christian epochs of earthly history Christ was coming ever nearer to the earth, approaching His Incarnation in a human body. This Descent of Christ was known and witnessed by all the priests and kings of old who served in the ancient Mystery Centres and were the initiated leaders of humanity. Under many different names in all the great pre-Christian religions all over the earth, people were worshipping Christ, who was slowly descending from the spiritual realms of the starry regions. There were Christians on the earth long before Christ Himself incarnated in a human body, long before He Himself established the name of Christianity on earth through His Deed on Golgotha.

This is why in the histories of the peoples in pre-Christian times we find many stories of sacred vessels containing the healing essence, the life-giving forces that were needed to maintain the progress of evolution. Wherever we hear of such a sacred vessel being treasured in a sanctuary—be it in oriental shrines or in some Celtic centres of worship; be it in the temples of Syria, in the heart of Asia or Africa, in the South or in the North—we are hearing of pre-Christian Temples of the Grail, where the mystery of Christ's approach to the earth was known and guarded.

In studying all these many different stories we must, however, be very careful and use our discrimination. Between the golden streams of the genuine mysteries of the Holy Grail we come across many degenerate streams which fail to guard the lofty secret in its purity. Moreover we discover some dark places of worship where at the heart of the rituals we find vessels that are filled with adversary powers. One of the most powerful anti-Imaginations of the Holy Grail is the theme of the head in the dish. We find it in a number of stories from many part of the earth. The most famous story on this theme takes us close to the Mystery of Golgotha. It is the story of the events that took place in Machaerus, the centre of darkest black magical powers, where John the Baptist was beheaded by order of Herod and Herodias. The head of John the Baptist, placed in a dish, was carried into the banqueting hall by Salome and set before the king. From all the stories of the Holy Grail we learn that good and evil are always to be found close to each other. We cannot learn about the mysteries of Monsalvat without also learning about the secrets of Klingsor's castle.

Let us now follow the path of the most important of the pre-Christian streams of the Grail Mystery, the stream that leads straight to the Incarnation of Christ. We are told that the sacred vessel of the Holy Grail was kept in a temple in Tyre in Syria. King Hiram of Tyre gave it into the keeping of the Queen of Sheba, and she in turn took it to King Solomon. Henceforth it was guarded in the Temple of Jerusalem. Furthermore the legend tells us that Jesus Christ used this vessel at the Last Supper; that a Jew took it to Pontius Pilate and that Pilate gave it to Joseph of Arimathea, who is said to have brought it to Glastonbury in the year 63 A.D.

When the time of the Mystery of Golgotha was approaching, the high divine being who had served the Christ for so long once again

made himself the vessel for Christ. This time he helped to fashion the human body that was to be capable of containing the Being of Christ for the duration of the Three Years. Among the Hebrew people 42 generations of the tribe of David had prepared for the coming of this child. They had been guided in their preparations by the sacred knowledge of the Holy Grail that had been guarded in the Temple of Jerusalem since the time of King Solomon.

This child, whose birth-story is told in the Gospel according to St. Luke, brought with him the purity of Man before the Fall. When he was twelve years old he received into himself the ego of Zarathustra, who represented all the earthly achievements and earthly wisdom of Man since the Fall. In his lectures on the Fifth Gospel Rudolf Steiner tells us of the further path of Jesus of Nazareth up to the time of the Baptism by John in Jordan, when he became the vessel for Christ. As already mentioned, people have often wondered where to look for the site of the original Castle of the Holy Grail. Many different places have been named. Now we can begin to understand that there is not only one Centre of this Mystery on the earth. Christ says: "Wherever two or three are gathered in My Name, there am I in the midst of them." Thus sanctuaries of the Holy Grail are to be found in all the places on the earth and in the spiritual worlds where true servants of the Christ Mystery are actively gathered in His Name. Over thousands of years the destinies of the Grail stream are manifold. They are inseparably bound up with the destinies of all the groups of beings and of all the single individualities who have been able to join this stream.

Since Christ has made Himself one with the earth, it is no wonder that the healing powers of His Resurrection have begun to radiate into many aspects of life on earth. One day the whole of the earth will be redeemed. All its Kingdoms will be permeated with the Healing Power of Christ. Every single part will then have become a vessel wherein the Christ may dwell. Thus the Holy Grail is the most precious of earthly stones; it is the Chalice of the Sacrament that, at the same time, we behold in the purity of each flower cup (see Rudolf Steiner's lecture in Landin); it is a healing remedy, for Christ is the Healer of the whole world; it is a beam of light, for Christ says of Himself: "I am the Light of the world"; it is a draught of the Water of Life that is bestowed on us every night in the depths of sleep (see the fairy tale, "The Water of

Life"); it is an organ in the human body, the organ where this mystery of renewal takes place every night in sleep (see the article by the late Dr. Grete Bockholt, "A Grail Castle in the Brain," first published in German in *Natura*, September 1926, and reprinted in English in the *Golden Blade* 1975); it is a constellation in the starry sky, where the name of the Holy Grail and the name of Parzival may be read in the occult script of the stars (again see Rudolf Steiner's lectures, "Christ and the Spiritual World"). The Holy Grail is all these wondrous things and many more.

Slowly the Mystery of Christ is permeating the whole of the earth, bestowing Life and Light upon all who dwell thereon. The goal will be reached when every single human being is able to say with St. Paul: "Not I, but Christ in me." When these prophetic words have come true, the Holy Grail will appear to the whole community of mankind and everyone will see the other's countenance in a new light. The whole development is of such gigantic proportions that we begin to understand why so many riddles and problems have beset us for so long. We begin to expect, too, that many more riddles and problems will surely beset us in the future. Long and steep is the path that still lies ahead of us, but infinitely glorious is the distant goal to which it will lead us, the goal at the completion of the earthly cycle of evolution.

Since the story of the Holy Grail is the story of the most sublime secret of the whole evolution of mankind, it is, at the same time, the individual story of the innermost secret of each single human being. This throws new light on the questions we asked at the beginning. It is no longer surprising that everyone has heard of the story, but that no one is far enough evolved, as yet, to grasp the whole of the lofty truth. The theme is always close at hand because we live by the grace of it, but for our limited understanding it is still far removed.

Every night, while we are asleep, Grail processes take place in our organism to heal the tiredness of the previous day and to bestow on us the new life-forces needed for the following day. When we wake up in the morning our consciousness is not yet strong enough to remember our experiences during sleep, but they sustain us in all our activities during the day. The reality of our existence is so far greater than our present capacity for understanding, which is as yet neither strong nor large enough to match the full truth of our own being. From this point

of view it becomes clear too why again and again we encounter the answers to our questions without realizing that we have met them. Our task is then to develop and strengthen that part of our being which Rudolf Steiner calls the "Consciousness Soul." (See Rudolf Steiner "Theosophy," "Occult Science" etc.) Now we experience the Mysteries of the Holy Grail in deep sleep. One day, when we shall have fully developed the strength and capacity of our Consciousness Soul, we shall awaken to behold the Holy Grail.

The epoch for the development of the Consciousness Soul began with the 15th century. Whether we are aware of it or not, we of the twentieth century are all engaged in the task of developing the faculties of our Consciousness Soul.

The forerunner of our epoch, who prepared the way for us all, lived in the ninth century. He is known to us by the name of *Parzival*. So, many centuries ahead of the rest of humanity, he achieved what for most of us is still a task for the present and future. The name of this historical personality, who became Grail King in the ninth century, signifies a degree. Every human being will sooner or later reach this degree and rise to become a *Parzival*. The archetypal stages of the path towards this goal are inscribed in the life story of the individuality who bore the name of *Parzival* in the ninth century. These archetypal stages of the path are the same for everybody, and yet they are always individually different, even as the archetypal form of the human countenance appears in innumerable individual variations. Hence all the life-stories of different historical personalities who achieved the Quest of the Holy Grail are fundamentally the same and yet individually different. Therefore it is important to occupy ourselves with the archetypal images of the experiences they had to meet, the battles they had to fight, the trials they had to endure and the many victories they had to gain. Above all we receive the greatest encouragement and the safest guidance in our own quest when we live with the story of *Parzival* and ponder deeply again and again the archetypal stages of the path he had to travel, the path that leads to Mont Salvat.

THE TRIALS OF PARSIFAL

FRANCIS EDMUNDS

A SAGA is a universal tale centred about a particular hero. Since it is universal, it holds a place in everyman. It is not merely for the reading—it has to be lived. We are with Sigurd, the Sun-hero, in his grim battle with Fafnir, the loathly worm. We pass through between Scylla and Charybdis with Ulysses, we have heard the enticing call of the sirens, have fallen to the witchery of Circe and rejoiced to regain our human shape, we may even have crossed the Styx, and met the three-headed Cerberus, and reached the borders of the dead to bring back from there renewing forces for the living. All this is deeply inscribed in us, as are also the accompanying triumphs and despair that make true history, for the Saga reaches us from a higher source and is history in the making.

Parsifal is a saga of post-Christian times. The heroes of old were as though god-born. Often their divine origin is stated. They come already equipped for their due tasks. They are richly endowed. Not so with a Christian saga. That begins with 'Blessed are the Poor'—begins with nothing. Parsifal stands midway between old and new. Thus his life also divides in two—a before and an after.

Parsifal begins poor, even less than poor, for his father dies before he was born. It is the will of his mother that he remain poor, as little known in the world as is possible. Yet he is richly endowed as all must see who meet him. He is ever described as 'fair', as though a light shines through him. But in his early unpreparedness he commits great follies. He abandons his mother in a heartless manner. He brings untold suffering into the innocent life of beautiful Jeschutte. He slays the Red Knight for wanting his armour, invests himself in that armour and rides forth in it still wrapped as a child in the garments his mother placed round him. And so he comes to his first teacher, Gurnemanz, who nevertheless recognises his worth and trains him in the shortest possible time in the needs and disciplines of knighthood, clearly born for the part, as with all the heroes of old. He takes easily all that comes his way, is greatly successful, wins the love of Condwiramur,

of view it becomes clear too why again and again we encounter the answers to our questions without realizing that we have met them. Our task is then to develop and strengthen that part of our being which Rudolf Steiner calls the "Consciousness Soul." (See Rudolf Steiner "Theosophy," "Occult Science" etc.) Now we experience the Mysteries of the Holy Grail in deep sleep. One day, when we shall have fully developed the strength and capacity of our Consciousness Soul, we shall awaken to behold the Holy Grail.

The epoch for the development of the Consciousness Soul began with the 15th century. Whether we are aware of it or not, we of the twentieth century are all engaged in the task of developing the faculties of our Consciousness Soul.

The forerunner of our epoch, who prepared the way for us all, lived in the ninth century. He is known to us by the name of *Parzival*. So, many centuries ahead of the rest of humanity, he achieved what for most of us is still a task for the present and future. The name of this historical personality, who became Grail King in the ninth century, signifies a degree. Every human being will sooner or later reach this degree and rise to become a Parzival. The archetypal stages of the path towards this goal are inscribed in the life story of the individuality who bore the name of *Parzival* in the ninth century. These archetypal stages of the path are the same for everybody, and yet they are always individually different, even as the archetypal form of the human countenance appears in innumerable individual variations. Hence all the life-stories of different historical personalities who achieved the Quest of the Holy Grail are fundamentally the same and yet individually different. Therefore it is important to occupy ourselves with the archetypal images of the experiences they had to meet, the battles they had to fight, the trials they had to endure and the many victories they had to gain. Above all we receive the greatest encouragement and the safest guidance in our own quest when we live with the story of Parzival and ponder deeply again and again the archetypal stages of the path he had to travel, the path that leads to Mont Salvat.

THE TRIALS OF PARSIFAL

FRANCIS EDMUNDS

A SAGA is a universal tale centred about a particular hero.

Since it is universal, it holds a place in everyman. It is not merely for the reading—it has to be lived. We are with Sigurd, the Sun-hero, in his grim battle with Fafnir, the loathly worm. We pass through between Scylla and Charybdis with Ulysses, we have heard the enticing call of the sirens, have fallen to the witchery of Circe and rejoiced to regain our human shape, we may even have crossed the Styx, and met the three-headed Cerberus, and reached the borders of the dead to bring back from there renewing forces for the living. All this is deeply inscribed in us, as are also the accompanying triumphs and despair that make true history, for the Saga reaches us from a higher source and is history in the making.

Parsifal is a saga of post-Christian times. The heroes of old were as though god-born. Often their divine origin is stated. They come already equipped for their due tasks. They are richly endowed. Not so with a Christian saga. That begins with 'Blessed are the Poor'—begins with nothing. Parsifal stands midway between old and new. Thus his life also divides in two—a before and an after.

Parsifal begins poor, even less than poor, for his father dies before he was born. It is the will of his mother that he remain poor, as little known in the world as is possible. Yet he is richly endowed as all must see who meet him. He is ever described as 'fair', as though a light shines through him. But in his early unpreparedness he commits great follies. He abandons his mother in a heartless manner. He brings untold suffering into the innocent life of beautiful Jeschutte. He slays the Red Knight for wanting his armour, invests himself in that armour and rides forth in it still wrapped as a child in the garments his mother placed round him. And so he comes to his first teacher, Gurnemanz, who nevertheless recognises his worth and trains him in the shortest possible time in the needs and disciplines of knighthood, clearly born for the part, as with all the heroes of old. He takes easily all that comes his way, is greatly successful, wins the love of Condwiramur,

noblest and loveliest of women, becomes ruler of three kingdoms, and is acknowledged as the Perfect Knight, the flower of all Knighthood. Then, and only then, does the actual Saga begin. Possessing all, he is to find that he holds nothing. Henceforth every step he is to take is through pain and sacrifice. He stands between two worlds, an old and a new; between two loves, the one born of the senses, and the other born of Christ. It happened this way.

At the peak of his achievement a very simple wish enters into him. His wish is to see his mother once again, not knowing she died when he left her. He finds himself on unfamiliar ground, sees a water, comes upon the Fisher King, and through him finds his entry to the castle of the Grail, where he is to meet him again as Anfortas. What world is he in? He must learn to live in the world and yet move in it as from an inner world. He has to awaken to the kingdom that is not of this world, yet to live in this world. And to begin with he is utterly lost. In this world he is the poorest of poor. He does not meet his mother but he finds himself as a child at birth.

Has destiny abandoned him? Destiny never does, but how is one to know one's destiny? Before, it was through the adventures met on the way, but what shape are the adventures to take now? He does not know that the dead are with him upon that way, that they follow him step by step, his grandfather King Gandin, his father Gahmuret whose life, cut short, was a preparation for him, his mother Herzeloide who lived and died for him, and so many others of whom he may come to know later, but for now he knows nothing.

Yes, there has been some preparation to meet what has to come, but does he recognise it? Shortly after leaving his mother he met the maiden Sigune, torn with grief, carrying in her arms the form of Schionatulander, her dead lover. He could not know that Schionatulander had died actually in defence of what was his. Schionatulander in death has become the guiding star of Sigune's being and, through her, of Parsifal too. From Sigune he learns for the first time that his name is Parsifal. In those days one's name was an indication of one's spiritual path. For Parsifal it was a moment of awakening but he scarcely knew it. Yet it brought an element of purpose into his life.

So Parsifal is now within the Castle of the Grail at Munsalvaesche. He meets the Fisher King in the figure of Anfortas, he sees the agony

of his suffering, hears the whole company lamenting at the sight of the bleeding lance, witnesses a great sacramental procession at the coming of the Grail, and then the nourishing through the Grail, even receives the Sword of the Grail from the hands of Anfortas, yet his soul remains dumb and silent and he lets it all go by. The world was waiting for one little question but it did not come. Parsifal cannot grasp the moment, he cannot awaken to it, but nor can the moment be waiting for him—it melts away.

That night he sleeps surrounded by "tapers bright". Once before we have seen him sleep amid light all round him—a waking sleep. Condwiramur had sought him out in the night to ask his help. We have heard how Nicodemus came to Christ in the night. Where do we meet in the night if not in Heaven. That is the waking dream. But in this night Parsifal is beset by a swarm of swords, he in the midst attacked by them all, a suffering as of multiple death. It is as though the sorrows of the world were thrusting at him on every side. "Thus fear and unrest awoke him, and the sweat streamed from his every limb."

He wakes to find himself deserted of every one, yet not entirely alone, for the Sword of the Grail is still there to companion him—so it was not only a dream. He dressed and donned his armour and mounted his horse. He called, but all seemed deserted. There was no answering call. And then, as he crossed the courtyard and was about to issue from it, the drawbridge was suddenly lifted, flinging him forward with his horse, and now a voice cried out, the voice of the squire who had welcomed him so graciously, "Goose that thou art, ride onward, to the sun's hate hast thou been born."

The words rang through his soul as though resounding from within him, "Goose that thou art." Was it he himself calling, beholding the goose in himself?

Stunned and bewildered, he saw a path and followed it, and there once again he came upon the figure of Sigune, with the dead Schionatulander, now embalmed at her side, as though further removed in death. It took some time before they knew each other. Recognition in the spirit has to be reborn each time. "Where had he slept?" she asked. "In a castle a mile away." "Impossible," she cried, "there is no dwelling of any kind for thirty miles around." And she told him of Monsalvaesche and of Anfortas and brought the whole

vision of his experience vividly before him. Then the question came, "Did you ask?". Yes, he had seen and heard it all as she described, but no, he did not ask.

Then her voice, which had been tender with her own sorrow, and that of Anfortas, and memories of Herzeloyde his mother, changed abruptly and she said,

"Dishonoured, curst art thou,

Who bearest wolf's fangs empoisoned."

So she roughly dismissed him, and he hears, as though resounding from his own soul from a greater depth than before, as though he himself were uttering it, "Wolf that thou art."

All trace of the castle had vanished.

"Great sweat drops stood on his forehead as he rode on his lonely way." Twice had he been thrust down, but, as though by grace, a special adventure awaited him a little further on his way, maybe to restore his courage.

He met the figure of Jeschutte in rags and in fearful distress, hunted through the world and humiliated by her outraged husband Orilus, because of the ring of their plighted troth which he, Parsifal, had wrenched from her finger, totally misreading the counsel his mother had given him at parting. Fierce was the battle till Parsifal overcame Orilus, and in a chapel nearby swore to the innocence of Jeschutte and restored her their wedding ring. Orilus had been an enemy of Arthur, an enemy of the Grail, an enemy of Parsifal in particular, for it was he who killed Schionatulander, thinking it was Parsifal he was encountering. Now Parsifal sent Orilus and Jeschutte to the court of King Arthur, thus bringing about a double victory over Orilus, the second being reconciliation and redemption.

But now whither further must Parsifal go? He had seen re-union and the renewal of love, and had set a goal to others, but he himself had to continue in loneliness along a road that seemed to offer nothing and revealed no ending. He was caught in a mid-world between the call of the senses, and the call of the spirit; between the grace and beauty of Condwiramur, his love for whom had never diminished, and the vision of the suffering Anfortas which now never left him. There was no going back and there seemed no way forward.

There was snow on the ground in the month of May, winter at Whitsuntide, when the love of heaven descended in tongues of flame

upon men on earth. Of this Parsifal knew nothing. He had spent the night in a woodland, his sole companion a solitary falcon, lost to its flock as he was. As morning dawned a company of wild geese rose into the air. The falcon sped after them and struck one of them and three drops of red blood fell upon the snow. Parsifal gazed at the three drops as though in a trance. They stirred in him the greatest longing for Condwiramur and the love he had left behind. He did not know that Arthur and his court were nearby. First a young knight Segradors, seeing him standing there challenged him, and receiving no reply charged at him. He neither saw nor heard until his horse swerved and then with a single blow he felled him to the ground and became once more absorbed in contemplation of the blood. Then Keie the Seneschal attacked him with even more dire results: for again, the spell broken for a moment, Parsifal cast him heavily to earth, and returned entranced as before. Then came Gawan, a master in the affairs of the heart. He quietly covered the blood by laying his mantle across it. Only then did Parsifal come back to himself. Gawan greeted him and led him to the great company, Arthur and Ginevra and a host of knights and ladies. He was welcomed with great rejoicing, for long had he been sought and now was come. Thus did he sit greatly honoured, a wonder to all, but in himself lonely as ever and lost in inner musing.

Then arrived Cundrie, messenger of the Grail, and the host grew silent. Gay were her garments and cultured her manners, but her frame seemed to have been composed of a disharmony of beasts: long black tresses, bristles of swine, the nose of a dog, tusks of a boar, ears of a bear, hand sharply clawed like a lion's paws, and skin of an ape.

She recounted at great length all the intimacies of Parsifal's background with many details, the nobility of his father Gahmuret, the sorrowing heart of his mother Herzeloyde who had lived and died for him, his splendid half-brother Feirefiz in the far East, and then she spoke so movingly of Anfortas, that every heart was melted, and much more she told and finally turned fiercely upon Parsifal whom she reduced to contemptibility, that he had been with Anfortas and had not asked the question of healing that would have brought blessing to all. What was it Parsifal was seeing now and what was he hearing, and what was Cundrie that she could humiliate him so?

He heard the words:

"And I deem thou art but a monster, and myself shall fairer be." And all his own unworthiness rose up before him.

And she said further:

"Thou hawk in fair feathers hidden, bright serpent and poisoned fang." And there resounded in him from deepest depths:

"Serpent that thou art."

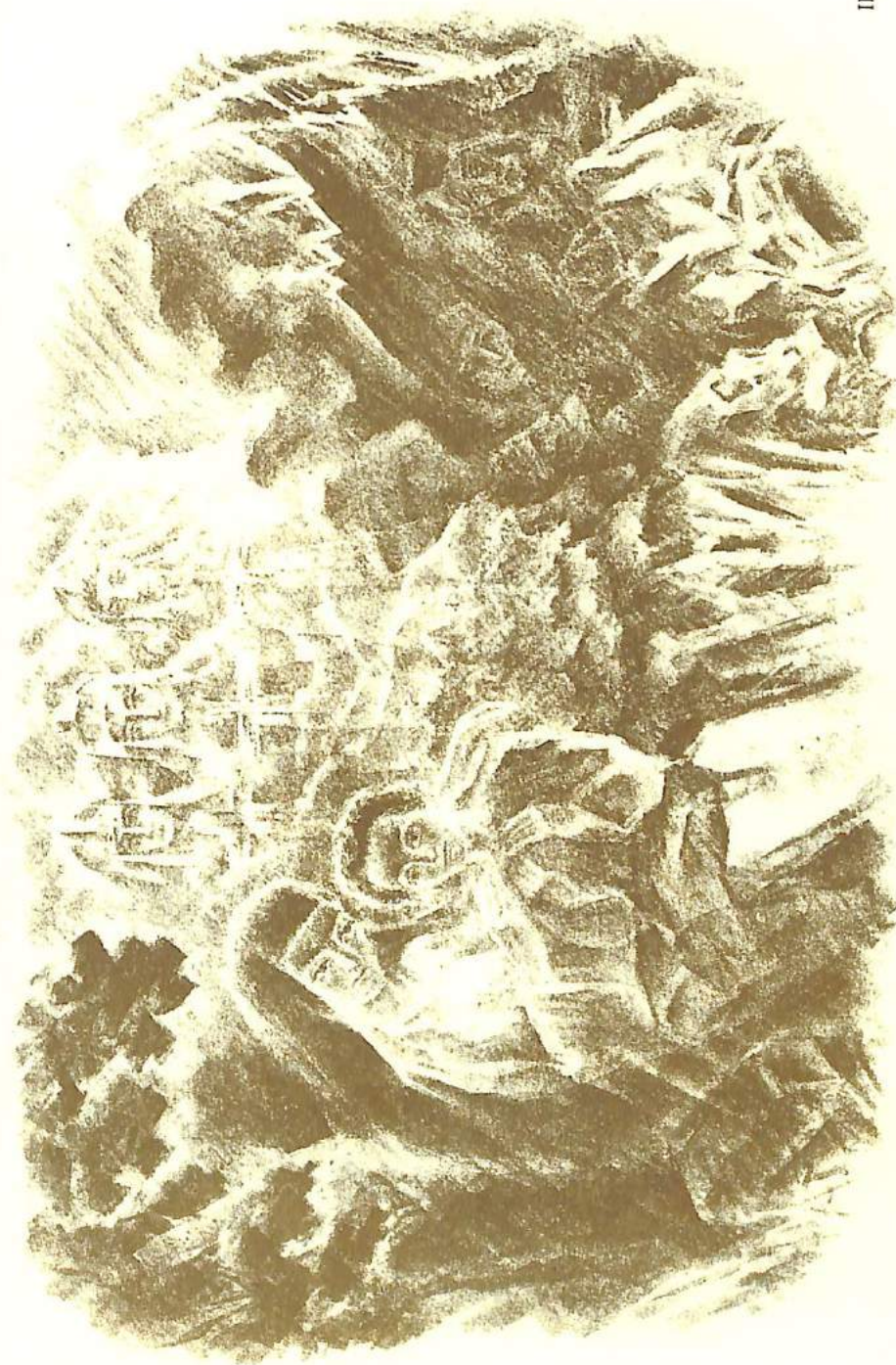
He knew himself now as Goose and Wolf and Serpent, three monsters to be overcome before he could reveal himself in the true likeness of a man. Whatever the others might have seen and heard, the revelation was for him. Early he rose and left the company, bitter at heart, for he saw no way.

We must imagine that all the time Parsifal was moving through many adventures, meeting with many encounters, and always his battles led to healing and redemption, as in the case of Orilus. All this was revealed much later, but there were times when rancour assailed him, times when he would revile a merciless God who mocked him whilst concealing from him every way. Yet unbeknown to him many unseen eyes in heaven were watching with infinite care.

And so it was that on a Good Friday with the snow again on the ground, quite lost to time and his whereabouts, he found himself beside a small hermitage. He called and the figure of a woman came towards him. Again they had to learn to recognise each other. Schionatulander lay in a tomb newly prepared. Faithful Sigune, this last time she and Parsifal were to meet on earth, pointed out a path he was to take. They parted in tenderness. He left it to his horse to find the way and it led him to the threshold of his second and spiritual teacher, Trevrizent. And now it was through Trevrizent that a new stream of life was to flow into his soul, as though the time of probation was now over and the time for enlightenment had come.

Three stages of conquest lay ahead of him, three battles with himself. First the goose.

Trevrizent taught him much; about the fall, the casting down of Lucifer, prince of pride, the descent to man of the Grail with the transmuted blood of Christ that flowed from his wounds at Golgotha for the healing and redemption of all mankind. Much more he learnt about the Grail and its guardian Templar Knights and the heavy destiny of Anfortas and how this befell, for beclouding his clear vision as King of the Grail through earthly desire for a maiden set to betray





him against her will. In the course of the days, through Trevrizent, Parsifal was able to bring the light and the deed of Christ into his thinking. By degrees the Goose began to transform into the Dove, symbol and bearer of the Holy Spirit, sign and symbol also of the Templar Knights, guardians of the Grail. Parsifal now knew in Christ the meaning of sacrifice and the will to sacrifice.

He left Trevrizent with journeys still to go and tasks still to be met but he left him filled with a new understanding, with a new resolve, and with a newborn patience to bide his time.

The middle adventure of the heart is left ostensibly to Gawan. He has to pierce through the delusive enchantment of the senses to the roots of innocence within. It is he who has to win Orgeluse from her bondage to Clinschor though for long she treats him as her enemy—taunting, reviling, scorning him, all which he carries with unflinching faithfulness for the sake of the love he bears her. Only when he has conquered the Chateau Merveille, set up by the evil magic of Clinschor for the imprisoning and transfixing of all that flows as generous love from the human heart, and when he has mastered the dangers of the Perilous Ford, now freed from Clinschor through Gawan's deed, does she reveal her true being to him. We do not meet the image of the wolf directly but we meet its ravages in the human soul. Gawan has to meet the raging lion and bring that rage to stillness and to death. In the end we see how the final stage of this adventure passes to Parsifal, in whose service Gawan labours as his brother and second nature.

And now we come to the third and last adventure in the meeting of Parsifal with Feirifiz who has come from the East seeking for his father Gahmuret, not knowing that he is dead.

What does Feirifiz represent in this threefold drama, presented in the version of Eschenbach under three heroes who really are as three-in-one, Parsifal, Gawan and Feirifiz?

Feirifiz appears as a hero of old. His queen Secundille, of whom we only hear, is wondrous wise. She must know of the mysteries of the West. It is she who sent Cundrie as a gift to Anfortas of whose kingship of the Grail she must have heard, and with Cundrie her brother Malcreatiure whom Anfortas donates as servant to Orgeluse. In that love for Orgeluse was his downfall and his grief. He, the King of the Grail, appears on the jousting green like any other knight and

there it is an Eastern knight who hurls a poisoned spear at him which pierces him in the groin, inflicting the wound which no outer measure can heal. Feirifz has a great army and navy to answer at his beck and call, but he sallies forth alone to seek adventure. He has never known defeat. His strength streams to him from the heavenly spheres whose help he calls upon. His virtues he owes to them. He carries as his badge "That wondrous beast Ecidemon" gift of his beloved and loving Secundille.

" on his helmet he bare,

Ecidemon, all poisonous serpents they must of its power beware."

It is therefore not Feirifz alone but Ecidemon that Parsifal must now confront.

There is a yearning in Feirifz to know what lives behind the visor of his opponent, but that is denied and they must fight and test the worth of their wills.

There is a moment when a mighty stroke of Feirifz brings Parsifal down on his knee. The combat grows fiercer and fiercer and now it is Parsifal who with as mighty a blow brings Feirifz down—but with that blow the sword of Parsifal breaks. With what sword has he been fighting? With the sword of Ither, the Red Knight, whom he brought to his death. The sword of Ither has failed him, a sword that was not his own, and now he is at the mercy of Feirifz. What is it that moved Feirifz so deeply that he flings his own sword far from him saying, "Now we are equal, let us rest." Parsifal mentions he is an Anschewin, but Feirifz too is an Anschewin though he is both black and white. And so the world of East and the world of West meet in these two brothers. Parsifal leads Feirifz to the court of Arthur where they meet Gawan, too.

As they sit, all rejoicing, Cundrie appears again to declare that by heaven's decree Parsifal is now King of the Grail. His dominion holds sway through all the seven heavenly spheres whose influence is now born anew.

And Cundrie leads the two brothers to Monsalvaesche where Feirifz hears the question Parsifal puts to Anfortas and sees the miracle of healing that takes place. Feirifz sees the queen of the Grail, Repanse de Schoye, and he is caught in a joy and a love he has never known before, great as was his love for Secundille, a wondrous queen of the East. But the Grail he cannot see. Only after the baptism does

he behold the Grail and the source of the love that has enraptured him. Rudolf Steiner describes how at the baptism by John the Baptist, the imagination living in the soul is changed, the Serpent of Lucifer is transformed into the Lamb of God. So is it now at the baptism of Feirifz. Now Secundille has fulfilled her task, and, dying, frees the further way for Feirifz. He is then able to lead Repanse de Schoye back with him to the East where she becomes the mother of Prester John. Of him the prophecies tell that he will bring the Christianity of the Grail into Eastern lands, Asia and Africa included.

Parsifal is a saga born of the western world. It is a saga of inner battles that the light, and the love and the will of heaven may, through uniting with Christ, grow manifest in men on earth. This is the tale of Parsifal who confronts and overcomes in himself the goose in his thinking, the wolf in his feeling, the serpent in his willing so that the noblest of knights may be raised to become a Son of God.

Rudolf Steiner said that in the countenance of Anfortas we behold the suffering of all humanity. We all have our share in Anfortas. The question put by Parsifal is in the simplest of words. In Eschenbach it is written as "What ails thee, uncle?" The answer is not in words. It is a question born of the deepest compassion of the heart from man to man. The answer is not in words but in the healing. The world is waiting for Parsifal to be born from within the soul of each one of us.

THE TEMPLE OF THE GRAIL

JOHN and DORIS MEEKS

IN Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*, spiritual and earthly striving are interwoven in a wonderful artistic unity. Again and again human conflicts of different kinds are resolved, and reconciliations brought about by the intervention of a human being whose own moral development allows him to do so. Opposing parties are brought together in love and understanding; few unredeemed elements remain in the great tapestry of events which Wolfram so lovingly spreads out before us.

From the perspective of *this* world, where the story of Parzival is rooted, we are shown glimpses into another: a world from which the Grail comes and to which it returns again. In his first visit to the Grail Castle, Parzival sees the Grail carried into the hall by the Queen, and then removed again after the meal. As his eyes follow the departing procession, he catches a momentary glimpse of the room beyond, where, reclining on a bed, a "most beautiful old man" can be seen. We later learn that this is none other than Titurel, the first Grail king.

Only at the end of the story do we hear of a Grail Temple. Here it is that Feirefiz, the heathen brother of Parzival, must appear before the Grail to receive his baptism. Only the baptismal font is described. It is carved of ruby and rests on a jasper base. The temple itself seems of secondary importance beside what takes place in it.

Yet the Grail Knights, who are repeatedly called "Templeisen", or Templars, must surely look to this sanctuary as to a spiritual centre of all their service. In it the Grail is housed, much as other holy relics are housed in the great churches and cathedrals of Europe. Is it possible to enter more fully into this temple, to become acquainted with its origin and its architectural forms?

In a monumental work written in the latter half of the 13th century and usually known as "The Younger Titurel", Albrecht von Scharfenberg devoted over a hundred stanzas to a description of the Grail Temple in elaborate detail. His work is of particular interest, as





it treats a subject which Wolfram began, but left unfinished in the form of his "Titurel" fragment, so-called because it begins with a long throne-speech by Titurel. In fact, it was to have dealt with the life and deeds of Schionatulander, whom we meet in *Parzival* as the dead knight in the arms of Sigune. Like the momentary appearance of Titurel, the Sigune episodes may be seen as windows, through which we are offered glimpses of a world which lies beyond. We meet the threshold of death, and follow indirectly Schionatulander's ascent into the spiritual worlds, until, at the very end, Sigune is able to follow him.

Albrecht begins writing his Titurel as it were in the person of Wolfram, but he fails to achieve Wolfram's wonderful interweaving of the physical and spiritual levels. The Grail Temple, for all its exquisite beauty and detail, seems quite remote from earthly affairs; it is *beyond* the realm of the story, which, in equally elaborate form, deals with the courtly world.

But if Albrecht's style is markedly different from that of Wolfram, his work enjoyed great popularity and influence. Although the Grail Temple as he describes it was never achieved as a physical work of architecture, there can be little doubt that it lived in the hearts and minds of many of the bearers of Central European culture during the latter part of the Middle Ages.

In the following section, a summary is given of Albrecht's description of the land and temple of the Grail. Some passages are word-for-word translations, others appear in condensed or altered wording. The liberty has been taken of changing the sequence of the description of the different parts of the temple, in order to allow the overall form to become easier to grasp.

* * *

When Titurel was 50 years old, an angel appeared to him from the Grail, to make known to him that the rest of his life should be devoted to its service. With celestial music the angel led him into a deep and seemingly impenetrable wilderness, *Foreis Salvasch*, which was overgrown with many exotic plants and trees: among them cypress, cedar, almond, myrrh and aspind, from which Noah built the ark. Many strange birds filled the forest with song, and in the earth countless precious stones were hidden. In the centre of the forest rose a mountain which had ever remained concealed and protected from fallen man, whether Christian, Jew or Heathen: Munt Salvasch it is

called. The mountain and everything on it was protected from all evil. Titurel found encamped there workers from all the nations of the earth, who had been led to this paradisaical spot to assist him in his work. The Grail could be seen to hover over the mountain, held by the invisible hands of angels. Titurel built a great castle upon the mountain, so strong that all the armies in the world could not have made it yield a single loaf of bread in 30 years. From this castle he did battle against the heathen, until none dared enter the land of Salvaterre.

Now Titurel resolved to build a temple for the Grail, which was still hovering above the mountain. Only the purest of materials were to be used. The King turned for counsel to those learned in the virtues of precious stones, as once taught by Pythagoras and Hercules. They told him of the fire-stone *abestus*, which sends forth a fire that does not burn; and the water-stone *elitropia*, whose water is cool in summer and warm in winter. These were chosen as the basic materials of the temple. Everywhere precious stones and metals were used; only the chairs, lest they should be cold, were made of aloe wood.

Titurel cleared away a part of the summit, which consisted of a single mass of onyx, and polished its surface until it began to glow like the moon. One morning he found engraved in the stone the ground plan of the temple. Recognising the Grail as the source of inspiration, he arranged for the construction to begin.

The work took thirty years to complete. During this time the Grail supplied the workers with all their needs; it sent forth the precious substances from which the temple was built, as well as food and drink. These gifts more than outweighed those given by God to Solomon for the temple in Jerusalem.

The temple arose as a wide and high rotunda, bearing a great cupola. Seventy-two (or twenty-two) chapels stood out in octagonal form; over every pair of chapels stood an octagonal bell-tower, 6 storeys high. At the summit of each tower was a ruby surmounted by a cross of white crystal, to which a golden eagle was affixed. Whoever saw the temple from afar must have believed the eagles were hovering, as the transparent crosses disappeared from view. These towers encircled the roof of the cupola which was fashioned out of red gold and enamelled in blue, to soften the glare from the reflected sunlight. In the middle of the roof rose a great central tower richly decorated by

many goldsmiths. At its summit was a carbuncle, which shone forth at night. Should any Templar return late to the castle, its glow showed him the way.

On the outer wall of the temple were depicted the deeds of the knights in service and defence of the Grail. The chapels were decorated with vines, foliage and strange sea-wonders, which gave rise to great mirth in those who saw them.

Three portals led into the temple: in the north, west and south; the palace and dormitory where the brotherhood slept were connected to the southern portal by cloisters.

The interior of the temple was rich beyond measure. Nowhere was there any space which had not been adorned by the hands of artists and craftsmen.

A great marvel could be seen beneath the onyx foundation. Fishes and other sea-wonders were sculpted there, each one in its true form; hidden air-pipes brought them into movement. Clear crystal was spread out like ice over the floor, beneath which they moved like living creatures in the water. Windmills outside powered the bellows which gave them breath.

Two doors led into each of the chapels. Each one contained an altar of sapphire, which was so placed that the priest should face to the east. The altars were richly decorated with pictures and statues; over each one a high ciborium. Curtains of green satin protected them from dust. When the priests sang there a silken cord could be pulled, releasing an angel, brought down from above by a dove, as though descending from paradise. In the east stood the main chapel, twice as large as the others. It was dedicated to the Holy Spirit, who was the patron of the temple. The chapels to either side of it were dedicated to the Holy Virgin and to John.

On the wall between the chapels were golden trees with green foliage, their branches filled with birds. Green-golden vines hung down over the seats; roses, lilies and flowers of all colours could be seen. Wind from hidden bellows brought the foliage into movement, giving forth a sweet sound, as though a thousand falcons wearing golden bells rose up in flight. Over the vines were angels, which seemed to have been brought from paradise. Whenever a breeze arose they came into movement like living beings.

The portals were richly decorated in pure red gold and in every kind

of precious stone which was used in the building. Beside each stone was engraved its name and virtue. High above the western portal an organ was built in the form of a golden tree. When air was pumped through the branches from hidden bellows, birds sang forth in sweet tones. Four angels stood on the outermost branches holding a golden horn in one hand which they blew triumphantly, while beckoning with the other, as though to say: "Rise up, all ye dead!"

Clearer than the strings of a harp was the tone of two bells made of *aerzubiene* with clappers of gold. The one called to the temple, the other to the dwelling of the knights. Whoever spoke in the temple heard his voice echoed by the precious stones and magnified like the voices of birds in the forest.

The windows were of beryl and crystal, and decorated with many precious stones, among them: sapphire, emerald, three shades of amethyst, topaz, garnet, white sardonyx and jasper in 17 colours. The black of jasper brought out the true brilliance of the other colours. The sunlight was variously tinted by the stones, so that it was a joy to see. And yet the light from without was needless, so brilliantly did the precious gems gleam with their own light.

In addition to the light from without, and the light from the stones, three pairs of balsam lamps hung in each of the chapels and two lamps hung before the doors. Two angels were suspended above on invisible cords. Many others on chapels and walls bore candles. Nowhere in the temple was there a crypt. The light alone should proclaim to us the Christian faith.

The cupola rested on brazen pillars, into which many images were graven. It was decked with blue sapphire, on which stars of carbuncle shone forth like the sun both day and night. The golden sun and the silver-white moon were pictured there. A clockwork, artfully concealed, drove them around on their courses; cymbals of gold announced the seven times of day. Statues of the four Evangelists were cast in pure gold, their wings spread out high and wide. An emerald formed the keystone of the cupola. On it a lamb was depicted, bearing the cross on a red banner.

In the midst of the temple was a rich work dedicated to God and the Grail. It was identical in form to the temple as a whole except that the chapels were without altars. In it the Grail was to be kept for all time.

* * *

The reader's first impression is likely to be one of overwhelming detail, of a descriptive realism which leaves little to the imagination. No space, says Albrecht, is left unadorned. It is as though the material out of which the temple is built were raised so entirely into the sphere of form and colour that substance and weight were altogether overcome. A threefold radiance fills the space; the sunlight which shines through the gems of the windows, brings manifold nuances in the course of the day; the glow of the stones at night, above all the carbuncle-stars in the cupola; and the candles and balsam-lights which are never extinguished. Movement and sound gently fill the space with the illusion of life; from the fishes and sea-wonders under foot to the angels above. Music is represented—strangely!—by the animal kingdom (the birds) and the angelic world, while human music is lacking! As the angels blow their "horns", they beckon for the dead to rise.

Just as the dead have been purified to a greater or lesser degree by the trials and sorrows of earthly life, and arise at the angels' bidding triumphant from the darkness of the grave, so too the precious stones and metals have been lifted by the power of the Grail from the darkness of the earth, where they were long hidden before being raised up to the light. Only so can the teachings of the virtues of the gems be understood, which so permeate the description.

The temple rests on a foundation of onyx, which Titirel so polishes that it glows like the moon. The name of the Grail, as we learn in Wolfram's *Parzival*, was first read in the script of the stars. The ground-plan of the temple, which appears in the onyx is a first revelation out of this stellar script which can show itself only in an earthly substance so purified, that it can be a selfless reflector of the cosmic laws around it.

Rudolf Steiner has shown that the different precious stones began to arise within the earth at the same time as various organs, most notably the sense-organs, began to arise in the human organism. They were the earthly reflections of these organ-building processes. The formation of the senses required a gradual dampening of the life-processes in the organs, so that they could become ever more selfless in their perception of the world. The formation of the onyx occurred parallel to the formation of the sense of hearing. During the night, when all outer senses come to rest, the ground-plan of the Grail

Temple is engraved on the onyx. The architectural form of the temple reveals itself not at first to the eye, but to an inner hearing or inspiration. Even when it is finished, the temple is filled with the purest tones, as though it would begin once again to dissolve into the musical world from which it has come.

This cosmic musical origin of the temple also expresses itself in the rotunda form surmounted by the celestial dome with the constellations. The stars are carbuncles. They, together with the great carbuncle on the central tower of the temple are the only stones specifically mentioned as giving forth their own light. The term "carbuncle", as used in the Middle Ages, referred more to the colour of a stone than to its substance. It was thought of as a stone having the colour of human blood. Both within and without the Grail Temple it shines forth when all else is obscured in darkness, giving man direction and orientation. Cosmic imaginations come to life when the manifold forms and colours of the daytime recede. The unicorn, it was believed, bore a carbuncle beneath its horn, in the same place where once the "third eye" gave man a pictorial, imaginative experience of the supersensible words. Such experiences will arise again in the future, when the human blood has been purified of base passions.

The number of chapels in the temple is variously given as 72 or 22. Both numbers betray a cosmic origin. Seventy-two (6 x 12) is a common variant of the Biblical seventy languages which arose when the Tower of Babel was built. Rudolf Steiner¹ speaks of the Grail Temple as unifying peoples of all nationalities and languages in a single striving. The 72 chapels thus represent the 72 disciples of Christ who dispersed in all directions of space, and now carry together the yearning of all humanity for the Christ-impulse. The builders of the Tower of Babel originally spoke a single language; as a result of their work they became divided in their understanding and spiritual striving. Architecturally, it was an attempt to take heaven by storm, piling substance on substance from below upwards. Under its own weight it had finally to crumble. The Grail Temple was built by workers of all nations and languages. The materials were bestowed by the Grail, which hovered aloft over the mountain; although their origin may be earthly, they are raised up and brought together by a celestial power. Form, light, colour and sound are ordered together in cosmic harmony which overcomes the weight of matter. The temple is

dedicated to the Holy Spirit, which descended on the day of Pentecost to overcome the division of languages.

The variant of twenty-two chapels need not be seen as a contradiction to this conception. St. Jerome taught that the Old Testament had 22 books corresponding to the 22 letters of the Hebrew Alphabet.² There is evidence that these were in turn derived from the lunar mansions, which represented stations along the Moon's path through the zodiac.

Each of the 72 chapels contains an altar stone of sapphire. "Sapphire", says Albrecht, "has the virtue of sprinkling man's sins with the waters of repentance; God gave Moses the tables of law on a sapphire".

The formation of sapphire in the earth took place parallel to the formation of the human feet. The feet, which are placed utterly in the service of the human will, embody something of the power of sacrifice. The altar, as a modified table, selflessly receives and gives earthly support to the sacrifice which man offers to the spiritual worlds. This quality of selflessness comes to expression also in the sapphire of the celestial dome which becomes the background for the radiant carbuncle-stars.

The windows of beryl and crystal are inset with stones that shine forth in 99 colours. Here all the virtues and qualities of the stones appear together in a mosaic of light, as though all cosmic directions should be united and harmonised by the power of the sun. The keystone of the dome is an emerald, on which the lamb is depicted holding the symbol of the cross. Directly below the keystone in the centre of the temple is a microcosmic image of the whole temple which houses the Grail. Wolfram describes the Grail as *lapis exillis* which has been interpreted as *lapis ex coelis*, "the stone from heaven". It is carried on a green *achmardi*, an Arabian silk embroidered in gold. Might not the green of the emerald represent something of the quality which man has to develop in order to become a receiver, a bearer of the Grail? The cosmic origin of the emerald is parallel to the development of the solar plexus in man. This organ presides over deeply unconscious processes in the human organism, processes which have to do with the transformation of substance. As man's conscious life gains more and more mastery over these processes in the future, the substances of his physical body will gradually become purified and ennobled through the working of conscious moral forces.

The body itself will become ever more like the temple of the Grail; the metabolic and life processes, which are now veiled in the depths of unconsciousness, will become transparent like the onyx foundation of the temple with its moving fishes and sea-wonders; the life of thinking will become as clear and objective as the celestial dome with the luminous images of sun, moon and stars; the feeling life will become filled with radiant light and harmonious tones, like the middle realm of the temple. The human heart will become a place of offering, like the chapels with their altars of sapphire; the will will become a source of strength and sure support, like the brazen columns that bear the cupola aloft.

The Grail Temple is created in the image of man, but represents in its purity a future ideal, rather than a present reality. This perspective may serve to throw light on the otherwise paradoxical descriptions of hidden mechanisms that are needed to give movement and the illusion of life. The mineral world is today a static world, it has fallen out of the sphere of the life-processes. If, therefore, these substances are "raised up" and given the semblance of life, a price must be paid. A kind of sub-nature, hidden from view, must be created. One substance must "fall" to the level of mechanism, in order for another to be raised up. This seeming paradox brings to expression an inescapable law of spiritual evolution—namely that no being can attain to a higher stage of development without another descending. This process must inevitably accompany the building of the temple.

Even so, the gentle movements and sounds produced by the mechanisms are hardly sufficient to outweigh the impression of a static quality pervading the whole. As a picture which could be conceived if not imitated as a physical work of architecture, the Grail Temple represents the ultimate in intellectual mastery over the mineral kingdom. Although the whole of threefold man as a being of thinking, feeling and willing may be ideally present in its structure, it is permeated through and through by the laws of the intellect, as they are able to penetrate and master the mineral world. Time, the dimension of the etheric or living world, is almost entirely subordinate to space. In a similar way, the Heavenly Jerusalem, as a future ideal of the transformed and ennobled earth, is built on the basis of the 12-fold symmetry of space.

* * *



The mission of Parzival is that of the spiritual development of the individual. Once this development has reached maturity in the course of time, the meeting with Feirefiz can take place. In Albrecht's work, Feirefiz rules over 72 peoples. He is the representative not of the individual but of humanity as a whole. When Feirefiz is brought to the Grail Temple he unites there the spiritual strivings and longings of all those peoples and cultures over which he holds dominion. Humanity, spread out in space over the earth, finds itself together in the temple of the Grail and the Holy Spirit.

* * *

BIBLIOGRAPHY

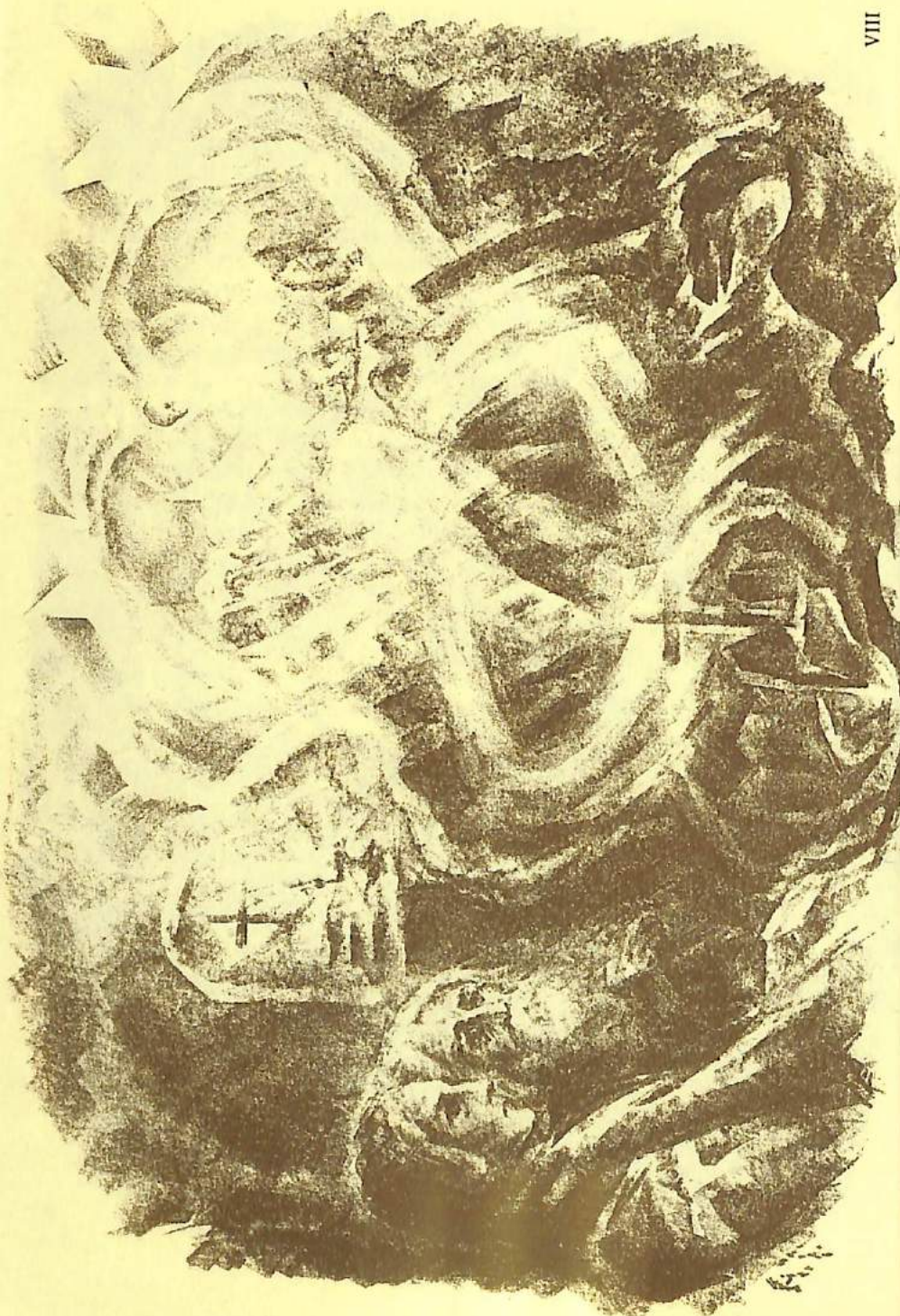
- Albrecht von Scharfenberg.—"Der jüngere Titurel". Ed. K. A. Hahn. Quedlinburg und Leipzig, 1842.
 "Der jüngere Titurel". Ausgewählt und herausgegeben von Werner Wolf. Francke Verlag, Bern, 1952.
 "Der jüngere Titurel", in: San-Marte, "Leben und Dichtung Wolframs von Eschenbach", Bd 2. Magdeburg, 1841.
 Cloos, Walther.—Kleine Edelsteinkunde, Verlag Freies Geistesleben. Stuttgart, 1965.
 Meyer, Rudolf.—"Der Gral und seine Hüter", Verlag Urachhaus. Stuttgart, 1958.
 Steiner, Rudolf.—"Die Sendung Michaels", 13.12.1919, GA 194. Dornach, 1977.
 Stucken, Eduard.—"Der Ursprung des Alphabets und die Mondstationen". Leipzig, 1913.
 Trendelenburg, Gundula.—"Studien zum Gralraum im 'Jüngeren Titurel'", Verlag Alfred Kummerle. Göppingen, 1972.

* * *

In the description of the temple the German word "Chor", literally "choir", has here been rendered "chapel". This seems to make Albrecht's description more intelligible, and there is evidence for this use of the word "choir" in relation to monastic churches. A ciborium is a receptacle, sometimes suspended from the ceiling in front of an altar, for the reservation of the Holy Sacrament.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Rudolf Steiner, "Die Sendung Michaels".
- ² E. Stucken, p. 20 ff.



GRAIL MOUNTAIN AND GARDEN OF MARVELS

HUGH HETHERINGTON

IN the last few decades the general respect for mythology and the great legendary images of our ancestors has greatly increased. Indeed the image, whether mythological or not, has come to be regarded by many as a powerful means of communication with our fellows, as well as an indispensable instrument in self-understanding. Copy-writers and artists working in advertising make very conscious use of the image as a means of conveying shortly and cogently a particular message, while trans-personal psychology, a recent development along Jungian lines, uses the symbol as a potent means of discovering the self. It is small wonder that this is so, as the mind moves easily among images and through them reaches out into spheres unvisited by rationalism, unrepresented by the wooden contrivances of mere allegory.

One of the most powerful images in the western world is that of the Holy Grail, and nowhere more compellingly and richly presented than by Wolfram von Eschenbach, who brought out his version of the story in German in 1200 A.D. It is the purpose of this short study to look at some of the images Eschenbach uses and to attempt to assess their relevance to our spiritual life today.

Those reading Eschenbach's *Parzival* for the first time will be puzzled by the fact that a large part of the poem is not concerned primarily with Parzival's adventures at all, but with those of another hero altogether: Gawain. Further reading will soon reveal that the poem is carefully constructed to reveal the polar difference between Parzival and Gawain and between their respective adventures. Eschenbach is here concerned with one of the most fundamental polarities of our earthly existence, perhaps most thoroughly worked out by the ancient Chinese in their descriptions of *yin* and *yang*. It appears in European literature as the opposition between emotion and reason, Romantic and Classic schools, in philosophy as the division between subject and object, in biology as the differentiation into

female and male, in physiology as the opposite functions of blood and nerve, in psychology as introversion and extroversion, and in mythology it is fully reflected in the great images of moon and sun, of Lower and Upper Gods. But, as the Chinese well knew, *yin* and *yang* are never fully expressed in any identifiable pair of opposites. Each new, freshly worked out polarity throws additional light on the essential nature of *yin* and *yang*, and Eschenbach's contribution is as valuable as any. Its very unexpectedness quickens the imagination to new understanding.

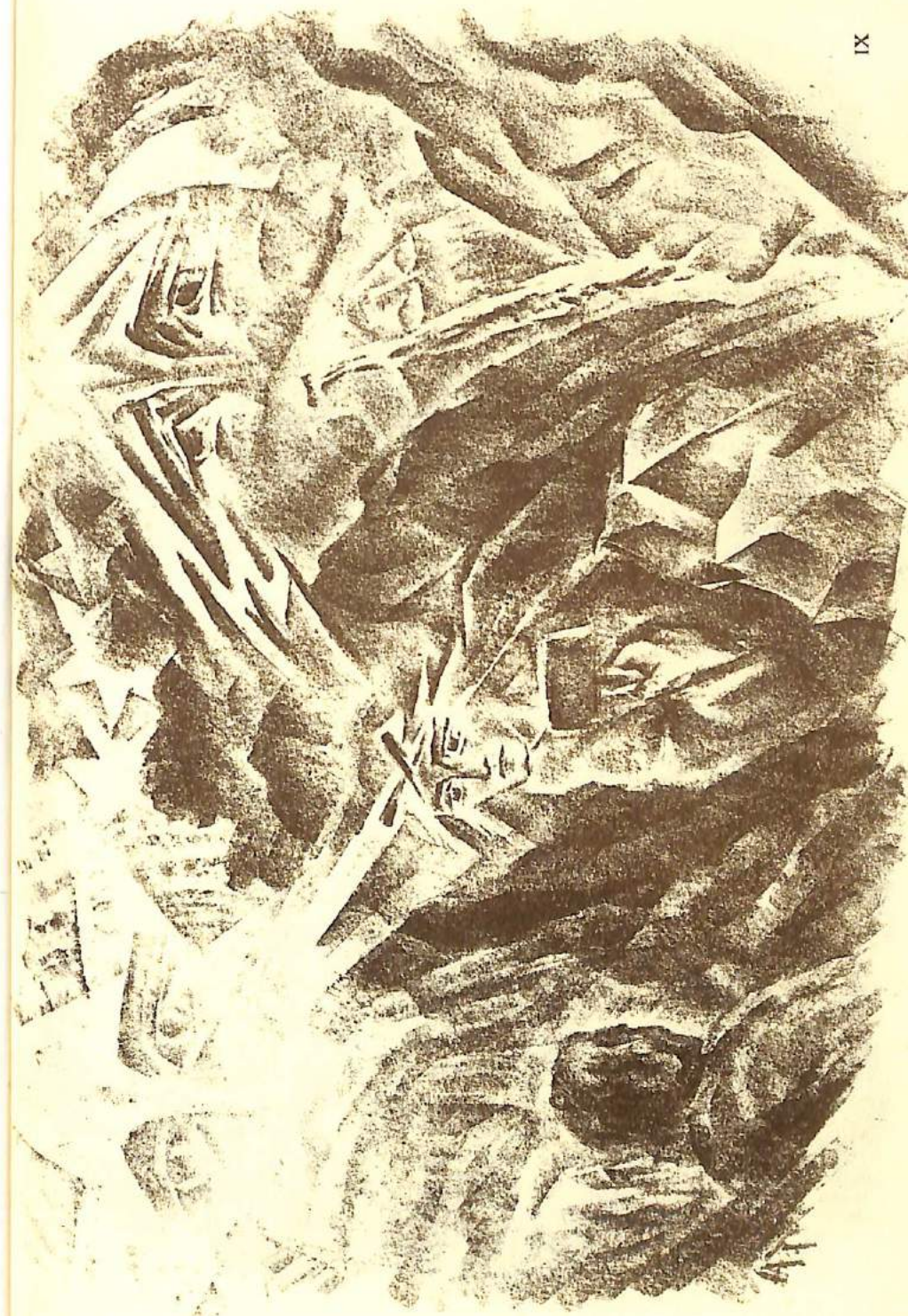
Besides presenting us with a subtle and revealing study of *yin* and *yang*, Eschenbach weaves in two more themes, also of very ancient origin: first that the human spirit struggles from imperfection to perfection, and secondly that because of some catastrophe in the remote past the world and man stand in need of redemption and this can be carried out only by the perfected man (man made god or god made man). So we find both Parzival and Gawain are at the outset, for very different reasons and in very different ways, very far from perfect. Their weaknesses lead them into sore trials from which they learn much. They finally succeed in their quests by reason of their steadfastness and refusal to give in. We also find that the two castles which the two heroes win are each vitiated, lessened in power and enthralled by sickness and enchantment, awaiting the hero who will deliver them. In this the two are alike, but in all other ways they are very different.

Munsalvaesche, the Castle of the Grail, is built on a high eminence in the middle of a primeval forest, untouched by man, a true wilderness, pathless and waste. In the environs of the hill, the Knights Templar, servants of the Grail in white armour, ride through the glades and rough ways of the forest, guarding the approaches and challenging all strangers. When he first comes to the castle as a young knight, newly wed, Parzival meets no Templar Knight, but unhindered and unchallenged draws rein by a lonely lake at the foot of the Grail Mountain. He sees a boat being rowed on the waters and reclining in it a nobleman in rich clothing. Parzival calls across the waters to this man, enquiring, as night is drawing in, whether there be any lodging in the neighbourhood. The King of the Grail, King Fisherman, as he is mysteriously called, is that nobleman and so Parzival is invited to stay the night with his royal host.

This scene calls for imaginative attention: the young man in red armour sitting on his horse by the lakeside, the quiet of the evening and the lonely boat on the water, cutting the still surface and making little eddies in the wreaths of mist rising from the surface at sundown; the still air disturbed by the raised voices of the stranger knight and the nobleman in the boat: all this scene breathes the authentic atmosphere of the Grail. The sense of solitariness, of quiet reflection, of the silence of twilight, of the urgency of the encounter expressed by the ringing call across the water, echoed back by the cliff face of the rocky eminence, the mystery of the boatmen on the water and the invitation to visit the Grail Castle, all these build up the sense of a personal quest, undertaken in the inevitable loneliness of spiritual endeavour. What follows is the natural development of this extraordinary beginning. Our eager expectation is aroused and, blessedly, the poet is able to satisfy it to the full. The great images which unfold during Parzival's first visit to the Grail Castle are worthy successors to this deeply poetic overture.

How different is the starting point of Gawain's conquest of his castle. He finds himself in a fair, cultivated and prosperous country, well populated and busy, where the poor work and the rich play: a kind of medieval tapestry, full of incident and adventure. While in some ways it is debatable at what point we can say Gawain begins his quest to redeem *Schastel Marvel*, the Castle of Marvels, for he is led into it unwittingly and without conscious intent, it is perhaps his meeting with Orgeluse which spurs him on, fiercely and passionately, in the direction he has to go. The scene of this meeting is as carefully composed as the one just described of Parzival by the lake, although it is as different as it could be in atmosphere and colouring.

Gawain sees a castle on a hill and a road that winds round the eminence leading up to the castle gates. This track makes its way through trees, many of them bearing fruit; it is a place of great profusion and vigorous life, no wilderness like the environs of *Munsalvaesche*. Riding up this track Gawain comes upon a fountain beside the road and, sitting by it in a flowery meadow, a lady so beautiful that he falls in love with her utterly and finally. We soon hear how dangerous it is to love her and that she has lured many a knight to his destruction. Her beauty holds Gawain despite all warnings, despite all her scornful and derisive treatment of him, despite the many





trials she bids him undergo. It is during the course of winning this lady's hand that Gawain comes to *Schastel Marveil* and undertakes the perilous adventure which is able to redeem it from the power of the baleful magician, Klingsor. As did Parzival, so does Gawain come upon his castle unawares. How often in life are our major spiritual adventures undertaken without conscious decision on our part.

Moving among the contrasts of this extraordinary story we naturally begin to ask questions. Where in ourselves do we find the wilderness of *Soltane* in which the Grail Mountain is situated, and where *Terre Marveil*, the land on which Klingsor built his castle?

We know both domains well. The one is that land which we must inevitably tread on the path of inner development, where no fellow human being can accompany us or be our proxy. There we have simply to journey, facing whatever comes our way with stoic calm and patience, expecting nothing, but receiving with gratitude what grace may grant us as a gift. The Grail, Parzival is told, cannot be won by feat of arms, or stormed like any common citadel. He who aspires to be called thither must live the good life of a knight and wait for his summons. Gawain's land of marvels is a very different place, but we all know it much better than the lonely forest of *Soltane*. At once the source of the greatest delight and the most acute pain, it is known by every married couple, every lover, every artist and poet, all of whom recognise the need to enter and master it for the sake of his or her own humanity, as Gawain did.

The Grail story makes it quite plain that this mastery of *Terre Marveil* by Gawain is a necessary antecedent to the final consummation of Parzival's quest. Until Gawain is master of his land, Parzival cannot be master of his. In the story there are several veiled hints of the mysterious fact that in essence Gawain and Parzival are one and the same. Both heroes reside in each one of us. The success of the one is entirely dependent on the success of the other. Only when we have achieved true humanity in our relations with others will we be fitted to go that final way to spiritual enlightenment and the beginnings of wisdom on the spiritual path.

It is interesting and indeed somewhat puzzling to find that whereas Gawain's adventures are described in all their colourful detail, Parzival, once he has failed his first test at *Munsalvaesche*, retires into the background. While we hear of him from time to time and know



trials she bids him undergo. It is during the course of winning this lady's hand that Gawain comes to *Schastel Marveil* and undertakes the perilous adventure which is able to redeem it from the power of the baleful magician, Klingsor. As did Parzival, so does Gawain come upon his castle unawares. How often in life are our major spiritual adventures undertaken without conscious decision on our part.

Moving among the contrasts of this extraordinary story we naturally begin to ask questions. Where in ourselves do we find the wilderness of *Soltane* in which the Grail Mountain is situated, and where *Terre Marveil*, the land on which Klingsor built his castle?

We know both domains well. The one is that land which we must inevitably tread on the path of inner development, where no fellow human being can accompany us or be our proxy. There we have simply to journey, facing whatever comes our way with stoic calm and patience, expecting nothing, but receiving with gratitude what grace may grant us as a gift. The Grail, Parzival is told, cannot be won by feat of arms, or stormed like any common citadel. He who aspires to be called thither must live the good life of a knight and wait for his summons. Gawain's land of marvels is a very different place, but we all know it much better than the lonely forest of *Soltane*. At once the source of the greatest delight and the most acute pain, it is known by every married couple, every lover, every artist and poet, all of whom recognise the need to enter and master it for the sake of his or her own humanity, as Gawain did.

The Grail story makes it quite plain that this mastery of *Terre Marveil* by Gawain is a necessary antecedent to the final consummation of Parzival's quest. Until Gawain is master of his land, Parzival cannot be master of his. In the story there are several veiled hints of the mysterious fact that in essence Gawain and Parzival are one and the same. Both heroes reside in each one of us. The success of the one is entirely dependent on the success of the other. Only when we have achieved true humanity in our relations with others will we be fitted to go that final way to spiritual enlightenment and the beginnings of wisdom on the spiritual path.

It is interesting and indeed somewhat puzzling to find that whereas Gawain's adventures are described in all their colourful detail, Parzival, once he has failed his first test at *Munsalvaesche*, retires into the background. While we hear of him from time to time and know

him to be ceaselessly active, and ever more purposefully so as he matures, we know very little of his adventures. We are given towards the end of the poem a list of champions he has overcome in battle, but no details of the combats or history of his opponents. This tantalising state of affairs suggests that the full adventures of Parzival have still to be written. Maybe it is not fanciful to wonder whether it may be possible to do this in the twentieth century, for Parzival belongs to the future and his achievements are to come. We have to admit with a heavy heart that Amfortas, the wounded Grail King, still suffers and the Castle with him.

For most of us the final achievements of the Grail must wait our further experiences in *Terre Marveil*. There most of us still have to undergo the agonies and tests of Gawain in that enchanted land and to learn to hear behind the strident tones of some silly quarrel the mocking laughter of Klingsor as he watches his enchantment exert its disrupting and divisive influence on foolish men and women. If this is an admissible interpretation of the images in question, then the seemingly unbalanced composition of Eschenbach's poem is explained. Most of us are more deeply involved, at least consciously, with Gawain and his troubles, and the adventures of Parzival await their final conclusion in the future!

The characters of Parzival and Gawain repay careful study. Of course they are not rounded individuals as are, for instance, the great Shakespearean characters, rather are they archetypes moving like radiant foci of spiritual forces through the evolving story. They represent, among many other things of course, the opposites of innocence and experience. The strength of Parzival's growing understanding is precisely that it is fresh, wondering and untainted by past memories which could have dulled and habituated the intensity of immediate, novel experience. It can be compared to the simple wonder of the shepherds in the Christmas story whose untutored minds alone were worthy to receive the glad tidings of the Angels. Gawain, on the other hand, is an experienced man of the world, possessing many of those princely attributes we associate with the Three Kings from the east. What he finds as problems and difficulties, troubles Parzival not at all, and what perplexes Parzival is clear to Gawain. The two characters sound two different notes which together form a wonderful harmony.

Let no one think that any one interpretation or illumination of a symbol explains it finally or completely, rather is it just one tentative and momentary questioning of the life and power of the image. It is touched momentarily by the intellect, yielding perhaps one answer, but many other possible readings exist and will present themselves. If this little study has suggested that the Grail story is incapable of being pinned down to any one rational explanation and remains an endless source of new insights, then the tentative indications of possible approaches will have done no harm.

WOLFRAM AND WAGNER

EILEEN HUTCHINS

EVEN in his early operas Wagner expressed two of his most dominant themes. In "The Flying Dutchman" (1839) and "Tannhäuser" (1845) appeared the motif of the power of love and sacrifice to redeem one who laboured under a curse. In "Lohengrin" (1848) he first revealed his connection with the Grail mystery. He had been very much moved by Wolfram von Eschenbach's "Parzival", but it was not until 1857 that he had the experience which gave him the impulse for his final work.

In "My Life" he wrote of a bright spring morning following a period of damp cold weather and many personal difficulties and discomforts:

"Beautiful spring weather now set in; on Good Friday I awoke to find the sun shining brightly for the first time in this house: the little garden was radiant with green, the birds sang, and at last I could sit on the roof and enjoy the long-yearned-for peace with its message of promise. Full of this sentiment, I suddenly remembered that this day was Good Friday, and I called to mind the significance this omen had already once assumed for me when I was reading Wolfram's 'Parzival'. Since the sojourn in Marienbad where I had conceived 'The Mastersingers' and 'Lohengrin' I had never occupied myself again with that poem; now its noble possibilities struck me with overwhelming force, and out of my thoughts about Good Friday I rapidly conceived a whole drama of which I made a rough sketch with a few dashes of the pen, dividing the whole into three acts."

But it was not until 1882 that this great work was matured and perfected to become Wagner's outstanding final achievement.

To concentrate a long mediaeval romance into an opera of three acts was no mean feat; but Wagner had a wonderful power of distilling the essence of a rich and varied substance. It was not possible to follow Parzival's gradual development through his attainment of judgement, of inspiration and of intuition; but he was able to illuminate certain transcendent moments.

In the first act of the opera we are in the realm of the Grail Castle where the old knight Gurnemanz relates the story of its founding by Titirel and of the opposition of the black magician Klingsor. Titirel's heir, Amfortas, on inheriting the kingship, has proved false to his calling. Through yielding to sensual love he fell into Klingsor's power, and not only lost to him the Holy Spear which was able to protect the Grail Community but also received an incurable wound. However the Grail has foretold that redemption will finally be brought by a blameless fool.

Kundry now enters in the form of a wild, frenzied creature whom the esquires regard as a witch or the devil's mare. She has little in common with Wolfram's Kundrie, the Messenger of the Grail, except in the rather menacing impression at her first appearance. The Grail Messenger seems ugly and apparently cruel because the blows of fate which direct our lives into their rightful channels appear at first incomprehensible and hard to bear. Wagner's Kundry is a complex character. On the one hand, when she is under the spell of Klingsor, she comes in the guise of a beautiful enchantress to seduce the Grail Knights and lead them into his power. But, when she can escape from his toils, she appears a distraught being who seeks to serve the Grail Community and brings soothing balsam for Amfortas. When the esquires discuss her strange behaviour, Gurnemanz reminds them that she serves them as a faithful messenger and that perhaps she is labouring under a curse, atoning the guilt of an earlier life.

In Wolfram's poem, Parzival, before approaching the Grail Castle, has already attained the power of judgement and won himself a position in the world; but with Wagner he still appears as an untaught boy. In a few strokes Wagner gives the impression of his hero's ignorance and the pain he causes the Grail Knights. He takes up an episode from Wolfram's story and transmutes it. Wolfram relates how, as a child in the forest, Parzival takes joy in the singing of the birds. But when, after having learned to make a bow and arrow, he shoots and kills some of them, he is filled with distress and weeps bitterly.

In the opera Parsifal's approach is made known by the sight of a swan which sinks wounded to the ground, pierced by an arrow. Parsifal is dragged in and accused of the outrage. But Gurnemanz's expostulation wakens in him a knowledge of what it is to take life. In

grief he breaks his bow and arrow. His description of his adventures in pursuit of the Arthurian Knights and his response to Kundry's report of his mother's death show that he has not learned to control his acts and feelings, but the death of the swan is his first awakening.

Gurnemanz, aware of the prophecy, and wondering if this foolish youth may be the promised redeemer, invites him to be present at the Grail Ritual. Here Wagner departs from Wolfram's account and follows other mediaeval traditions. The squire with the bleeding lance, a picture of Amfortas's misdirected will life, does not appear. The Grail ceremony is not represented as a procession of maidens, followed by their queen, bearing "that thing which is called the Grail". The stone which fell from Lucifer's crown has become the Sacred Chalice of the Last Supper; and the Ritual is akin to the celebration of the Mass where Amfortas is required to fulfil the priestly role. We realise here that spiritual truths can be represented by differing imaginations.

The drama is heightened by the King's frenzied attempt to evade his task until summoned by his father, Titurel. The different musical themes of the Grail, of the love feast and of the declaration of faith, all add up to the solemn mood of the ceremony. Parsifal does not in the least understand what he has seen but his gestures show that he has been deeply moved. Gurnemanz, bitterly disappointed, declares, "Thou art then nothing but a fool". And he pushes the lad impatiently away. But the stirring of compassion is the sign of Parsifal's awakening consciousness, and this is confirmed by the Voice from above, "By pity awakened, the blameless fool".

From a dramatic point of view Wagner's merging of the two characters of Gurnemanz and Trevrezent is most effective. It is fitting that the one who drives Parsifal from the Grail Castle should also be the one to welcome him back. Although there seems little connection between Wolfram's and Wagner's Gurnemanz, they have an attitude in common. The former, while teaching Parzival the knightly skills, attempts to bind him to the past, both by offering him his daughter Liasse and by teaching him that it is improper to ask questions. Wagner's Gurnemanz, after the Grail Ritual, fails to recognise Parsifal's true destiny and angrily rejects him.

In the second act we are in Klingsor's domain. Wolfram gives the task of overthrowing Klingsor to Gawain, but Wagner assigns it to

Parsifal. This is both poetically and dramatically justified. In Wolfram's poem the destinies of Parzival and Gawain are closely related and each from time to time helps the other. When, without recognising each other, they engage in combat and Parzival discovers he has overthrown his friend, he cries, "Alas that I should have fought with the noble Gawain! It is I myself I have vanquished". Within the scope of Wagner's opera it is essential to keep Parsifal as the central figure so that the conflict between Klingsor and the Grail Knights may become a leading dramatic theme.

In this act we become more fully acquainted with Kundry, who is one of Wagner's most powerful creations. While she has little relationship with the Messenger of the Grail, she can be compared with Wolfram's Orgeluse who lures Amfortas into Klingsor's power and wins the ardent admiration of Gawain. When, however, Gawain fulfils the task by which she hopes to destroy him, he has the strength to reject her. This redeems her so that she becomes free from Klingsor's spell.

But while Kundry can be compared to Orgeluse she is by no means a shadowy reflection, she is a character in her own right. Through her, Wagner affirms the law of reincarnation. Klingsor addresses her as Herodias who brought about the death of John the Baptist; and Kundry herself tells Parsifal that she laughed when she saw Christ carrying the Cross. She is unable to escape the burden of her destiny and so she is under Klingsor's power although she longs to free herself.

With great skill she tries to entangle Parsifal by telling him of his mother and, having won his attention, she sets out to convince him that mother-love has to be transformed into sensual satisfaction. But, when she bestows upon him a passionate kiss, he is suddenly made aware of her wiles. He feels the pain of Amfortas's wound and rejects her with violence. She then tries another approach. She strives to stir his pity. She confides in him her tragic destiny and pleads that if he will yield to her for but one hour she will be saved. But Parsifal experiences only horror at her approach.

In fury Kundry summons Klingsor to her aid. He appears with the Holy Spear; but the power to use it fails him. It hovers over Parsifal's head and, as he makes with it the sign of the cross, Klingsor's Castle of Evil Enchantment falls into ruin.

Before leaving, Parsifal gives Kundry a note of hope. He says, "Thou knowest where thou canst find me once again".

Her further progress now depends on her own effort.

A brief comment needs to be made here on the part played by the Flower Maidens. In Wolfram's poem we are told that Klingsor held captive in the Chateau Merveil four hundred ladies, including the mother of King Arthur and Gawain's sister. Whereas the Grail Castle reveals itself only to those regarded as worthy to approach it, the way into Klingsor's realm is easy to find but no escape is possible. It is implied that those who are unable to transform their feeling life are likely to be his prey. The Flower Maidens are only shadowy reflections of these dignified ladies, but their seductive music and song provide a welcome interlude between the stormy conflict of Klingsor with Kundry and the dramatic awakening of Parsifal.

In Wolfram's poem the deed that can heal Amfortas is the question, "Uncle, what is it that ails you?" For the initiate his words have attained the power of an act. In Rudolf Steiner's words, "the knight of the sword" has become "the knight of the word". With Wagner the Holy Spear is the symbol of the purified will which is no longer directed to self-interest but has become an instrument to serve world karma.

In the third act we are once more in the neighbourhood of the Grail Castle. Gurnemanz like Trevrezent has now retired as a hermit. The Grail Knights have fallen on evil days for Amfortas has ceased to perform the ritual and has thus brought about the death of the aged Titurel.

It is Good Friday and a beautiful spring morning. Gurnemanz is disturbed to hear the sound of groaning. In a nearby thicket he discovers Kundry, chilled and apparently lifeless. When he has restored her to consciousness she humbly begs to offer her services and he is surprised at the change in her behaviour as she now appears humbled and softened.

At this moment they notice the approach of a knight, clothed in black armour. Gurnemanz reproves him for entering this holy realm in war apparel on the morning of Good Friday. When the knight removes his armour and kneels in silent prayer before his spear, Gurnemanz and Kundry suddenly realise that he is the Fool and in astonishment they recognise the Holy Spear.

Parsifal now describes to Gurnemanz the paths of error and suffering through which he has passed. He has had to face many dangers and fight many battles since overcoming Klingsor; but he has kept the Holy Spear unprofaned by these conflicts. We are here given an impression of the gradual process of development before initiation can be attained.

Gurnemanz is now able to greet Parsifal as the deliverer who will bring Amfortas's agony to an end; but Parsifal himself is overcome with sorrow to think of the long delay caused by his own failure. He is led to the spring where Kundry bathes his feet and Gurnemanz anoints his head with the pure water as token of his atonement. He addresses him with the words:

"Thrice blessed be, thus purified, thou pure one."

Meanwhile Kundry has drawn a golden vial from her breast and, pouring the oil over Parsifal's feet, dries them with her hair in the gesture of the repentant Mary Magdalene. Parsifal takes the vial from her and passes it to Gurnemanz who now anoints him as King, with the words:

"Thou blameless! Patient in suffering, by pity wakened!
As the Redeemed One's sufferings thou hast suffered."

As his first kingly act, Parsifal bends down and, gathering water from the spring, baptises Kundry who sinks weeping at his feet.

We now come to one of the most beautiful moments in the opera when Wagner is drawing on his own spiritual experience of the joyous mood breathed out by the world of nature on Good Friday.

In Wolfram's poem, when his hero comes to Trevrezent, he has already attained mastery over his own soul powers, but he has not fully realised his guilt or united himself with the Christ. In the opera, Parsifal has already accepted his failure and has achieved the strength to heal Amfortas, but his experience of the Christ Being has still to be deepened. In both the poem and the opera the meeting with the hermit is a central theme in the development of the story. When Christ's blood flowed from the Cross, the world of nature rejoiced, for He had now united Himself with the Earth and His Deed had redeemed the sin of Adam. The mood of joy and peace is all pervading.

"Now all Creation doth rejoice

In this the Saviour's love to trace—

On the Cross uplifted Him no more it seeth,
It therefore looketh up to man redeemed."

Through the power of the music Gurnemanz's words are raised into a higher realm.

The bell now tolls for the funeral of Titurel and Gurnemanz guides Parsifal and Kundry to the Grail Castle which appears before us. There is a dramatic contrast with the Good Friday scene when Amfortas cries to his Knights to slay him as he can no longer bear the anguish of his pain and guilt.

At this moment Parsifal enters and, laying the point of the Holy Spear upon Amfortas's wound, declares:

"One only weapon serves:

The Spear that smote must heal thee of thy wound."

A wonderful transformation takes place. Amfortas's expression of agony gives way to a holy rapture. Parsifal ascends the steps of the altar and unveils the Grail which glows with light, while a dove descends over Parsifal's head. As the newly appointed King waves the Grail in blessing over the assembled Knighthood, Kundry sinks lifeless to the ground, her curse at last removed; and a Voice from above proclaims:

"Wondrous high salvation! Redeemed the Redeemer!"

Wagner reveals the knowledge that without the recognition of man, Christ's deed would have been ineffectual, but, through his acceptance, God and Man are reconciled.

In his lecture, "Richard Wagner and Mysticism", given in Berlin on December 2, 1907, Rudolf Steiner said, "An impulse akin to that of Spiritual Science lived in one of the greatest artists of our time". However, he went on to point out that Wagner was not fully conscious of his inspiration for he considered himself a pupil of Schopenhauer, and nothing could be further from this pessimistic philosopher's outlook than that which is expressed in Wagner's art. It is as though the legends which provided the content of his operas spoke to him and revealed their secrets. Whatever myths he accepted, whether from early Germanic times as with "The Ring", or from mediaeval sources such as "Tannhäuser" or "Lohengrin", Wagner was able to express their deepest meaning. "Parsifal" itself wonderfully conveys the mediaeval wisdom of esoteric Christianity.

At a time when Science, Art and Religion had become separated and dramatists turned more and more to realistic interpretations of life, Wagner strove to unite these different realms and, like the Greeks,

to seek inspiration from Mystery Wisdom. He considered that all works of art should express truth and be acts of religious worship. Wagner considered that the two geniuses able to give revelations from a spiritual realm were Beethoven and Shakespeare, the one creating out of an inner world of inspiration, the other through a waking clairvoyance which enabled him to penetrate the inmost hearts of his characters.

In his article on Beethoven (Prose Works Vol. 5) Wagner describes how the Overture to Coriolanus illuminates the leading theme of Shakespeare's play. Through the union between the inner realm of music and the outer world represented by Shakespeare, one is able to understand more deeply the leading theme of the drama, namely, the conflict between the characters of Volumnia and Coriolanus. Music and drama should enhance each other. Wagner set out to achieve this enhancement in his own operas where the poetry plays as important a part as the music.

We owe a great debt to Wagner, not only for his vision of Art as Mystery Wisdom, but also for his bringing to recognition the Parsifal theme. It was the performance of the opera that inspired Jessie Weston to translate Wolfram's poem and thus introduce it to the English-speaking world. At a time when materialism was gaining its greatest power, this representation of the true being of man in relationship to the life of our times appeared as a shining light and, for those who were able to understand, prepared the way for the Michael Age and the teaching of Rudolf Steiner.

ASSIA TURGENIEFF AND HER DRAWINGS OF PARSIFAL'S QUEST

JACOB STREIT

ASSIA Turgenieff once remarked that when celebration for the dead is under discussion, when one who has died is actually being remembered, the childhood experiences of that person should be mentioned.

Let us turn our inward gaze to that delicate, dreamy girl, Assia, growing up near Moscow in the nineties of the past century, with many unanswered questions which seemed prophetic of an intensive spiritual endeavour. Her elders were unable to give her answers and so, when she was about four years old, the angel of dreams came and gave her pictures.

In one dream, she climbed a birch tree and saw the radiant evening sun going down. She hurried to fetch her mother and took her by the hand. They climbed up a sandy hill, sinking into it but struggling on, and reached the top just at the moment that golden light still shone into the descending glow. And the sun spoke: "The Spirit lives".

Some time later she had eye trouble and had to travel to Moscow to see an eye-specialist. The town was noisy and exciting compared with the life that she had led on her parents' estate. In the night, she dreamed that a little devil came to her bed and whispered: "I will let you listen to the world. Will you listen to the world?" She stood up and glided with the little devil to the keyhole of the door and listened. Assia heard delicate sounds, and then, in turbulent tones, 'the whole world'. When she spoke of the dreams a few years ago she added that these two had prepared her, while still a small child, for Anthroposophy. When her mother asked her, "If I were not in the world, would you not be here either?" the little girl answered, out of inner knowledge born of the spirit, "Oh yes, I would have sought out another mother for myself".

The child was often depressed that people should be unhappy, so she had the idea of building a house in which everyone could be happy. It was to be entirely of wood and to have coloured windows,

like the garden house in a property nearby. She ran off to her grandmother's house, some miles away; but there only knotted trees and hard branches were to be found. She was in despair and wept, but she had to keep her disappointment to herself.

At about the age of eleven, Assia read in a history book a chapter on Gnosis containing something about Lucifer; whereupon she had a dream in which she saw Lucifer seated upon a throne. As a 'Light-form', he looked wonderfully beautiful and was surrounded with burning torches; but he was very lonely and she had great pity for him.

When she lay in the cornfields through which the sun sent its golden rays, she felt nature to be something good and beautiful. In animals she experienced a suffering that called out for compassion. She knew, also, that evil lives in man; but the sun shines upon good and evil alike. When she was twelve years old, she wanted to understand the 'Age' in which she lived. Humanity became a problem for her. She demanded 'concrete books', 'documents', from her father. He gave her Herodotus and Tacitus to read and she threw herself into this study, attempting to learn some parts by heart. This intensive relationship to history remained with her for the rest of her life.

The time came when despair took hold of the fifteen-year-old girl. This was during the revolution in 1905. She visited anti-religious gatherings and saw street fighting in Moscow. To remain on her father's estate became dangerous so she was taken to Paris with her sister. There she stood entranced before the great works of art in the Louvre. As she perceived how art is speaking throughout the centuries, she responded; 'Yes. The gods have united with man'. And she experienced this beholding of beauty as release and thus began to see her own way traced out. She went to a teacher of engraving—Danse by name—in Brussels and studied with him.

In her aunt's home in Paris she had already met the Russian poet Andrei Bjely* when he was giving a reading of his poems. Later he became her husband and she was able to travel to Sicily, Egypt, Palestine and Greece with him, to see and experience the great treasures of ancient cultures. Her impressions of those were that gods and artists had once worked together and there was no boundary

*In the *Journal for Anthroposophy*, Spring 1977, there is a drawing of Andrei Bjely by Assia Turgenieff and a photograph of Assia Turgenieff.

between birth and death. The human soul, however, was involved in history, through reincarnation—about this she had no doubt; but where could one find recollections to show how the earthly and super-earthly are to be connected? One day Andrei Bjely (Bugaeff) showed her a photograph of Rudolf Steiner which he had received from a theosophist, 'a German scholar'. Assia Turgeneff was so impressed by the picture of this personality that she wanted to know more about him. She obtained two books: *Theosophy* and *Christianity as Mystical Fact*. In the spring of 1912 she dreamed one night that a voice spoke to her: "You are looking for Rudolf Steiner—he is near you". On enquiring she found that Rudolf Steiner would soon be going to Cologne to give lectures there at Whitsun. She travelled there with Bjely and heard and met Rudolf Steiner, who invited them to Munich. From that time they both took part in his lecture tours, always returning again to Berlin where they were domiciled.

In the spring of 1914 they went to Dornach to help with the building of the Goetheanum. At first Assia joined in the work on the plans; she painted and then carved on the architraves. Now no longer was there a sunset mood as in her childhood experiences, but sunrise with Rudolf Steiner in the coming into being of the Goetheanum. The little garden house had widened out into the building for humanity. Later she carved with Miss Maryon.

Owing to overwork in 1916-17 and a crisis in the state of her health, she could not continue with carving or eurythmy. It was then that she approached Rudolf Steiner with a series of drawings in light and shade, done in a technique she had previously learned, and asked for his advice. He gave her directions which in her further work with him led to a completely new technique of light and shade—diagonal shading. Later she asked him whether she could do the red window in the Goetheanum as an engraving; thereupon he asked, "Why not do them all? These motifs are meant for engravings: it is good to engrave them—but you must not bring anything personal into this work". For many years she continued with this and her work was reproduced as a series of plates in her book *The Goetheanum Windows*.

In those years there was such an enormous 'inbreathing' that one life was not sufficient fully to work out even a single part of it. In all modesty, she once formulated the following words for artists. "To cultivate future impulses means, for artists, to learn to make what

works spiritually in the elements into our teachers... that is, the inherent creative impulses."

After Rudolf Steiner's death it became more and more Assia Turgeneff's task to metamorphose all those years of absorbing and learning into a giving and teaching, both in her artistic creations and in lectures and courses. In 1927, after she had worked intensively at eurythmy and in performances, she began the preparatory work for the diagonal engraving of the windows for the second Goetheanum, in which she was assisted by two Members. It was very hard physical work to bring out the motifs from the huge glass surfaces. She had to illumine the material. Later she worked at the immense red window with the initiation-motif; commanding the self-knowledge and transformation which must accompany the man seeking his true being, and showing the obstructions on his way to knowledge.

Marie Steiner, with whom Assia was closely connected, suggested that she should make a series of lithographs illustrating Parsifal's search for the Holy Grail: she did an imaginative drama of light and dark—probably her most mature work, the significance of which still has to be discovered.

The Swiss poet Conrad Ferdinand Meyer speaks in one of his poems of a 'holy flame': 'and I guard it in all holiness, that it burns in purity and uncorrupted'. Those who often met and spoke with Assia Turgeneff during the last twenty years of her life experienced the meaning of such spiritual watchfulness. 'Holy flames' were to her, the impulse which had led to the building and forming of the First Goetheanum. Her course was to awaken this understanding for the Goetheanum; and it came to expression in the part she played helping to arrange various exhibitions and conferences in the Rudolf Steiner Halde, Dornach, in Zürich and Berne.

Thanks to the devoted nursing of her niece, her home could become a centre for human contacts and meetings. On October 12th, 1966, she was taken into the Klinik in Arlesheim, where often before she had been helped back to health. A few hours before her death she said: "I have seen Rudolf Steiner quite in the Light. He will help in the beyond". The last year of her life were a time of suffering. She carried in the depth of her heart what she had experienced as tragedy in the destiny of the Anthroposophical Movement. Her physical body also caused her great suffering. The experience of pain—so Rudolf Steiner

taught us—deepens life after death in the spiritual worlds. And so let us close these thoughts on Assia Turgenieff with our gaze turned to the first page of her Parsifal cycle of drawings that stands like a great motif of seeking and finding over her own life. In the centre of the drawing a radiant sun shines over the cup of the Grail, to the right is the hill with the three crosses, to the left the Grail Castle—representing the building for humanity; a picture of the spiritual Goetheanum for which she lived and worked.

* * *

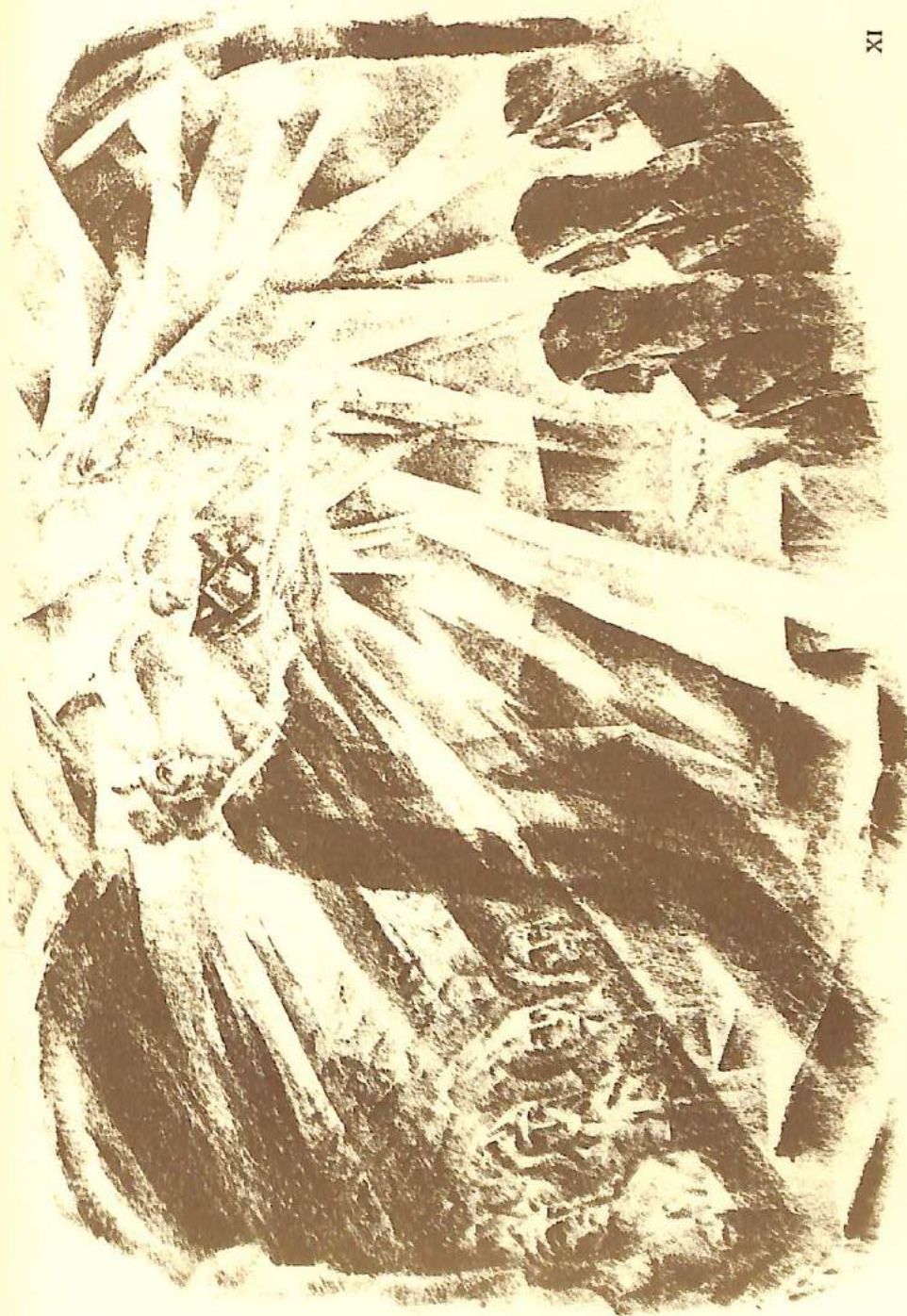
Assia Turgenieff's Introduction to her drawings of Parsifal's quest for the Holy Grail—

This quest directs us to the everlasting power which works from the past into the future. The one ordained by Providence to be the renewer of the mystery of the Holy Grail must reach blessedness through his own effort, passing through apathy of soul and doubt. Perceval, which means the one who makes his way through the valley, was, according to a saying of Rudolf Steiner, the first 'Protestant'.

We can read the three stages of this transformation of the soul—through apathy and doubt to blessedness—from the questions which work in Parsifal's soul, forming his destiny. Following a suggestion by Marie Steiner, the attempt is made here to bring these questions to expression in eleven pictures.

Herzeleide's flight is the cause of the first child-like question—What is God? Separation from her follows. "What is the Grail?" is the decisive unspoken question in the Castle of the Grail.

Sigune calls forth the question of self-knowledge in him who has become innocently guilty. Doubt and despair speak from the words—Does God exist? The question put to Trevericent concerning the Holy Grail becomes a power in him that works for his redemption. Pictures concerning the Grail—its cosmic origin and ultimate goal, the deed of Cain, the sacrifice of Hiram, the mystery of Joseph of Arimathea—prepare the way for him to the place of the Grail which had been lost. Thus the third stage is achieved.



THE TITLES OF THE ELEVEN PICTURES

- I Right: Hill with three crosses. Centre: shining sun over the Cup of the Grail. Left: The Grail Castle (the spiritual Goetheanum).
- II The dream of Herzeleide, the mother of Parsifal.
- III The Child Parsifal on his mother's knee.
- IV Parsifal rides away to join King Arthur: his mother falls senseless to the ground.
- V Parsifal's first visit to the Grail Castle. He stands beside Amfortas, mute.
- VI Parsifal's meeting with Sigune, his cousin, who holds the dead body of Schionatulander.
- VII Parsifal continues his search. Note the greater maturity of the expression in his face.
- VIII Parsifal being taught by Gurnemanz.
- IX Parsifal has a spiritual experience—a picture of Cain's deed, the slaying of his brother Abel.
- X The experience continues: a picture of the Grail—its cosmic origin. Hiram's sacrifice (Hiram was King Solomon's architect in the building of the Temple). Joseph of Arimathea's secret leads into No. XI.
- XI Parsifal is led to the last site of the Grail and becomes King of the Grail. The three stages of transformation—stupidity, doubt, blessedness—are thus accomplished.

Eleven illustrations: original size 16" x 11½". Published in Dornach, 1952.

COUNSELLING AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

ADAM BITTLESTON

TO be able to talk over, quietly and unhurriedly, some of the problems and uncertainties with which we are beset is a deep human need. But there are many who feel they have no opportunity for such a conversation; in particular, that they do not know anyone, with whom they could speak in this way. On the other hand, those who are approached for advice may feel that an unjustified burden is being put upon them, and that they are being asked to make a decision which belongs to the other person, and to him or her alone. In the past these things were easier; the rules of behaviour appropriate for any position in society were much more definite, and everyone knew who could be approached for advice.

In the literature of the world it is the great heroes, for example central figures in epic poetry and drama, who meet the kind of problem that almost everyone meets today. The hero or heroine needs counselling, because life has put him in an impossible position, for which the normal rules give no answer; Orestes, for example, when he learns that his mother has murdered his father. And one of the most wonderful and mysterious examples from the past can be found in early versions of the Grail story. Perceval has brought about, although he does not know it, the death of his mother, who died of a broken heart when he suddenly left her. He has visited the Grail Castle, and failed in the task that met him there, though he does not really know this either. Life has become meaningless for him; he wanders about, defeating all who challenge him, but finding no joy in the fame he wins. On Good Friday he comes in full armour to the cell of a hermit, who gives him an austere hospitality. A great conversation develops between them, in which Parsival learns both about the destiny of humanity and his own personal destiny. Though what he learns is hard to bear, he can now find meaning and purpose again in his existence.

In what follows, I shall call those who are approached for advice Hermits, and those who seek advice Knights. Of course, Hermits and

Knights can be either men or women; and the same person may sometimes play the part of a Hermit and sometimes the part of a Knight, perhaps even both on the same day, or in the same hour. It may be someone very young, perhaps even a child, who acts as Hermit; and it may be someone very old, perhaps near to death, who comes as Knight. But nearly always the Hermit has experienced loneliness, and the Knight, combat.

The Hermit needs some vision of the world and of human destiny which helps him, though it may be a very general one. The hermit encountered by Perceval has a very special source of guidance; the Grail itself. And though Perceval brings a questioning and even sometimes a sceptical mind to what he hears, he recognises that the hermit speaks with a certain authority, which everyone around him would acknowledge. It often seems that he is being addressed in the language of accepted, traditional Christianity.

But an attentive reading of the version by Wolfram von Eschenbach shows that the hermit is describing the Grail in a way that is drawn not simply from traditional, exoteric Christianity but uses a kind of Christian knowledge in which the stars are part of a Divine writing, as they were for the Magi. Though traditional Christians could read the story without finding anything that would seem heretical to them, it really brings into the open what had been a hidden stream in Christianity since quite early times. Perceval's heart responds to this; and he learns how his family, through many generations, has served this kind of Christianity.

The present-day Hermit, though he needs what has been called here a "vision of the world" for himself, cannot give as much instruction as Treverizent gives to Perceval. Indeed, instruction hardly belongs in counselling at all today. The Knight who comes to the cell may have a quite different vision of the world. The Hermit has to try to avoid imposing his vision on the Knight; even if both are members of the same spiritual tradition, this is not the place for any kind of dogmatic teaching. Today many of the representatives of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity are in varying degrees reluctant to accept that human souls do not respond as they did in the past to a teaching simply because it has long been held to be true. If they appear to accept such teaching or have done so in childhood, this may well be one of the reasons why their souls are ill. And there are modern teachings as well

which claim a kind of dogmatic authority; for example Marxism, the work of Freud, and many views which claim to be scientific (though they may be disproved in 10 or 20 years), and much else. Everything brought into the conversation in a dogmatic way will tend to provoke argument, and destroy the mood of calm and patience.

When, during the period from about 1909 to 1922, Rudolf Steiner was approached on various occasions by members of the Christian clergy who asked for help in their work as counsellors, he often recommended them to study *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. He recalled this when he was speaking to the group of men and women who founded the Christian Community in 1922. The clergy who had received this advice do not seem to have been altogether happy with it. The book indeed hardly seems to touch at all upon the subjects which come up most often in consultation; family difficulties, for instance. The book appears to stick very closely to the theme announced in the first paragraph—the means which are necessary for the right development of spiritual organs of perception. It promises that every human being can develop these organs, so that worlds can be revealed to him containing beings and events hidden from the ordinary senses. What has this to do with the troubles with which people usually come to a priest or minister, or to a psychiatrist or social worker? It is perhaps a little easier to begin to answer this question today than it was 70 years ago. For the Hermit will quite often find himself confronted in these days by a person who has had a clairvoyant experience which deeply troubles him. He may not be able to speak of this to anyone else, for fear that he will be thought to be “going crazy”. And he may not be able to interpret it himself.

The Hermit has to be careful not to seem as if he claimed the status of an Initiate or even of a clairvoyant, except perhaps in the general sense in which we all have a measure of clairvoyance if we observe ourselves accurately enough. But the book will help him greatly to form sound judgment about the spiritual development of the one with whom he is speaking. And, far more than we may expect at first, every difficulty a human being meets in life is connected with the state of his spiritual development. Personal relationships, for example, are largely so difficult because our thoughts, feelings and impulses of will are at variance with one another. *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* shows that as we go further on the spiritual path the tendency of thinking,

feeling and willing to separate will actually increase, and we have to relate them to one another more and more consciously.

If a conversation is to deal with such delicate things, a certain mood is necessary. This mood is one of the first things described in the book—the mood of reverence for truth. Rudolf Steiner says that it is good if this can be founded on a reverence developed in childhood towards particular people. It will help us if we have approached the room of a revered personality with the feeling that we are entering holy ground. Much in our civilisation tends to destroy feelings of reverence; and yet countless human beings long to recover them, as the almost boundless respect and affection which can be developed towards certain public figures bears witness. The Hermit must not claim personal reverence for himself; but he can try to bring about in the whole conversation a mood of quiet reverence for the truth.

He can be helped or hindered in this by the environment in which the conversation takes place. It may happen anywhere; in a railway carriage, in a garden, or in the Knight's own home. But if the Hermit himself has a room which he can often use in this way, he can try to see that it supports this mood. When writing about reverence for truth, Rudolf Steiner says that when it is developed a change comes about in the colours of the human aura; shades of blue come to prevail. A fairly small room, in which blue predominates, can be good; if the environment is utterly different, the Hermit can as it were create a realm of warm blue by the direction of his own feelings. He can build encompassing walls by the wakefulness of his own attention. In a physical room, he should try to avoid anything that proclaims too emphatically the spiritual stream to which he himself belongs; if he is a Christian, for example, anything that might make a Jewish or a Moslem Knight feel on alien ground. There should be little that points to other activities and preoccupations of the Hermit; and if possible no telephone! The Knight should be received into an unconstrained and friendly tidiness.

A small room—but spiritually boundless. In some of his paintings Rembrandt has been able to show this very powerfully. An old man or woman sits in a confined space, perhaps with a book. And we feel that the soul is moving through wide realms of space and time. Rudolf Steiner writes of how we can go up a hill in the evening, and see everything in a wider perspective, in its true proportions. What is for

the senses a narrow space, can be for the soul a mountain-top. The gospels often speak of Christ Jesus teaching his disciples upon a mountain, and in particular of the Mountain of the Transfiguration, and of the Mount of Olives. And the last great teaching before the Passion is given in the Upper Room; a protected place, to which the disciples have to ascend. In every conversation between Knight and Hermit there should be the sense of ascending to a quieter, wider vantage point.

Of course, the Knight may have come to talk about a particular matter; something, perhaps, that has just happened to him. And Rudolf Steiner points out that we shall rarely achieve a detached and selfless view of events soon after they happen. Nevertheless, the Hermit can help the Knight to look back a little into the past and forwards into the future. He will have to take great care about the questions he may want to ask. The Knight has the right to restrict the conversation, if he so wishes, to a particular subject. And even if the conversations go on for more than a year, there may be significant parts of his life of which he never wants to speak. But straightforward questions about what he has done in the past, for example, or intends to do in the future, may be acceptable and helpful. Or if he shows signs of long-standing shock, the Hermit may try to lead him back gently to the time or times in which this originated. Such things may of course have to wait until a considerable basis of mutual confidence has been built up.

The Hermit will always have to practice patient listening. There is a wonderful description in "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds"—

Of very great importance for the development of the student is the way in which he listens to others when they speak. He must accustom himself to do this in such a way that, while listening, his inner self is absolutely silent. If someone expresses an opinion, and another listens, agreement or contradiction will, generally speaking, stir in the inner self of the listener. Many people, in such cases, feel themselves impelled to voice their agreement or, more especially, their disagreement. In the student, all such assent or dissent must be silenced. It is not imperative that he should suddenly alter his way of living by trying to attain at all times this complete inner silence; he will have to begin by doing so in special cases, deliberately chosen. Then, quite slowly and by degrees, this new way of listening will creep into his habits, as of itself. In spiritual investigation this is systematically practised. The student is enjoined to listen at certain times, by way of practice, to the most contradictory views, and to silence in himself all agreement, and, more especially, all adverse criticism. The point is to silence, not only all purely intellectual judgement, but also all feelings of displeasure, denial, or agreement.

The whole context in which this passage occurs can become very significant for the Hermit. It includes the advice that we should listen attentively at times to all the sounds in our environment, including things that we regard as inanimate, for example, a waterfall or the wind. We shall try to feel the joy or pain expressed in the sounds made by animals. We shall try to regard as relatively unimportant our own likes and dislikes in this realm. Most difficult we may find our response to noises made by machines; but here too an attentive, active questioning may help us to overcome our irritation. What is really being said in the sound of an aeroplane or of a vacuum cleaner?

It may seem particularly hard to avoid "assent". Hermit and Knight are both seeking the truth about a matter, and at moments surely they can feel that this has been achieved. But it is good if they remember that truth is a living, many-sided thing, which cannot be fixed and held fast. In marriage problems, for example, the Hermit has to bear in mind that the Knight is struggling to give him an unbiased picture of what has happened, but that what he says can at the best be only a small part of the whole reality. If he gives at any point too vehement assent, he may be building a barrier in his own mind against something the Knight will tell him later, or against what he may hear later from that other Knight, the marriage partner.

The Hermit has thus to listen very attentively to what the Knight has to say, not only in its content, but also in its form. Before he says what he may have to say, he may have in a sense to learn a new language; the Knight's own language. In Christian terms, the light of Whitsun has to shine into his soul. St. Luke describes how this was shown in the disciples:

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance . . . At this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in his own language.

(Acts II, 4-6).

At the present time the English language, for example, may be used in the most varied ways. The Hermit must try to avoid using words which do not have much meaning, or have a different meaning, for others. Sometimes he will do best by saying again, in almost the same words, what the Knight has already said. He may even be able to hear in the sound of his own voice whether what he is saying is acceptable or not to the Knight. He will have to be particularly careful if he is

touching upon faults or failings in the Knight's life. (Friedrich Rittelmeyer, a man with immense experience as a counsellor, first as Evangelical minister and then as priest of the Christian Community, being one of its founders and leaders, once wrote to the effect that we can only tell a man about his faults what he is almost ready to say himself.)

A distinction can be made between what the Knight says and what he is. What he says needs to be deeply heard and understood. Both he and the hermit are on the way to truth, but can possess it only in part, and must rediscover even that part ever afresh. What the Knight *is*, the Hermit can fully welcome and even learn to love. St. Paul describes this love in a wonderful way, writing of the relationship between the apostles and new-born Christian congregations: "Not as lording it over your faith, but as fellow-workers of your joy". (II Corinthians 1, 24).

The Hermit, in his individual relationship to the Knight, can help him to overcome the hindrances which limit his joy—his grievances, his bitter regrets, his destructive criticisms of himself and others. Positively, he can help to awaken the Knight's full joy in all the revelation of God around him. He can lead him towards a sense of membership in a positive, active community. But he can do these things only if he has learnt to some extent to speak the Knight's language, and to hear his true name. He has to see before him something of the Knight's unique, individual destiny.

* * *

There is a long chapter in "Knowledge of the Higher Worlds" called "Some Effects of Initiation" (page 117). Here, more completely I think than anywhere else in his work, Rudolf Steiner describes the organs of supersensible perception, which are called "lotus-flowers" or "chakrams". These are of course a familiar subject in the East, and were well-known in the Theosophical Movement when Rudolf Steiner wrote. Here he gives a detailed picture of the relationship of these organs to the developing astral and etheric bodies in man. He shows what helps or hinders their unfolding. Though we may be utterly unaware of the existence of these organs, the telling of an untruth, for example, damages one of them just as objectively as a hand is damaged if it is put into a flame.

He speaks of six such organs, "the first between the eyes, the second in the neighbourhood of the larynx; the third in the region of the heart; the fourth near the so-called pit of the stomach; the fifth and sixth are situated in the abdomen." The most detailed attention, in this chapter, is given to the second and third of these.

The lotus flower in the neighbourhood of the larynx has sixteen petals. Of course, we should not think of these "petals" as if they were finite objects, like the petals of a rose. They are called petals rather as we might say "he sped like an arrow". But as with all poetic diction, if it is genuine, the comparison is a real one. Of these sixteen petals, eight were formed long ago, and will reappear of themselves, if the other eight are rightly developed now. The cultivation of these is identical with the following of the Eight-fold Path taught by Gautama Buddha. It is the path on which the human soul finds peace; it consists of forming right ideas, right resolutions, right speech, right action, a right manner of life, right endeavour, right recollection, and right contemplation. (In different contexts different names are given to these elements of the Path.) In a sense, there is no great need to teach human beings today the elements of this path; deep down we all know them already. For the Buddha has worked through the centuries, not only for the adherents of Buddhism but for all mankind. His inspiration flowed into St. Luke's Gospel; his impulses worked in the life of St. Francis of Assisi.

The Grail story became known nearly at the end of the 12th century. According to the picture of the development of civilisation, given by Rudolf Steiner during the last years of his life, the inspiring spirit for about three and a half centuries had been the archangel Raphael, the archangel who brings the healing impulses of Mercury. Mercury, as was stated already by Madame H. P. Blavatzky, stands behind the Buddha. From Raphael the rulership passed to the Mars archangel, Samael, and we see Europe entering a period of devastating internal wars. The legend of the Grail becomes known in Europe as an impulse which transcends conflict; the knight is to become a helper and protector, not to seek conflict for its own sake. Perceval is to become king of the Grail, a source of endless gentleness and compassion. The Hermit can recognise in Perceval the longing to follow the Eight-fold Path.

Today each generation brings with it stronger impulses towards

non-violence and compassion, received from Buddha before entry into earthly incarnation. For today the Buddha works, not directly on the earth, but since early in the 17th century, 200 Mars-years* ago, from the realm of Mars itself. We bring into earthly life the impulse to make our work a vehicle for compassion and healing. When Rudolf Steiner suggested to his pupils that on each day of the week they could concentrate on one of the elements of the Eight-fold Path, Right Livelihood was allotted to Wednesday, the day of Mercury. Countless people today find it extremely difficult to make of their work, or lack of work, something that is health-bringing either for themselves or for others. Quite often an aggressive mood takes hold of a man in relation to his work; aggressiveness, for instance, towards employers or competitors, or towards the living creatures of Nature. There seems to be little in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* that bears directly on this theme; and what is said in relation to the development of the sixteen-petalled lotus flower is very brief, and may seem too general to be practically helpful. It begins: "The pupil endeavours to live in conformity with both nature and Spirit. Never over-hasty, he is never indolent." The whole paragraph sounds as though it were directed to people living in a society which gave suitable opportunities for people to live in this way. But it is important to observe where this requirement comes within the Eight-fold Path, and indeed in the whole context of the book. We have to be attentive first to the requirements of right conceptions, right resolves, right speech, and right action. In practice, difficulties in these spheres have nearly always to be resolved to some extent before "Right Livelihood" can be achieved. For what underlies the simple words is something very far-reaching. It is a right service for the evolution of humanity and the earth. A balance has always to be found between the ideal and the possible. This has been wonderfully described in the previous chapter, "The Conditions of Esoteric Training": "Anyone who regards himself as a product merely of the outer world, as an outcome of the physical world, can achieve nothing in esoteric training, for to feel oneself a being of soul and spirit is its very basis. Anyone who acquires this feeling is able to distinguish between inner duty and outward success. He learns to recognise that

* 1 Mars year=1.88 earth years. 200 Mars years=376 earth years.
1604 A.D. is the date given for the Buddha-Event on Mars.
1604 + 376=1980

the one cannot be directly measured by the other. The esoteric pupil must find the right mean between what is prescribed by external conditions and the conduct he recognises as right for himself. He should not force upon his environment anything for which it can have no understanding; but he must also be quite free from the desire to do only what his environment will accept. Recognition of the truths for which he stands must be sought *only* in the voice of his own soul, with its genuine striving for knowledge. But he must learn as much as he possibly can from his environment in order to discover what will benefit those around him and be useful to them. In this way he will develop what is known in Spiritual Science as 'spiritual balance'. An 'open heart' for the needs of the outer world lies on one of the scales and 'inner resoluteness and unswerving endurance' on the other." (page 110).

The Hermit cannot of course simply prescribe to the Knight how in his particular case he is to achieve this spiritual balance (though he is sometimes expected to do so). But this mood of balance can live in the whole conversation; the Knight bears in the depth of his soul a great longing for his work to be in harmony both with the purposes of his own spirit and the needs of his environment.

There is a being who has a much greater understanding for this than either the Hermit or the Knight. The Guardian Angel of the Knight has the most delicate sense both of the practical possibilities and of the abiding purposes which are to be reconciled. He notices at once when the Knight tries to impose something upon his environment which is alien to it, or when he neglects one of his deepest resolves. In every part of the Eight-fold Path the angels have the liveliest concern. Whether the Knight or the Hermit has any feeling for this or not, the angels are likely to be close at hand. They look upon human words much as we may look upon the landscape, happy where it is fertile, grieving where it is devastated or barren. A human being often pays little attention to the adequacy or inadequacy of the words he uses; the Angel is deeply attentive to every word a human being speaks, and to all the varieties of sound which he hears. His interest is turned not to one special person alone, but to all the relationships between that person and the world around him. If the Hermit says anything that could prove useful, he can be sure that the Knight's Angel will remember it and perhaps remind the Knight later on.

Quite soon after describing the Eight-fold Path, Rudolf Steiner writes of six attributes which are needed for the right development of the twelve-petalled lotus flower in the region of the heart. They are thought-control, control of actions, perseverance, tolerance, faith and equanimity. It is not always easy to be sure how these are related to the Eight-fold Path. In seeking right conceptions, for example, we are concerned with the *content*, for instance with its accuracy or inaccuracy; thought-control is a matter of the course actually taken by thoughts in our mind, the relevance of each to what preceded and follows it. We fail in thought-control when we jump from subject to subject without knowing why; when we set out to solve some problem, for instance, and discover after a few moments that we are thinking about what we are going to have for lunch. Similarly, right action in the Eight-fold Path is concerned with the character of our deeds, their freedom from aggressiveness and over-attachment; control of action and perseverance are concerned with the presence of consistency and continuity in all that we do. What is meant here by tolerance and faith is particularly noteworthy in this context:

The fourth requirement is forbearance (*tolerance*) towards men, other beings and also circumstances. The pupil suppresses all superfluous criticism of whatever is imperfect, evil and wrong and tries rather to understand everything that comes to him. Just as the sun does not withhold its light from the wrong and the evil, he too does not refuse them intelligent sympathy. Should some adversity befall him, he does not indulge in adverse criticism but accepts what necessity has brought him and endeavours as best as he can to turn things to good. He does not look at the opinions of others merely from his own standpoint but tries to put himself into their position.

The fifth requirement is *impartiality* towards all that comes to meet him in life. In this connection we speak of 'faith' or 'trust'. The pupil meets every man and every other being with this trust and lets it inspire his actions. When anything is communicated to him, he never says to himself: 'I don't believe it because it contradicts the opinion I have hitherto held.' Far rather he is ready at every moment to test and rectify his views and opinions. He remains always receptive to everything that approaches him and he trusts in the effectiveness of what he undertakes. He banishes faint-heartedness and scepticism. If he has a purpose in view, he also has faith in its power. A hundred failures cannot rob him of this faith. It is the 'faith that moves mountains'. (p. 131).

The sixth attribute is equanimity; mastery over the extremes of feeling, ecstatic joy and despair.

Is there any way of describing the content of these six attributes in a single word? Rudolf Steiner is to speak very soon as if they were together a single thing, but he does not name it. They are all helpful to

the heart, even the physical heart; their opposites always put it under strain. There is a wonderful clue to their significance in the description of the fourth attribute. The sun is spoken of, with its generous light given to good and evil alike. The sun has been regarded through many ages as corresponding to the heart in man. In what condition is the heart, when it is truly like a sun? It is the loving heart, in the great sense in which St. John in particular uses this word, in St. John's first epistle we read of the perfect love which casts out fear; and the word translated 'perfect' in English often includes the meaning 'complete' or 'universal'. Indeed the words used in the description of the fourth attribute are very close to those of the Sermon on the Mount (v.44).

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Love in this sense is not only a matter of feeling; only through the use of all his powers can a man begin to illuminate as the sun does or be as refreshing as rain is to the earth. It may not be easy to see that the control of thoughts is part of love; that the real reason why our thoughts wander is that we do not love the thing we are thinking about enough. And some failure in love underlies our inconsistency in action. Both in ecstatic joy and in despair we have forgotten love.

Every conversation between Knight and Hermit will lead in some way towards this goal. Just as Mars is becoming mercurial, Earth is becoming Sun, since the Mystery of Golgotha. It may well be that even in a very complete conversation the name of Christ is never mentioned; but the conversation can always have a character which would not have been possible before the Mystery of Golgotha.

A little later, in a very solemn and earnest context, Rudolf Steiner writes of "four attributes". These are described in a way that may be found puzzling. "The first is the faculty to discriminate in thought between truth and appearance . . . The second attribute is the power to value rightly the true and the real . . . The third consists in the practice of the six qualities already described . . . the fourth attribute is the love of inner freedom."

If it is right to describe the six qualities needed for the development of the twelve-petalled lotus flower as forming in their totality the power of love, then "the love of inner freedom" is a special element in the soul, a particular kind of love. May it not be that through the wise,

universal love for human beings a further love can come about, which is directed towards a spiritual power who can inhabit us, the being traditionally called the Holy Ghost, the Comforter? Inner freedom is connected with the growth of a human being beyond the limitations which have confined him, the limitations caused by his particular place, his nationality and social status, for example.

If we think of these four steps in relation to the work between Knight and Hermit, we can see how the striving for discrimination between truth and appearance may be followed by a 'valuation' of the truth. What does this mean? The value of a thing is what someone of sound judgement is prepared to pay for it. In St. Matthew's Gospel we meet the man who is prepared to sell all he had in order to purchase a single pearl. Will the value of truth be less than this? In the New Testament the Gospels are followed by the Acts of the Apostles; in response to the truth they have received the apostles are willing to give the rest of their lives, and to suffer martyrdom. Their deeds make it possible for congregations to come into existence which are open to every kind of human being and filled with positive love. There the Spirit of freedom can live and grow.

In the mood of fullest respect for each other's freedom, Knight and Hermit can part. But the conversation between them will have been incomplete unless the way has been shown on which the Knight can enter a community where he will be King among Kings.

TWELVE SONNETS

MAURICE BRANCH

ARIES

The heaviness of horns: and yet the shape
Is light: the rhythm of a cosmic dance:
The noble head, still dreaming of escape,
Is poised between returning and advance.
Swift-sure of foot, where others do not dare,
But hesitate and ponder, you arrive.
From time and space you wrest your here-and-there
And keep them ever moving and alive.
To win the heights and, having won, to see
The heights unwon and ventures bold and new:
From what we are to what we yet may be,
A purpose crystalline, a cosmic view.
And far above the haunts of mountain ram
Remembering still—"Behold, behold the Lamb."

TAURUS

Fan-vaulting voices in the angel choir
And mighty basses bearing up the nave,
Till the last Kyrie flutters from the spire.
Bull-roaring's what the bright sopranos crave:
In throat and loins a metamorphosis,
Light breaking through the variegated glass,
Boy's hope and man's: fusion of destinies.
Welcome, high noon, sun-gold and green as grass.
The sun, his lover, finds him on the hill,
And from that fire, making, being made,
Goes forth the scarlet splendour of his will
And from the rock, the tower's mighty shade.
A vaulted silence, when the song is flown,
And knowledge of the needful, rightly done.

GEMINI

Wind-caped, wave-breaking, shoulders brace to bear
 On the slim stem a poised and noble head:
 Star-set and strong, to future burdens square,
 Wing-tapering to the past, the burdens shed.
 The wanderer's knapsack or the comrade's arm,
 These are the lightly-borne, in careless youth
 When strength is gathered for the world's alarms,
 And stillness, for the guarding of the truth.
 Steady between the vortices of storm,
 Heart's turmoil and the starburst of the mind:
 Polarities of purpose and of form,
 Reflected contraries, though of one kind:
 A dual fate: divided, still to be
 One in the holiness of symmetry.

CANCER

Armoured anemone, ghost in a cage,
 Life quickening beneath a carapace:
 You bring dire omens, though the nations rage,
 Or signs auspicious to a thankless race.
 Your barbèd words tear at the very heart
 From which they spring to injure whom you love:
 But you have other words which seem a part
 Of sky and sea and wind, of moor and grove:
 Vibrations, tones and rhythms that resound
 From your hard shell, to make all people one.
 Through jangling discord, harmony is found,
 Through the good fight the longed-for peace is won.
 God send you, strong and steadfast, to our cause . . .
 Spare us the grip of those relentless claws!

LEO

The golden sun-gong in its throbbing noon
 Roars in the sky and in the human heart.
 The lion roars beneath the midnight moon,
 His wide-eyed prey in terror freeze or start.
 In man, the roar is governed to the beat
 Of life: and majesty becomes the means
 To serve and save, and in the common street
 Discern a populace of Kings and Queens.
 Man's transformation, human to divine—
 Dynastic treasures to wisdom's gold,
 Heat of blood-sacrifice to holy wine—
 This is the tale the ages must unfold:
 Moving to wholeness, feud and faction stilled,
 When all the roaring cycles are fulfilled.

VIRGO

The vortex is dissolved, that drew the mind,
 Funnelling from the rim of time and space,
 Down, down to Being, visceral and blind:
 Dreaming in darkness of an outer grace,
 Of virtue manifest in word and deed,
 Of truth ice-blue, of purpose cold and pure:
 Of the clear vision of another's need
 And service vowed before the means are sure.
 To bear the burdens others have refused,
 To do the humble task that comes to hand
 Or walk among the mighty, unbemused:
 To value, to foresee, to understand:
 This is their task, who are the Virgin's own,
 And their reward is still, to be unknown.

LIBRA

Haunch-heaviness, the generative drive:
 And yet, so delicate, so fine a touch,
 Balance for which creators live and strive,
 The poise between too little and too much.
 The guardians of the loins redouble here
 The weight of wings that made the shoulders proud,
 The dance of life, the dance of death, to steer,
 In solitude or moving through the crowd.
 Hinged on the haunch, the rhythm of the dance
 Moves fast or slow, sacred or sensual.
 Be mindful, then, of Him Who looks askance
 From high above your little festival;
 Whose gaze is stern on him who halts and fails:
 Fear then his sword, and fear not less his scales.

SCORPIO

Wave-break, wind-change, a darkening of the voice,
 The quiet spell of metamorphosis,
 Fission or fusion, a primeval choice:
 Here is the crossing of all contraries.
 Over the senses' joy, the heart's desire,
 The body's strength, the poise of peerless skill,
 At the white vortex of transforming fire,
 The mastery of mind, the governed will.
 You scorn to fail or falter or resign.
 Out of defeat you marshal forces new:
 Though others mock, you hold the plan divine
 And make it yours and theirs, and see it through.
 Still flesh and spirit strive, and still you know
 Neither, without a blessing, lets you go.

SAGITTARIUS

Thigh mirrors thigh and flexes for the kill:
 Slim-waisted hunters, bearing bow and spear:
 Wisdom of moving and of being still—
 The means are mastered and the end is near.
 The time-to-come is but the arrow-flight
 Of mind that speeds to meet its chosen fate,
 Perceives, directs and demonstrates aright,
 Plans and has done while others hesitate.
 Hunter transformed: through brakes of argument
 He finds and follows reason's narrow track,
 Keeping, through doubt and dark discouragement,
 The clear and crowned head that looks not back.
 His ranks are vibrant with angelic wings,
 And on His thigh is written "King of Kings".

CAPRICORN

To stand, a man of office and estate,
 Cast a tall cross's shadow on the lawn:
 Or bow the knee to an accepted fate
 Or bend the arm to gather the forlorn.
 Articulate in limb and tongue and mind,
 All things to all and everything to some:
 Your master and your servant all mankind,
 God's many mansions every one your home.
 Wise in this world, attentive to its ways:
 Yet something in you that must walk alone
 Where mountain creatures turn a startled gaze
 Upon a stranger in their world of stone:
 Who sets in lowly places many lights,
 But feeds his fire from the lonely heights.

AQUARIUS

Water to water is the little span
 Of all our striving and of all our dreams:
 Not so for you: you seek another plan,
 Divine what is, beyond what only seems:
 Divide the waters and in part reveal
 The hidden God in cloven seed or rock,
 In bursting suns a single mind unseal,
 Part of a mystery for fools to mock:
 You do not think to set the world ablaze
 But, in the stillness of a vaulted night
 Untroubled by the loud and lonely days,
 You tend a pinpoint of eternal light.
 The body dual, strong to stand or stride:
 The spirit one, unwearied as the tide.

PISCES

The feet upon the waters—"It is I—
 Be not afraid."—The feet upon the track,
 Narrow and stony, to the needle's eye:
 And on the cross, the feet that turned not back.
 This is the only way: the way he trod
 Who stilled the winds and waters with His voice,
 But hung alone, deserted by His God,
 Until His change: the chosen have no choice.
 His purpose this (though friends and kindred weep
 For feet anointed and for head enspined)
 The bond no lowing creature dies to keep,
 Because His blood alone is shed to bind.
 His realm is one, among the starry swarms
 Or the light-bearing fish, too deep for storms.

A CONSULTATION ABOUT THE FUTURE

CHARLES DAVY

AN imaginary friend of mine—call him B—is troubled
 with recurrent dreams which seem to bear on the future.
 He dreams of an arid land, a great plain stretched out under a burning
 sun. He wakes with words spoken in his mind—"the waters of
 life"—as though to remind him of the arid land and its lack.

I imagine that B decides to consult Dr. K, a learned futurologist,
 and their ensuing conversation comes into my mind.

"Yes," says Dr. K. "I know these dreams—we call them
 doomwatch dreams. But first I had better explain the background . . .
 Among futurologists—I mean simply people who scan the probable
 future and try to estimate the outcome of current trends—there are
 two conflicting schools of thought. The supporters of the first
 school—I call them the scientific optimists—believe there is no
 practical problem that scientific technology cannot solve, in time.
 Scientists will find effective ways of limiting populations and ensuring
 food supplies, partly by new methods of chemical synthesis. They will
 develop nuclear power to provide energy for all purposes and all
 countries. They cannot guarantee freedom from nuclear war, but they
 believe the best safeguard is to maintain a balance of terror, with such
 fearful means of retaliation available that aggressors will be afraid to
 strike.

"The supporters of the other school are at present a small minority,
 hardly more than a pressure group. They believe that the health and
 resources of the earth must be protected from reckless technology,
 and that since these resources are finite, neither population growth nor
 economic expansion can go on for ever. They advocate a simpler style
 of living, developing natural energy resources—sun, wind and
 waves—as far as possible and promoting the growth and use of wood,
 almost the only self-renewing raw material."

"Which school do you support?"

"I incline to the second school," Dr. K replies, "but I am not
 expecting it to have much influence on the early course of events. Its

adherents are sowing seeds, while the scientists can show a great range of practical achievements, with more and more to come. Yes"—Dr. K gently shakes his head—"but for how long? The world is in a very unstable condition—tensions and power-struggles building up and likely to reach some sort of climax by the end of the century. All the graphs show that trend. The rising world population—now more than 4,000 million and expected to reach at least 6,000 million by the year 2,000—will have the power of multitude. The spread of nuclear capability will have the power of devastation. The Third World countries will have the power of hungry national ambitions and neglected needs. The affluent countries will have the power of weapons, technology and wealth. Over and above all this will be the power of actual or coming shortages—of oil, raw materials, probably food and water—to provoke conflicts. The earth may be ploughed with fire before the first shoots of a new civilisation can emerge."

By this time B is feeling somewhat dazed. He tries to collect himself.

"What about our own country?" he asks. "How shall we get on?"

Dr. K nods. "Yes, we will come to that. But first there are several things to remember. One of them is obvious and generally accepted: in all these projections the uncertainty factor is very high. The second thing, accepted at present by very few, is that we are encompassed by conflicting spiritual powers. The war in Heaven, obscurely mentioned in the Bible, is now being fought on earth. The conflict is between beings who are seeking to imprison the human spirit—the adversaries, I will call them—and beings who follow a Christian leadership and wish to keep the human spirit free. That is the fundamental issue. But in the earthly world, where it manifests through the aims and activities of human beings, it is not so clear-cut. It appears in various disguises, confused by uncertain loyalties and political rivalries. But remember one thing: the would-be prisoners of the human spirit will present themselves as entirely beneficent."

"Wait a moment." B is not sure of his ground. "You say all this is happening now?"

"Yes, it is happening now, but something like it has been happening for a long time. You remember Dostoevsky's story of the Grand Inquisitor—an old man, almost ninety, tall and erect, with a withered face and sunken eyes, in which there is still a gleam of light.' While walking on a summer evening through the streets of Seville with his

guards, he encounters a Figure whom he recognises and forthwith casts into prison. 'Why hast Thou come back to hinder our work?'

"The Inquisitor is sure that men in the mass are children who cannot bear the burden of freedom; it condemns them to unhappiness. Let them have an authority who will bear the burden for them, who will give them bread and comfort and an ideal to have faith in—then they will be grateful and happy and will forget what freedom is . . . Every tyrant, every dictator, has claimed to be acting for the benefit of his people. The difference today is that ways and means of conditioning people to accept ideas and ideals prescribed for them are more powerful than they could be in the pre-scientific past. The attack by the enemies of freedom can now be made directly on the human mind."

With the trace of a smile Dr. K continues: "Powerful forces are active also on the side of freedom. I believe they will win the final victory, but that is a long way off. We are considering the turn of the century and what may be happening then. Shortages, population pressures, nuclear dangers—these will aid the enemies of freedom. Imagine an authority which promises to ensure food and order and peace; an authority armed with all the scientific resources of that future time so that it seems able to turn even stones into bread and by commanding the powers of the air to impose peace on all the kingdoms of the world, asking in return for nothing but obedient loyalty—well, would not many people be tempted to surrender their freedom? In fact, they would not feel it as a temptation but as their only hope—under the prevailing circumstances."

"And those circumstances will arise?"

"They may—but remember the uncertainty factor. I am speaking only of a possible trend . . . And now I have talked enough."

"But what about Britain?" B reminds him. "You were going to speak of that."

"Ah, yes." Dr. K pauses for reflection. "We have a saying, 'Futurology is for foreigners.' In other words, an experienced futurologist has learnt to say very little, and nothing in public, about his own country. However objective he may try to be, his feelings are bound up with his native land and on the unconscious level that is more than a metaphor—it is a fact. But we are talking privately, so I can say that for our country the long-term signs are not unhopeful."

Apart from the transient benefits of North Sea oil, Britain has good natural resources—coal, soil, climate—and a tradition of rising to emergencies. But some illusions, and certain echoes from the past, will have to be overcome. Too many ghosts are haunting the corridors of power.”

“And now about your dreams. The anxieties they express are well founded, and I share them, as anyone must, up to a point. But my own experience has convinced me that humanity is not being left to struggle alone. The spiritual powers who work under the sign of freedom will not win battles for us, but they can give us strength and guidance if we are willing and able to receive their light, and if—first of all—we learn to recognise our adversaries. That is the essential thing. The adversaries like to work unseen, in disguise, in the unconscious. Thus they hope to be accepted as benefactors and not resisted—until they have so far conditioned human minds that they cannot be resisted.”

Dr. K glances at B. “You will think I am simplifying all this, reducing it almost to the level of children’s stories. Yes, I am. How did the adversaries, the powers of opposition, arise in our world-system? Why have they been allowed so much scope? Why do we find running through human history so much appalling cruelty, suffering, injustice? I could speak about this, but always recognising that an unfathomable mystery, the mystery of evil, lies at the heart of it, and I will say no more about it now . . . I have been trying to set your anxieties in a wider perspective—this may take some of the tension out of your dreams, I hope.”

That night B dreams that he is following a path by the side of a canal, with a green landscape of water-meadows on the further side. Soon his path crosses the canal and goes on among the meadows. He has no knowledge of where he has come from or where he is going, but is content to follow the path. The landscape seems deserted, bathed in clear evening light.

Presently he has left the water meadows and is walking across open parkland, with trees in summer leaf and a low hill not far ahead. The path leads to the top of the hill, where a wooden seat lets him rest, with a view all round. The same green landscape, meadows and parkland

stretching away on all sides. He becomes aware of how it is sustained by the elements of earth and water, air and light, and of how their ceaseless interplay gives rise to its visible appearance. It seems evident to him that this elemental life comes from some unfailing source, and to experience it flowing through the landscape gives him a feeling of confidence and peace.

He wakes in early morning daylight, feeling refreshed, but with the same words as before, “the waters of life”, echoing in his mind. Water, the life of the earth—and before his mind’s eye rises the arid land of his earlier dreams. Something like that could happen, he thought. Then the water meadows and green landscape come before him. That will surely continue somewhere, he tells himself, while the earth endures; he would look back to it for reassurance if his anxiety dreams recurred.

THE CRISIS IN THE WORLD ECONOMY

DANIEL T. JONES

IT must be obvious to all of us that something is direly wrong with the operation of the world economy. In the rich countries of the West resources on a massive scale are lying idle while around one-fifth of the world population, or 800 million people, lack the basic necessities to survive. Moreover this situation is steadily getting worse and not better. Few commentators foresee the 18 million unemployed people in the rich countries of North America, Western Europe, Japan and Australasia finding work in the near future; and indeed there are many forecasts that their number will continue to grow. It is also difficult to imagine that an estimated 8 million new jobs can be found each year for the next two decades, that would be required to cope with the increase in population of working age and the backlog of unemployment in the world. This crisis has been with us now for a decade, although of course the problem of poverty in the developing countries for much longer. We seem however to be further away than ever from finding lasting solutions.

During the 1950s and 1960s the world economy, at least as far as the rich countries were concerned, seemed to perform rather well. Indeed the world has not experienced such a long period of rapid and uninterrupted growth since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Even though we could not see it at the time, with the benefit of hindsight it is clear that the foundations upon which it was based were not strong enough to survive the challenges of the 1970s. Most people still remain baffled as to what went wrong in the 1970s, beyond the obvious events such as the oil crisis of 1973, and are at a loss to know where to go from here to set the world economy on course again. In what follows I shall attempt to look somewhat deeper into some of the causes of the present crisis and ways in which more harmonious relationships can be restored in the world economy.

Probably the most outstanding feature that distinguishes the post-war from the inter-war period was the very high degree of international co-operation between the U.S.A. and the countries of

Western Europe, the main economic powers of the West, and later also with Japan. Without this basis of co-operation many of the other factors that contributed to this increase in prosperity could not have found expression. The absence of such co-operation in the tragic period between the two World Wars led directly to the second ghastly conflict. After such a conflict opportunities for new initiatives are opened up and the world has a unique chance to change direction. The foundations of post-war international co-operation were laid in those early post-war years by a number of influential figures who had sufficient vision to see what was required.

Three such figures who had a profound influence on the course of events were John Maynard Keynes, Jean Monnet and Arnold Toynbee. Interestingly, none of them was a politician, but all three were in a position to influence the policy makers in an advisory capacity. Also all three derived a most important inspiration for their later ideas and advice from their direct observation as junior participants in the negotiations in Versailles in 1919. Keynes was so moved by tragic lack of vision and spiteful nationalism of the main protagonists that he resigned and in a heightened state of anguish wrote a quite remarkable condemnation of the Peace Treaty, called "The Economic Consequences of the Peace".¹ This instantly became a best seller and had considerable influence worldwide. The force and intense anguish with which it was written still strike the reader two generations later.

Keynes was one of the leading architects of the institutions of post-war economic co-operation established at Bretton Woods in 1944. He saw the need for a world central bank, which would create liquidity and distribute it according to need to the developed and developing countries alike, and for mechanisms which would regulate currencies and enable countries to make the necessary adjustments should their balance of payments show a persistent surplus or deficit. The system was also to be linked to a scheme to stabilise commodity prices, both mineral and agricultural commodities on which many developing countries depend for their export earnings, and to a gradual elimination of barriers to trade between nations. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (The World Bank) were major steps in this direction though they fell short of Keynes's original conception in a number of

respects. These institutions were dominated by the rich countries and nationalistic thinking based on economic power relationships rather than truly global thinking prevailed in their operation. The onus of adjustment was therefore placed on the weaker countries, who were least able to make the necessary adjustments, and lending to the developing countries followed a very conservative pattern. The International Trade Organisation (ITO), which was to stabilise commodity prices and supervise the opening up of trade, never came into being. Limited progress was achieved only in opening up trade between the developed countries under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). A dramatic increase in trade between the developed countries did take place as a result, though the interests of the developing countries were left unanswered.

In the context of what had gone before these developments were a major advance and we now so easily take for granted the benefits that flowed from them. We must remember, however, that one of the key reasons why such advances were possible was that the U.S.A. was interested in and able to play the leading role of underwriting the system and guaranteeing its success, being by far the strongest economic and political power. This was a major change from the inter-war period when no one power was able or willing to play such a leading role, blocking any progress in international co-operation. Before we too hastily condemn the U.S.A. we should remember that an unprecedented act of generosity, albeit in the interests of her own foreign policy, namely the provision of massive aid to a devastated Europe through the Marshall Aid Programme, enabled Western Europe to recover quickly from the war and participate in this system. Again such a reconstruction programme was sadly lacking after World War I.

The contribution of Jean Monnet was to build on this initial stimulus to recovery by inspiring and initiating the first practical steps towards European unity, which began with the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951. The British, who were tragically not ready to go as far as sharing the responsibility for such key industries at a supra-national level, reacted to Monnet's initiative with sheer disbelief that it could possibly succeed. They underestimated the force of Monnet's personality and his ability to mobilise the yearning for greater harmony that existed in Europe at

that time. We now forget what a volatile situation Europe was in then and the history of discord and hostility between the main European powers in the past. I described Monnet's role in more detail in last year's *Golden Blade*.²

Another remarkable development in the post-war period was the relatively peaceful way in which Britain dismantled her Empire, beginning with India in 1947. To do so in such a short time with very little political or social repercussions in Britain itself was a great achievement. A large measure of the responsibility for the foresight with which this task was undertaken while Britain still retained the initiative was due to Arnold Toynbee. With the enormous sweep of his analysis of historical processes and his vantage point as a chronicler of international affairs at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA) from 1924-1956 his influence on the conduct of British foreign policy was enormous. Independence was an essential pre-requisite for the developing countries to begin to play an active and responsible role in world affairs, and for Britain to come to terms with her much reduced economic power in the world. However insignificant the political impact of the loss of the Empire, we are still experiencing the difficulties of adjusting the orientation and structure of our economy that this entailed, although this fact is not widely appreciated today.

Although the degree of international co-operation achieved in the early post-war years was a major step forward, its primary weakness—exposed again in the early 1970s—was that the transition from national to global economic thinking did not go far enough at the time, and can even be said to have progressed backwards since then. This system of international co-operation did accelerate the trend towards what Rudolf Steiner called a world economy, i.e. where economic units in different countries actually work together industrially, exchanging semi-finished goods for further processing elsewhere.³ International trade today is increasingly characterised by trade in manufactured goods rather than primary commodities (oil, minerals and food) and this trade is also increasingly in semi-finished products and intra-industry trade, i.e. in specialised products exchanged between firms in the same industry in different countries. Once this process had gone beyond the capacity of those responsible for managing the international economy to think in global terms, the system began to break down. This is precisely what Rudolf Steiner

forecast in 1922. He also pointed out that this imbalance between the demands of the world economic system and man's capacity for thinking globally could only be temporarily sustained "through one part of the earth stealing advantages at the expense of another". Again this is just what we have witnessed in the post-war period when, as we shall see below, the rich countries of the North grew at the expense of the developing countries of the South. We shall now proceed to discuss in this light each of the pressures that have brought the system into crisis in the 1970s.

We have already seen how the creation and functioning of the international system after the war was heavily dependent on U.S. leadership. In the late 1960s and early 1970s this leadership came under severe pressure from two directions, on the one hand from the crisis of confidence in the U.S.A. over its handling of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal and on the other from the rise of Germany and Japan as leading economic powers alongside the U.S.A. So far the system has not managed to emancipate itself from the demise of U.S. leadership and create a new form of co-operative stewardship between the three major economic powers, the U.S.A., West Germany and Japan. In what has now become a five-pole international system with the emergence or potential emergence of the U.S.S.R. and China as major actors, this is increasingly difficult. Failure to achieve such a co-operative stewardship and the uncertainty that this entails reinforce nationalistic thinking when the situation demands the opposite.

Keynesian economic analysis, which underlay the international economic institutions created at Bretton Woods and enabled national governments to maintain near full employment for two decades, also began to show its weaknesses in the 1970s. The major breakthrough in economic thinking that was made by Keynes in his *General Theory* showed that huge depressions with high unemployment, such as that of 1929-31, could be avoided by governments in fact temporarily over-spending, which created jobs and began the virtuous circle of more jobs, higher income, greater demand and hence more jobs etc.⁴ While this process is now well understood the danger existed that the amount of incomes generated and money in the system would get out of step with the productive capacity of the economy. This happened either domestically, where expectations of higher living standards grew faster than the ability of the economy to meet these expectations

or where trade union power pushed up wages faster than productivity, or internationally where the growth of liquidity got out of control. The latter situation arose when the U.S.A. exported a vast amount of dollars to the so-called Eurodollar market during the Vietnam War. Precisely because the whole international system hinged on the dollar, the appropriate adjustment or control of this outflow was not undertaken. This was one of the main factors that led to the collapse of the international exchange rate regime based on the dollar in 1971. The reaction to inflation that occurred in most countries in the 1970s was to return to the old cure of squeezing the amount of money by cutting government spending, which merely led to higher unemployment by reversing the process outlined above. Therefore we have not yet found a way of linking the supply of money to the productive capacity of the economic system. Rudolf Steiner argued that the supply of money should be linked to the ability to produce food, particularly wheat⁵. If this is an appropriate remedy it is interesting that although the international institutions to create and distribute liquidity were created after the war, the institution that was supposed to regulate commodity prices and production, including wheat, was not. Rudolf Steiner's other more difficult idea of introducing a counterpart to the process of the creation of money by letting money die also deserves more careful study in this context.⁶ So far no economists have thought in such terms.

The only institutional framework where the developing countries have a major voice is the United Nations and its daughter organisations such as the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). However these institutions were quite separate from the Bretton Woods institutions and it was the latter, controlled by the rich countries, that had control over the key areas of money, finance and trade. Developing countries had a very limited voice in the running of these institutions and consequently their interests were not given full attention. In terms of exchange rates, the provision of adequate liquidity and the burden of adjustment, the operation of these institutions worked against the developing countries. Moreover in the key area of stabilising commodity prices no progress was made at all. This meant that developing countries, heavily dependent on commodities for their export earnings, suffered from unfairly low

prices and massive fluctuations according to sudden changes of supply and demand which made development planning almost impossible. Those developing countries that did manage to industrialise, either through their own large internal market such as Brazil or through a dynamic entrepreneurial culture such as South Korea or Taiwan, find themselves heavily discriminated against in trying to sell finished products to the rich countries. As they became more successful so the richer countries fought even harder to exclude them. By the 1970s, when the advanced economies had for various reasons run out of steam themselves, precisely those countries of the world who should have provided the major stimulus to further growth in the world economy became instead a major drag on world economic growth.

For the poorest countries the principal source of funds for development is official development aid, mainly in the form of gifts. A decade ago the United Nations set a target of 0.7% of gross national product (GNP) of the developed countries to be given over to development aid. Instead of steadily increasing aid towards the target there was a slight fall and today the West donates only half the target amount, while the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe contribute only 0.04% of their GNP in aid. Such free gifts have always been part of economic life, particularly in self-contained economic systems as the world economy is today. We do not today fully appreciate the role of such free gifts, hence they easily get overlooked. Rudolf Steiner emphasised their role in unblocking and freeing excess capital and in contributing to a fully developed educational and cultural life.⁷ A vast extension of education in the developing countries must accompany substantial increases in food production, and indeed contribute in some measure to it.

In one respect in particular the economic system quite clearly demands global thinking, and that is in oil. After the oil crisis of 1973 we all became conscious that there are quite definite limits to the amount of oil available, though new exploration may in time increase the supply marginally. This one event of 1973 also made us aware that during the post-war years we were living in a period when oil was far too cheap; another example of the West growing at the expense of the developing countries, where much of the oil comes from. Schumacher has shown very clearly how this period of growth, dependent on the

exploitation of fossil fuels, particularly cheap oil, has encouraged rather an extreme form of what we might call inhuman patterns of economic life.⁸ Agriculture became increasingly mechanised, and hence oil-dependent, and consequently gave rise to a massive migration from rural areas to towns. These towns themselves have grown into monster cities that Schumacher likens to "a huge machine which for its very breathing requires a constant, continuous input of energy, namely oil".⁹ Technologies of production also developed in the direction of even larger production units, which in turn lead to greater reliance on oil-based transport to distribute the goods produced and to a highly urbanised workforce.

In moderation all of these trends have of course been beneficial to mankind, though in their extreme forms they have led to untold human misery. The remaining farmers on the land are lonely and the land is becoming increasingly impoverished, people living in cities find it increasingly difficult to remain sane individuals and people are revolting against working in huge impersonal factories. Such inhuman developments were possible only because we failed to see the implications of these forms of life for the world as a whole and individual human beings in particular. We are now being forced to do so. Quite clearly radical changes in our economic system will be required in the next two decades and will essentially call for the appropriate modes of thinking. Present patterns of life outlined above are certainly not sustainable in the face of future oil shortages and become even less feasible if one imagines the developing countries following our example by also basing their development strategies on cheap oil. Rethinking our activities again on a human scale, as advocated by Schumacher, needs to be matched by efforts to establish global associations of producers, distributors and consumers acting intelligently in the interests of the world economy, along the lines advocated by Rudolf Steiner.¹⁰ After both the First and Second World War the large measure of co-operation that was achieved between the Allies was abandoned in favour of a return to the laws of supply and demand.¹¹ The resulting developments just outlined above show this to be an enormously deficient system for regulating production and consumption.

Let us now return to our starting point: the world economy is functioning extremely badly, threatening the economic future of every nation on earth, and the resulting political and military tensions are visibly growing. In a desperate search for new ideas to resolve these dilemmas an independent commission of 18 eminent persons from the developed and developing countries was brought together under the chairmanship of Willy Brandt, the former West German Chancellor, to study the situation and see what new initiatives were required. The Commission included former British Prime Minister Edward Heath, former Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme, the Commonwealth Secretary-General Shridath Ramphal and Catherine Graham, the publisher of the *Washington Post*. Their report was recently published with the title "North-South: A Programme for Survival".¹² It contains a very comprehensive account of all the major issues currently dogging relationships between the rich countries of the North and the developing countries of the South, together with a long list of priorities for action to the year 2000 and an emergency programme for the 1980s. One only hopes that it will be read widely amongst the general public and receive sufficient attention from the world's politicians and their advisers. On the latter score Willy Brandt himself admits in the introduction that heads of government are so preoccupied with day-to-day issues that they rarely have time to consider the broader issues raised in this book.¹³ The only disappointing thing about this report is that it is written very much in the style of an uninspiring United Nations document that quickly gathers dust on a shelf. There are a few books which manage to achieve the rare quality of profoundly changing a person's thinking and this is sadly not the case here.¹⁴ Nevertheless the recommendations deserve to be very seriously considered; they divide into four main headings.

The first major call is for a massive transfer of resources from the North to the South, to remedy the uneven developments of the world economy and unlock the development potential of the disadvantaged countries. For the very poorest nations, who have little scope for borrowing internationally or raising sufficient funds domestically, they propose a Marshall Aid type of programme of aid, to be financed by a levy on world trade, or alternatively on military expenditures, arms exports or from the exploitation of the "global commons", especially sea-bed minerals. They consider that such automatic contributions

would help to establish the principle of global responsibility and be a step towards co-management of the world economy. In addition there should be considerable help in financing the huge debts run up by the middle income countries, and in financing mineral and energy exploration and development.

The second recommendation is for the establishment of an international strategy for energy, especially for oil. Recent events in the Middle East have dramatically shown that power politics over oil could easily prove disastrous for the whole world. An alternative framework for understanding and co-operation between all the major oil-consuming nations, including the U.S.S.R., who is about to enter the world market for oil as her demand exceeds her indigenous supply, the major oil companies who distribute oil and the major producers is absolutely necessary. Such a strategy will involve assurances of security of supply by the producing nations, commitments to actively restrict the use of oil by the consuming nations, a programme of exploration and development in the developing countries and the development of alternative energy sources. Such a major initiative would clearly have to go beyond simply treating oil as a commodity and involve political co-operation between the two super-powers, a resolution of the Palestinian issue and a guarantee of the rights of the oil-producing and developing countries. Although this may seem far-fetched in the present climate, the possibility of such an initiative may well arise after a major interruption of supplies for whatever reason, military or otherwise. So far the system has not had a great enough shock to wake up to the necessity of mobilising the mutual interests that lie dormant at present.

The third issue is a global food programme. This would involve a substantial increase in food production in the poorest countries, with the necessary technical and material support coming from the North, a guarantee of regular supplies of food, including food aid, and a liberalisation of world trade in food products. At present food is the most restricted area of world trade and each of the major markets of the North, the U.S.A. and Canada, Western Europe and the E.E.C. in particular, and Japan all have a rigid control on food imports, production and prices. These systems, like the E.E.C.'s Common Agricultural Policy, are supposed to protect domestic consumers from large price fluctuations due to the weather and to secure farm

incomes. What they do lead to is a substantial and growing gap between world consumption and production, for instance in cereals increasing from 37 million tons in 1975 to between 120-145 million tons by 1990. Clearly a lot of people in the developing countries are going to starve to death as a result. Can we really tolerate such an immoral system much longer?

Finally the report recommends that a start should be made in radically reforming the international economic system. These reforms would give the developing countries a greater voice in its operation and would in various ways improve the transfer of funds to the South, combined with greater monetary and exchange rate stability. On the trade side the aim would be to reverse the growing move back to national protective restrictions that occurred in the 1970s and to improve the developing countries' conditions in trade both in commodities and manufactures. On the one hand it would involve internationally agreed regimes for each major commodity with schemes to stabilise prices and on the other a negotiated opening up of Northern markets to manufactured goods from the South with help and understanding to complete the painful process in the North of moving out of one industry, such as textiles, and into another. Indeed the report goes so far as to say that we should again consider establishing an ITO to undertake and co-ordinate all these production and trade questions. Commonly negotiated agreements at an international level must be better than the present disruptive chaos in world trade.

The report concludes that the implementation of its programme "will do much to create confidence, stimulate trade and investment and improve prospects for growth in the world economy". Conducted in partnership between North and South it would amount to a major step towards a new international order, and the development of a true world community".¹⁵ All imaginative proposals meet with a barrage of technical and nit-picking political criticisms; what must be remembered from every initiative that was successful in the past in this direction was that the idea was stronger than the barrage of criticism and where it failed men had lost sight of the initial idea. We must never underestimate the importance of ideas as a means to mobilise the latent will to restore harmonious economic relationships between peoples.

What is striking about the report is that it is entirely directed upwards to the world political leaders and international bureaucrats in U.N. Conference chambers. Steiner reminds us that "what must be accomplished is far more likely to come about on the strength of human impulses which have their roots in life, than through decisions and agreements made at Congresses and the like".¹⁶ We have seen how in the past certain leading individuals were able to perceive what was required, to embody and mobilise the collective will-power to act on the basis of it. In a world where the foreign policy-making process, including international economic policy, is far more open and subject to public scrutiny by the mass media than 35 years ago, it may be that the initiative for far-sighted action must arise in another form, i.e. through the mobilisation of larger groups in society. The influence of somebody like Schumacher on the thinking of a whole generation all over the globe must be a more relevant example to follow in modern times. Moreover when you see the way his practical suggestions have taken root everywhere, from the awakening of interest in energy questions and the mass revulsion against nuclear power to intermediate technology in the developing countries and the revival of interest in small business in the developed countries, it is enormously impressive. It is perhaps worth mentioning here that Schumacher also played an important part in drawing up the initial proposals for what were to become the Bretton Woods institutions with Keynes and was the principal author of the famous Beveridge Report on full employment after the War.

In the particular orientation of the Report towards the international community at its highest level we can see some of its major weaknesses. The main thrust of its thinking is an elaboration of the ideas that underlay the creation of the Bretton Woods institutions, extended to give greater weight to the developing countries. Remember that these ideas have their origin in the failure to come to grips with the reality of the world economy a generation earlier in 1919. As far as they go the recommendations of the Report must be wholeheartedly welcomed. However, the one-sided way in which these ideas were implemented after World War II led to a quite unbalanced growth of the developed countries at the expense of the developing countries that was reinforced by cheap oil and epitomised by the direction of technology towards even greater scale and complexity.

The most important consequence of this particular pattern of development was that the human being became increasingly left out of the picture and his needs were less and less important to it. We have seen earlier that the resulting patterns of economic life will not be sustainable in the future and must eventually break down. While mankind may or may not revolt against being more and more imprisoned in a system that is antithetical to his needs, the structures created are certainly not sustainable from a global point of view. Therefore somehow we will have to begin the difficult process of reversing the direction of technology in the manner outlined by Schumacher and the over-developed countries will have to reassess their consumption habits to bring them more into line with the carrying capacity of the world economy. This may not necessarily mean a lower basic standard of living but will entail the loss of the freedom to squander resources needed by others elsewhere to survive. It is a shame that such a fundamental issue as the reassessment of the direction technology is taking us is hardly mentioned in the Brandt Report; appropriate technology is mentioned twice, in all only six paragraphs, and then it is wholly related to the needs of the developing countries and not to the developed.¹⁶

Because the balance between the over-developed and the under-developed countries has gone so far, the righting of this balance can only be done by the active participation of every individual in the rich countries. The report makes no mention of what each individual can do to contribute to this "programme for survival". Is this not a glaring omission? Does this not pinpoint one's unease that there is something not entirely convincing about it? It too easily allows people to say, well, the government should do this and that and I can't (really don't want to) do anything about it, or that it's their problem, they wanted the job—let them get on with it. While a Brandt type approach may have been quite adequate a generation ago it is no longer sufficient for two reasons. The first is that there are no longer any ways of postponing coming to terms with the realities of a world economy, which by definition is a closed system. Every economic actor increasingly has to recognise that the honeymoon period of growth at the expense of the other chap is coming to an end. Coming to terms with this reality involves everyone of us. The second is that policy-makers and governments wield far less power to shape events than

hitherto; political power and economic responsibility are far more diffused throughout our society than in the past.

At an individual level we can make an important beginning in the conduct of our own lives. Every time we go to the shops or supermarket and choose whether to purchase something or not we are helping to shape or distort the world economy. We must become quite conscious of this fact. We must also become aware of the strong encroachment on our free choices by the whole want-creation process employed by society today, particularly advertising, the media and television. Only by at least partially disengaging oneself from this influence can one regain the real freedom of choice to decide whether I actually want or need this particular item and what features of the world economy am I encouraging or not by so doing. For instance am I adding unnecessarily to the demands being placed on scarce energy resources or am I sustaining increasingly oil-dependent farming practices or more benign organic methods that do not impoverish the soil and so on. Consumer resistance, such as meat boycotts in the U.S.A., can have a significant counter-influence against the powers of persuasion of the media. There is no need for this to become a holier-than-thou exercise; more and more people are searching for a way out from the unfreedom of persuasion, not simply because it begins to make sense from their own point of view but also because they are more aware of the wider consequences of their actions. In this way we can help to reverse the direction of our over-developed society and bring greater harmony and balance to the world economy.

The same choices are faced in most production or service activities. How often does a company become clearly conscious of whether it is fulfilling a real need in society by producing a particular product and how often does it reassess the methods of production used to make that product in terms of the technology adopted and the environment of human relationships within that enterprise?

This process of gaining a greater freedom in relation to the external economic environment is a process of raising hitherto instinctive activities to consciousness. To achieve this degree of consciousness certainly involves a far greater awareness of the workings of one external environment in the widest sense. It also involves an inner process of greater self-awareness, for all that has been created in the external environment by man—even though it may seem to have got

beyond his control—has its roots inside man—i.e. was first conceived in man's thought. If there is something wrong with the man-made world then there must also be something wrong in man's own condition. Inner development and greater external awareness must go hand in hand. The last decade has seen an enormous revival of interest in new paths of inner development as well as concern to establish new forms of economic and social life. Towards the end of his life Schumacher emphasised that we must not neglect the former in favour of the latter; this of course is also one of the central themes of Anthroposophy.

In this paper I have tried to indicate the main problems facing mankind in resolving the crisis in the world economy. We are all too accustomed to take things for granted and fail to realise the fragility of the existing international economic order. Our present predicament would quickly pale into insignificance were this collapse to go much further. More important, we have shown that the transition from purely nationalistic to global thinking is essential for the continued functioning of the system in the face of the new challenges of the 1970s and 1980s. The working out of what this means in detail, by economists and others in all walks of life, is one of the main challenges facing us today. If one takes the most pessimistic view that the destructive forces at work in the system today are so strong that it is impossible to avert some form of collapse, then we must begin to lay the foundation of the ideas that will be required to restore the system to a healthy state when these destructive forces have spent themselves. Then again the opportunity for a fresh direction will open up and it would be tragic if the right ideas were not ready to meet these opportunities, as was the case in 1919. Much of the necessary ground work for such a world economic thinking was already laid by Rudolf Steiner in 1922 in his course entitled "World Economy". We are fortunate to have such a rich beginning at our disposal: it is time to build upon it systematically for the future.

NOTES

¹ John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Macmillan, London, 1919.

² Daniel T. Jones, 'Jean Monnet and the Spirit of European Unity', in the *Golden Blade*, Volume 32, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1980.

³ Rudolf Steiner, *World Economy: The Foundation of a Science of World Economics*, Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1936.

⁴ John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, Macmillan, London, 1936.

⁵ Rudolf Steiner, op.cit., Lectures XI and XIV.

⁶ Rudolf Steiner, op.cit., Lecture XII.

⁷ Rudolf Steiner, op.cit., Lectures XI and XII.

⁸ E. F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered*, Blond and Briggs, London, 1973 and E. F. Schumacher, *Good Work*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1979.

⁹ E. F. Schumacher, 1979, op.cit., p.18.

¹⁰ E. F. Schumacher, 1973 and 1979, op.cit., and Rudolf Steiner, *The Social Future*, Anthroposophic Press, New York, 1945, Lecture VI.

¹¹ Efforts by Monnet and others in this direction after World War I are vividly described in Jean Monnet, *Memoirs*, Collins, London, 1979, see also Daniel T. Jones, op.cit.

¹² Willy Brandt et. al., *North-South: A Programme for Survival*, The Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues under the Chairmanship of Willy Brandt, Pan Books, London, 1980.

¹³ Willy Brandt et. al., op.cit., p.9.

¹⁴ I found John Maynard Keynes, op.cit., 1919 and Jean Monnet, op.cit., and both the E. F. Schumacher volumes contained this immediately inspiring quality, while the various volumes by Rudolf Steiner are packed with tremendous food for thought.

¹⁵ Willy Brandt et. al., op.cit., pp.280-1.

¹⁶ Willy Brandt et. al., op.cit., pp.94-5 and 195-6.

AUTISTIC CHILDREN

LOTTE SAHLMANN

THIS essay is not meant to provide a complete survey of autism, or to give any advice as to diagnosis and treatment. Some salient aspects are being discussed which seem to me relevant from a wider point of view.

The autistic syndrome of childhood was first described in 1943 by Kanner. Since then many workers have confirmed the original picture and added to it. Tens of thousands of children were discovered, ranging from U.S.A. in the West, all over industrial Europe, and Japan. They are not unknown in the Third World, but are exceptions rather than the rule.

It may not be a new condition, but certainly earlier observers would have spotted these children, had they appeared in such numbers. They are a characteristic addition to our 20th century pathology. Might one even go further and ask, has this condition of autism perhaps a causal connection with our present age and all its implications? A question which may be asked but should remain open.

Autism can be characterized as a reactive behaviour to certain intrinsic or environmental factors which cannot be coped with, hindering the development and integration of the total personality. Any child suffering from brain damage, sensory defect, Mongolism, etc. can theoretically develop a secondary autism, depending on the constitutional make-up and the environmental situation. A burden of too many obstacles in a weak person may cause defensive withdrawal in any of us.

The genuine or primary autism, however, uncomplicated by organic defects, rests deeply within the child's constitution as a totality; it may be potentially present, waiting for an outer happening to make it manifest.

Unfortunately, a good number of children are born showing from the very beginning of their life a marked inability to relate, in spite of favourable outer circumstances.

How can we come to a first understanding of such manifold aberrations? What are the main characteristics of the so-called primary autistic child?

As to their physique, they are exceptionally beautiful children, delicately shaped, of noble features. Gracefully tip-toeing into a room, ignoring any person, avoiding eye-contact, they might proceed to smell everything they meet, to explore objects by tapping with as little contact as possible. Manneristic movement, be it rocking, jumping, twiddling, spinning or skilfully balancing objects, gives them away immediately.

The use of language is deeply affected, ranging from elected mutism and lack of any communication, even by gesture, to an occasional word, exclamation, echolalia or stereotyped speech. There is a total absence of self-awareness; thus the discovery of the pronoun 'I', characteristic of the three-year-old, is missing or grossly delayed. As a consequence, any I-you relationship is equally confused. "You are hungry" signifies that the child is hungry.

A striking phenomenon is their relationship to sense experience. Certain colours, sounds, smells, etc. will provoke an unusually violent reaction, either sympathy or antipathy. The child either seems to merge with his surroundings or is repelled, unable to suppress his emotional response. Thus subjective feeling will prevent any attempt at conceptualization. The way is barred ever to arrive at any objectivity and inner freedom. Obsessions in word or deed are the consequence, imprisoning the autistic personality in a nearly organ-bound, instinctive reactive behaviour. Is such reaction not reminiscent of earlier epochs of mankind, when our senses were still permeated by active life processes and where life processes took on soul functions?*

Rudolf Steiner describes conditions which even today may happen to individual human beings; they fall back into earlier developmental stages, acting "as if" there were a kind of thinking, feeling and willing. Such a throw-back would, by necessity, conjure further experiences and reactions which are not adequate to our time, and thus totally pathological. Maybe a number of these children belong to souls who, at present, are endowed with such an out-of-date constitution.

In every normally developing child the bodily senses (touch, life, balance and movement) sink into a subconscious experience after standing and walking has been acquired, allowing the middle senses (taste, seeing and hearing, etc) to carry out their task.

In the autistic child, this physiological metamorphosis does not

*The Riddle of Man VII, IX—Lectures of 1916.

come about; the lower senses become dominant, with the result that these children cannot differentiate objective spatial forces from their own bodily existence.

Thus space and objects become a fixed geometrical pattern, unrelated to values and meaningfulness, but all-important as to the preserving of the existing form.

To move a chair, hang a picture on a different wall, etc., will elicit an outbreak of despair or anger. The child identifies himself with the space around, is unable to experience his own bodily space as separate; making it nearly impossible to develop any awareness of the self.

The dormant or absent sense of Ego (recognition of the Ego of other person) eliminates any human, emotional relationship, adding "moving objects" to the established pattern.

While blind, deaf or spastic children show reduced faculties, limiting their experience and potentials, they share our world, our concepts and aims. The autistic child inhabits a world known only to him. He shows the greatest reluctance or inability to enter our spheres of contact, emotions and moral values; it often seems as if he refuses or is unable to take up his earthly destiny. He prefers to stop at the threshold, looking back to where he came from. Only if we consider the problem of Autism under the aspect of pre-earthly happenings can we come at all near to an understanding.

We are drawn into incarnation by the deeply subconscious urge of destiny. Our ancestral line has been chosen out of emotional bonds or to provide the most suitable physical tool. Conception and pregnancy not only prepare the body, but allow the invaluable contact between mother and the incoming Soul.

After birth, the infant, still closely sheltered by the mother's care and concern, has to become familiar with earthly space, earthly gravity and the flow of time through sleeping and waking. Sensory experiences of the normal child are very different from those of an adult, and also deviate essentially from the autistic. They are a perpetuation of spiritual qualities and Beings we met before conception.

These forces are always present behind the world of sense, but we fail to perceive them. The true nature of light and sound, chemical forces and warmth has died into the material world, the only world we

in our time are aware of. Early mankind was able to look behind the veil of the material. To be a child, even today, is to be open in a dreamlike way to those worlds which harbour the creative powers.

"He is still aware and influenced by all those Spiritual Beings who are endowed with an Ego. Higher Hierarchies, human beings, group souls of animals are directly available to the child's experience".*

Only step by step the curtain becomes impenetrable and our objective world emerges. The transition is made possible by two helping powers which enable every normal child to cross the threshold from pre-earthly existence through birth: *trust* and the faculty of *imitation*.

Incarnation into a new body is determined by the happenings in the Spiritual World between death and a new birth. From such experiences we derive the urge to take up our destiny; we want to meet what we have to encounter here on earth. With *trust* in our mission we prepare our incarnation; trust that we will be received by the parents we chose long before conception occurred. The mother and family, on their part, by fulfilling the expectation of the oncoming soul, provide a living bridge that leads the infant into the land of *imitation*, where it will dwell for the first seven years.

We tend to copy those people whom we love most, and it is through them that the world around us will unveil its meaningfulness. We subconsciously follow every movement, every mood, every word and gesture laying the foundation for our future skills, habits and morality. Trust will keep open the door to the world we stem from, keeping us in touch "with Beings possessing an Ego-nature". Imitation will take us by the hand and lead us on the path of our early development.

The autistic child is utterly lacking in at least one of these faculties, if not both. He neither experiences a human Ego, nor does he copy his surroundings, arresting thereby all development. Can we grasp at all the plight of these children?

Is it possible that out of deep Karmic reasons such beings could not go through the world between death and a new birth as required? After the Midnight-hour we find ourselves in an expanded consciousness where we merge with other, mostly Higher Beings, becoming thereby unaware of our identity. These periods are followed by a "breathing in" process; we awaken to ourselves and forget our surroundings.

*Rudolf Steiner. Pastoral Medicine Course, 1924.

We live in a cosmic breathing rhythm, the Archetype of all contraction and expansion here on earth. Out of expansion we derive the possibility to interest ourselves in the world, in the last instance to love; but also to imitate. Out of the contracting movement we develop the foundation of memory, thinking and awareness of ourselves.

I AM	Imitation
Memory	Interest
Thought	Love

Did the autistic children miss this all-important spiritual experience? Some of them, mercifully not all, suggest by their unrelated, bewildered behaviour that their world is utterly and totally different from ours. A kind of 'No-Man's land': a confused state of not comprehending, feeling irritated and frightened, despairing and lonely must be their experience.

The cosmic rhythm described above is the archetypal image of our total social existence here on earth. We extend our own being towards another when we listen and comprehend what he says or does, and return to ourselves, weighing up, judging, pondering. Any real human encounter contains those qualities of extended sympathy and considered antipathy in the widest sense.

There are other children who are obviously less disturbed, very much nearer to our world, which at short, unforeseen moments they might even share. These children are outspokenly negative; one has the feeling they could if only they wanted. They might even talk normally for a little while, laugh, act, play, like any child, only to close down again for many months or years to come, the moment they realise their "mistake."

Donald, a 12 year old, never spoke, nor did he show any interest whatsoever. One day he was observed writing his name on the blackboard. Another child noticed and called out, whereupon Donald wiped it out, never attempting to write again.

Another boy of similar make-up, who so far had only said 'No' at frequent intervals, was introduced to a child whose skull was deformed. To all our amazement, he remarked loudly: "Look at his funny head". This was his one and only sentence for another year or so. He refused to relate, to work, to even touch a pencil and was a passive onlooker and guest in this world. His will was strong in a

negative way. Such children shun their destiny, turn away from anything that might draw them into incarnation.

Rudolf Steiner speaks of the time before conception when, in an image, we behold our future life in its essential outlines. We get a glimpse of what might be awaiting us. Most souls go forward; but may there not be individuals who stop short, who rather turn back, who refuse to involve, to commit themselves to what destiny might bring?

So far we have only been mentioning the possibilities of individual Karma leading to autism. Such children may always have existed in small numbers. Can we find a possible cause why today, towards the end of the 20th century, a flood of autistically disturbed individuals enters our world? It obviously is the civilized, industrialized part of the globe where they predominate.

There are the rejected and unwanted children, also those who grow up in large Hospitals or Homes, who receive physical care but lack soul care. There are those whose upbringing may be thwarted by the breaking up of the family or the disappearance of a parental figure, during the most vulnerable first two to three years of their life. Our disintegrating social life, changing values and loss of motherly instincts may easily act as a breeding ground for such a phenomenon. May we not even query the modern approach towards birth control and its abuse, which could cause incarnating souls to shrink back from embarking on their destiny. All these are questions too involved to answer, though worthwhile to raise, leading us perhaps to a deeper understanding of such children as well as of our own time.

Can we find a remedy, a solution to this problem?

The modern approach of conditioning based on the psychology of Behaviourism degrades the child to the animal state. Nothing but automatic, reflex-bound responses can come from such treatment, denying all true development and unfolding.

Fundamental for any healing can only be the knowledge that man is a spiritual entity, each one having an individual mission in the course of death and re-birth.

All true curative education will attempt to work on this background; it will not force the child into learning and performing, but rather will allow him to remain an onlooker while life situations and school lessons happen to go on around him. The more these activities are imbued with real art, permeated by music, eurythmy,

colour and speech, the more conducive they might prove to be. Infinite patience and gratefulness for minute improvements will be needed by parents, teachers, but also by the class.

Is there a message these children are meant to spell out to us? The Mongol children, devoid of intellect, devoid of sexual impulses, bring to us their tremendous forces of sympathy as a healing medicine for our time.

The autistic has nothing to bring but himself, in his bizarre existential garment. He is a challenge to civilised man, urging him to re-evaluate and transform his own materialistic outlook.

We have to struggle for a new Image of Man in the light of re-incarnation and destiny, where birth and death are not barred doors, but will lead into a world which is intimately linked with man on earth through cause and effect. The laws of Karma, the experience of the threshold, the urge for inner development based on moral values and spiritual existence are the only guiding lines for re-orientation of our social life. Only then would we know again how to handle family life, the education and appreciation of children entrusted to us.

1979 was the year of the child. Perhaps the plight of the autistic child will awaken us to the fact that not material, but spiritual considerations are the burning needs of our time.

TELEVISION'S PRISONERS

FAITH M. W. HALL

ON December 20th, 1950, a letter appeared in *The Times* signed by the poet and playwright, T. S. Eliot. For us nowadays this letter has a truly prophetic ring. In it Eliot sounds a solemn warning of the consequences "mentally, morally and physically" to small children which would accrue with the development of television in this country. He points to the problems which were already manifesting themselves in America, where television viewing was by then becoming an entrenched social habit. With characteristic perception he states the crux of the matter, which has been largely overlooked in the great body of research into the effects of television on children in recent years. "The fears," he writes, "are not such as can be allayed by the provision of only superior and moral programmes . . ."

The problem of the effects of violent programme-contents on young viewers has received an enormous amount of attention by researchers. In a recent series of papers sponsored by the International Year of the Child 1979 entitled "Children, Violence and Mass Media," no fewer than 364 books, papers and articles on this subject are listed. This is understandable, as it must be the most grossly obvious of television's effects on children's behaviour, culture, and language. However, I venture to put forward the suggestion that preoccupation with programme-content is a prime example of not being able to see the wood for the trees.

Television-Watching Itself Affects Child Development Regardless of the Programme Content.

Naturally one realises that little children should not be exposed to violent or otherwise unsuitable adult programmes. This is a matter of common sense and scarcely requires stating. But the larger question is simply: Is not television-viewing *per se* a habit which is inimical to the normal healthy development of the young child?

In an important book published in America in 1977 and entitled *The Plug-In-Drug*,* the author, Marie Winn, puts forward in lucid

*Subtitled *T.V., Children and the Family*.

style the idea that frequent television-watching has a deleterious effect on young children quite apart from the influence of programme-content. "It's not *what* you watch," she states. Marie Winn is the mother of two little boys, living in New York. In the course of her research she interviewed hundreds of families and reviewed a mass of literature. Her conclusions are startling. Television-watching for hours daily (perfectly normal in the States, and now over here too) becomes a habit with the grip of an addictive drug. It saps the will-power of children and parents. Repeatedly the mostly intelligent, middle-class parents interviewed said shamefacedly "We know we should switch the set off. We realise it can't be good for our kids to watch so much—but we haven't the will-power to do it!"

In the U.S., surveys show that school children watch an *average* of 30 hours per week, and pre-school children up to 54 hours per week. This is a truly staggering thought and horrific in its implications, when one thinks the matter through clearly. Of course the problem is much greater in the States than in this country, *as yet*. But are we not rapidly sliding in the same direction? The Pye Survey "Children and T.V." (Jan., Feb. '78) found that 2 in 3 British children in the age group 7-17 watch T.V. 3 to 5 hours daily (21-35 hours weekly). One in three children dreams about late-night programmes. We do not know statistics for pre-school children; I fear we might find them surprising and very worrying indeed.

Eliot Daley, writing in the "T.V. Guide," maintains that T.V. has robbed many children of their childhood. He continues: "Back in what should have been the simple intimacy and security of pre-school days, we let the world burst in on them. Adult banality, precocious commercialism, *visions of evil* (my italics) all flooded their waking hours."

Waking hours . . . yes, but what of the child's sleep life—the hours of precious renewal so essential to healthy development? As a student of Speech Therapy at the end of the '50's (when television had nothing like its present influence), during my work observing little children in Health Clinics, I was struck by the very frequent histories of sleep disturbances, nightmares, insomnia, night-terrors, bed-wetting, and so on. These seemed often to be linked with watching T.V. until bedtime. It seems obvious that a little child can only be harmed by going to bed over-stimulated and with a mind crammed with indigestible, often frightening and usually incomprehensible images.

The developing infant of today must cope with a great deal of sensory stimulation from his environment, even if he never watches television. We live in a noisy, rapidly-changing world. But as parents we should endeavour to protect the child as much as possible from an onslaught on his delicate sense-organism. The education of the senses is of the greatest importance, as we know from Rudolf Steiner, Aeppli and others, and will have far-reaching consequences in later life. The sense of touch, the *tactile* sense, we are told, for instance, is much later metamorphosed into the ability to deal *tactfully* with one's fellow human beings, to cope sympathetically with *social contact*. What in this connection can be concluded when one sees a three-or four-year old watching television for hours at a stretch? Does not the act of watching television constitute an assault on the visual sense, and to a lesser extent on the auditory one, while the child sits for long spells *inactive*, experiencing no movement and receiving no tactile impressions?

A general practitioner from Exeter wrote in the medical magazine "Pulse" in August 1979:

"The greatest danger from T.V. is the *addictive*, time-consuming effect that prevents normal growth of play, speech, co-ordination and constructive pastime . . . It is in truth a potent sedative with harmful side-effects, as T.V. addiction in children reduces their ability to mature mentally and physically . . . For children growing and at school, it would be better banned than used as it is in most British homes today."

Gwen Dunn, in an interesting and well-researched book *The Box in the Corner* (Macmillan 1977), carefully examined the effects of television on the lives of the children she taught as a headmistress in Suffolk and elsewhere. One of her main points was: Little children should be *doing*. When they watch T.V. they only very rarely react by participating in the programmes watched; for example, in the special children's programmes intended to stimulate participation. The little child normally learns by doing, by imitation of those around him *in real life*. What goes on in *The Box*, what has been called "the great optical illusion," rarely calls forth reaction and activity in the young viewer.

What effect does the assault on the visual and auditory sense of the young child produce? On a purely physical level, television may be

causing a great increase in myopia (short-sightedness), according to an experienced eye specialist recently. On another level, as Marie Winn reports, the obsession with visual images may well be having a very serious effect on the *verbal* ability, written and oral, of young people in the States who have watched T.V. for thousands of hours while growing up. An expert committee was set up there to inquire into the falling scores in the Scholastic Aptitude Tests used in assessing youngsters' suitability for higher education. In reading and writing, and to a lesser extent in mathematics, the candidates' performance had dropped steadily over 14 years. In discussing the reasons for the decline, which the committee felt must be due partly to television's taking up studying time, the report put forward a disturbing theory: "Reading a line of script or type involves a 'linear, verbal, logical function which is performed in the left hemisphere of the brain, while watching something such as a T.V. screen involves a simultaneous, visual, affective function—performed in the brain's right hemisphere . . . Could this much functioning of one area of the brain (i.e. thousands of hours spent watching T.V.) alter the neural mechanisms of the mind?" Commenting on this possibility, Michael Dixon wrote in the *Financial Times* education column on 13th May, 1978: "True, the U.S. Committee is only hypothesising. But now the suspicion has been raised, it is surely vital that the effects of T.V. on the human mind should be comprehensively investigated."

When we turn to the question of television's effects on the *sense of hearing*, so vital to the development of language in the young child, it is interesting and worrying to note comments from people in the education world. In an article in the *Liverpool Echo* of February 6th, 1980, we read: "You have to teach children to listen these days"—this is a comment one hears again and again from people in education . . . "The first lesson in our basic language course for infants is called Learning to Listen . . . Children so often come from homes where there's a constant background of T.V. and Radio 2—a real cacophony . . ."

"The children who sat listening at a mother's knee *had* to listen," a Liverpool doctor says. "Now when they reach school age they have to be taught to listen, because T.V. has made them lazy listeners . . . It is not only the art of listening that has to be taught to today's T.V.-saturated youngsters. Many of them are scarcely able to string a simple sentence together by the time they reach school age."

It is a sad and dangerous illusion nurtured still by many people that little children *learn* such a lot from T.V. "But it's so educational, isn't it?" is still a frequently-encountered comment. T.V. teaches a child to be passive, and by its hectic and bewildering techniques causes confusion in the child's mind. It demands no response from the child, nor can the child ask the people in the Box a question. Thus it has serious social effects as well as limiting language development in many cases. In a recent issue of the *Sunday Times* there appeared a report entitled: "In Need of Small Talk!" The author told of a project being undertaken in a densely-populated area of Birmingham where it had been found that little children were not developing speech normally because their mothers were hardly speaking to them, and would leave them for long periods in front of the T.V., assuming that they would learn to speak by imitating the people of the Box. A campaign with the slogan "Mum, talk to me!" had been set up to alert the mothers to the great importance of communicating with their children! As Roger Housden wrote in the *Daily Telegraph* in May, 1979: "A child learns by imitation; but for as many hours as he watches T.V. his imitative faculty has no contact with *real human situations* . . . Moreover the whole family will commonly watch T.V. together, so that once-natural family activities like conversation, telling stories, sharing joys or troubles . . . just wither in the grip of its tyranny."

One of the most serious consequences of prolonged televising in childhood appears to me to be that of the effect on the *image-making capacity*. The child who listens to a story being told or read to him conjures up his own unique imaginative pictures. He is being creative, building up a rich storehouse of his own imagery—the stuff of inventiveness and of later memories—" . . . that inner eye which is the bliss of solitude." I find devastating (I use the word advisedly) the idea of millions of children sitting and receiving identical images fabricated in some T.V. studio. They have their images made for them artificially. As Roger Housden points out: "Their subsequent real-life activities will stir memories and pictures *not* of their previous life experience but of their T.V. viewing."

Rudolf Steiner has stressed the great importance of fostering a sense of *wonder* in the child. Excessive televising undermines this approach, for the child is shown so much at such an early age that he feels he has "seen the lot," and often reacts in a blasé, pseudo-

sophisticated manner when, for instance, a teacher has carefully prepared a subject to bring to a class: "Oh, I've seen *that* all on the telly," is a remark frequently heard, and the pupil mentally "switches off." In a serious article in the *Guardian* of 22nd January, 1980, concerning the increase in suicides among young people and children, Donald Gould speaks of a hopelessness which seizes hold of some children today, and one theory put forward by a senior physician to explain this was that they had been introduced, prematurely, to too many ideas. He stated that he believed "the most malign influence acting upon the British nation in the previous half-century had been the British Broadcasting Corporation." The writer comments with consternation on this idea, but thereafter wonders if the physician might not have been right: "As a result of the flood of facts and fiction concerning the adult world now poured out in picture and sound during all the waking hours, seven days a week, even small children are invited to take a *cynical view* (my italics) of . . . the institution of marriage, the virtues . . . and the idea of justice, and the power and existence of an omnipotent and beneficent God." He continues later: ". . . It is reasonable to believe that some young people are reduced to a state of despair because of the very freedoms (of information, of behaviour, of experience) which . . . are the expensively-won privileges of the new society."

Rudolf Steiner predicted in great detail the attack which would be made upon Man during our century through the enormously rapid development of technology, leading to gross materialism. This Ahrimanisation would aim to cloud Man's consciousness and undermine the possibility of the development of spiritual perception. One of the fundamental qualities needed for the following of a path of spiritual development is that of *Veneration*. (See *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*). The seriousness of the question: "What is television-watching doing to our children?" becomes abundantly clear in this context. But now—a ray of hope. In a number of places a deep concern at various levels is making itself felt, among parents, teachers and doctors. A movement is afoot to combat the insidious effects of television upon children. And it is gaining momentum. Like leaven in the lump, cell by cell, the movement is growing, and definite action is taking place. People are becoming conscious of the problem and discussing it in many areas. In the United States, where the problem is

acute, schools and kindergartens are pointing out the dangers to their parents, and strongly advising them to control their children's televiewing. This was reported in a recent article (Jan. 1980) by Edward B. Fiske, education editor of the *New York Times*. In England the T.V. Action Group, founded in 1978, has received unexpectedly strong support. A book reporting their findings will be published this year (*Who's Bringing Them Up?* by Martin Large). One of the Action Group's key phrases is: "*Think Things Through*—What is T.V. doing to your child?" This is an appeal to people to use the power of clear thought—the Sword of Light in the dark cave—as in the beautiful symbolism of "The King of Ireland's Son."

Television's Effects Upon Adults

No-one can deny the immense technical achievement of television. To most people it seems magical. Even people who tend to criticise many programmes will frequently be heard to remark: "But they do put on some marvellous wild-life programmes, travel features or other documentaries." So it is all the more surprising to hear of a remarkable book which roundly states that television is not reformable and must be totally eradicated if we wish for anything approaching a democratic society. These uncompromising statements appear in *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, by Jerry Mander (William Morrow, New York, 1978). This man is not a crank, but the ex-president of one of America's most famous advertising agencies. His book has been described as America's most important book in 25 years. As Anne Karpf wrote in her review of it in *The Times* (July 6th, 1978): "In a nutshell, his arguments are that T.V. helps expropriate knowledge by making us doubt our own experience until validated by experts; that American T.V. is dominated by a handful of corporations and gives voice to the powerful; that it produces illness, submissiveness, and conditions us for autocracy, 1984-style; and that only the grossest linear information can be conveyed by it."

Commenting on the frequent remark "I find T.V. relaxing," Mander writes:

"Television inhibits your ability to think, but it does not lead to freedom of mind, relaxation or renewal. It leads to a more exhausted mind. You may have time out from prior obsessive thought-patterns, but that is as far as T.V. goes. The mind is never empty, the mind is

filled. What is worse, it is filled with someone else's obsessive thoughts and images."

Mander stresses also that television-watching entails blocking off various senses: "The T.V. experience . . . adds up to something nearer to sense deprivation than anything that has come before it."

Whatever one may think about the recommendation to abolish television totally, as put forward in this fascinating book, (and we may feel it is neither practicable nor desirable in fact), it makes riveting and very important reading for anyone concerned about the whole subject.

We cannot put the clocks back. Television is part of the modern life in which we find ourselves; we chose to incarnate at this time. Those with young families will find it helpful to live without television in the house. For others, who decide to own a set, it is, as with many other marvellous inventions, a question of conscious control over the machine. Television doubtless has some positive uses. If we can employ it at the right moment for the right end, then we can answer confidently the challenging question: "Do you own a television set—or does your set own you?"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mrs. Pozzo of Dornach, Switzerland, the niece of Assia Turgenieff, has given her kind permission for the reproduction of our illustrations; and we thank Mr. Jacob Streit of Spiez, Switzerland, for allowing us to print extracts from his address at Assia Turgenieff's funeral. We print the lecture by Rudolf Steiner with the permission of the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung.

Most of our contributors are familiar to Golden Blade readers. But perhaps we may mention that Francis Edmunds is the founder and Principal of Emerson College, Forest Row, Sussex, where Dana Prager, the designer of our cover, and John and Doris Meeks are working; Daniel Jones is engaged in research on international economics at Sussex University; and Marie-Alice Cartwright has been working at old French and kindred subjects at Reading University. Faith Hall is actively engaged in a recently-founded movement to inform doctors, psychiatrists, teachers and parents about the effects of television viewing on children. Dr. Lotte Sahlmann has long and varied experience in work with children needing special care, associated with the Camphill Movement. Ursula Grahl is a pioneer of similar work at Sunfield, near Stourbridge.

STAR & FURROW

Journal of the Bio-dynamic Agricultural Association

Published twice yearly 60p (75p post free)

The BDAA exists for the practice and promotion of the agricultural principles taught by Rudolf Steiner.

Secretary: H. A. Fynes-Clinton, Woodman Lane, Clent,
Stourbridge, West Midlands DY9 9PX



Child and Man

WHY BEAUTY IN EDUCATION? *by Marjorie Spock*
The elusive yet powerful influence of beauty in the arts explored.

THE NEW ART *by Inge Schwarz*
Eurythmy in the Life of a School

ARCHITECTURE FOR EDUCATION *by Denis Devaris*
Background to the new buildings at Michael Hall

ART THROUGH THE HEART *by Margaret Shillan*
An approach to the Lower School artistic work

THE MOST HUMAN ART? *by Ted Roberts*
The Teacher as Artist

TWO 'DONS' OF ALBERTA MAKE WALDORF HISTORY *by Alan Howard*

NEW SCHOOL BUILDING *by David Austin*
An Architect's account

48 pages, illustrated with children's work in colour;
annual subscription (2 issues) £2.50 per year post paid in
U.K. from Child and Man, White Heather, Dale Road,
Forest Row, East Sussex RH18 5BR, England.

"WHO'S BRINGING THEM UP?"

—television and child development—

Written by Martin Large
for the T.V. Action Group,
using material from
parents, doctors and teachers,
concerning the effects
of television-watching on children
—and how to break the television habit.

128 pages Hardback £5.95
Paperback £2.95

*Orders should be sent with cheques payable to
'The T.V. Action Group', 25 Reservoir Road,
Gloucester, England.*

Living Art

The Book and Artshop which wants to be true, in being in its outer work the expression of its inner life, needing your support of true community-practice as Living Art.

Can Our thinking be a Living Art which in deed unites us in truth?

It is a sign of materialistic and not of artistic thinking that in our time many words are spoken to cover up the fact that words and actions fall apart and that with this unconscious split in the true human being himself society is split and power, strikes and terror are the signs of this frustration.

And still, they both arise out of the same origin which we all have in common although buried in a deep well filled with unconscious rubble. Can we make it conscious for the whole of mankind? Can thinking find itself in an artistic creative activity, as the wellspring of soul-life, transforming it out of the fullness of its life of universal wisdom, love and will?

Our scientific thinking is materialistic because it tries to understand the created but overlooks its selfcreating by which however it becomes artistic living thinking. This is a faculty which we have to practice and the question arises, can a new conscious art of thinking be practiced as a universal basis for our culture which would close the above mentioned gap? It is a gap in ourselves which arises because we split world-reality into senseperception and thinking and do not realise that thinking as an artistically free activity is the world content or being belonging to the senseimpression. We just set a sign, a name for this content in not objective but subjective materialistic thinking, in whose view thinking can never cross the threshold of consciousness which separates it from reality. The latter forms concepts without observation, not in free artistic creation of itself, and so combines them not in accordance with their own objective content but out of subjective aims which harm that worldreality for which we are responsible in being able to bring it forth individually on a path of soul-development, bridging the gap between knowledge and a knowing consciousness in free actions.

It is the love for the life of the spirit in the soul of the other human being—the love for its being as the "I" of the world, bringing forth itself which can awake our own spirit to become active. In its remembering itself our own being can be born. Loving to give itself to the other as its true self, it senses itself as being united with itself in the world to give its ever new life to it in deeds of recognition for a healing to come about in a new creation, in thankfulness to it to be able to do so.

With it we can try to practice an ideal-spiritual foundation-stone-laying of a true society. Of a social organism in which movement and form are one. Our heart senses it as one of the Christ's own being. Because only through the will of sacrifice with which he united himself with earth evolution can our fallen thinking become free deeds of our own will to unite us in recognition; not out of any given form but out of the united consciousness of our own will to foster its spiritual movement as the life of a free community, in a social-organic in a Living Art.

Stone Cottage, The Square,
Forest Row, Sussex RH18 5ES
Tel. 034282-2287

WELEDA

WELEDA have been manufacturing natural medicines for more than 50 years. Today, at its Derbyshire home, healing plants are organically grown in Weleda's own garden, and many more are collected from the wild for use in the medicines.

The other product ranges developed by Weleda constitute a comprehensive bodycare programme which includes oral hygiene preparations, a skin and hair care range and preparations for the bath and body. All have two things in common: one is that their ingredients are natural, and the second is that all products are formulated with considerations of healing and of health in mind.

As an example of the type of product we make, MASSAGE BALM is made from Oil of Rosemary, Oil of Lavender, Sunflower Seed Oil, and oily extracts of Arnica Flowers and Birch Leaves. The preparation is an ideal vehicle for massage, and is beneficial for soothing aching muscles, for sporting injuries, and so on.

If you would like details of our products and their underlying philosophy, please let us know. Please note that we welcome visits by interested groups of people—it lets us tell you what we do and it enables you to be sure that we do what we say we do.

WELEDA (UK) LTD.,
HEANOR ROAD,
ILKESTON,
DERBYSHIRE
DE7 8DR

Telephone
(0602) 303151.



Our Spiritual Companions

From Angels and Archangels to Cherubim and Seraphim

Adam Bittleston

This book is concerned with the work of spiritual powers in human life and in nature. The author draws both on ancient traditions which spoke of nine ranks of spiritual beings and on revelations breaking through in our time.

First edition, September 25, 1980; 22 x 14cm; 128pp; hardback; £6.50; 0-903540-39-8

The Making of Christianity and the Greek Spirit

Evelyn Francis Capel

The author shows how in their own style the Greek myths are a preparation for Christianity as real as the stories of the Old Testament. They carry in magnificent pictures the leading ideas of human evolution which have been manifested in Christian history.

First edition September 25, 1980; 22 x 14cm; 128pp; softbound; £4.95; 0-903540-37-1

Brothers and Sisters

Karl König

From birth we are under a hidden law that influences our relationship with the world but it is so basic that we may not even notice it. It is simply our order of birth in the family. The fact of being a first, second or third child determines, according to the author, our encounter with 'people, weather, demands, opportunities and destiny'. Using examples from life and literature König leads us into secrets about life that will linger on in our minds. We gain insight from him into our most personal relationships and yet at the same time feel our attitude to mankind refreshed and renewed. He provides a most valuable handbook for any parents who have to cope with the more immediate problems of the family constellation.

Fourth edition March 27, 1980; 22 x 14cm; 96pp; softbound; £3.50; 0-903540-38-X

Healings in the Gospels

Alfred Heidenreich

Heidenreich sees the Gospels as the greatest textbook on

the riddles of the earth ever written. Focussing his attention mainly upon the healings of the blind, the paralytic, the nobleman's son and Jairus's daughter, he leads to far-reaching considerations of the purpose of sickness and health. His theme also encompasses the role of spiritual healing in the Church and the opportunity bestowed by convalescence for the development of the inner life. The final chapter reaches into the heights of religious contemplation with a description in modern terms of the resurrection of Christ's body which is found to be the source of all permanent healing.

First edition March 27, 1980; 22 x 14cm; 96pp; softbound; £3.75; 0-903540-36-3

Prayers and Graces

Collected by Michael Jones

A collection both for general use and special occasions. Included are prayers for children, for illness, convalescence, crises, for the dead, graces, house-blessings, prayers for festivals.

First edition March 27, 1980; 18 x 11cm; 96pp; hardback; £2.75; 0-903540-33-9

The Apocalypse of Saint John

Emil Bock

This book helps us to interpret St John's rich, concentrated pictorial language; we can see that he is dealing with great problems of human spiritual development which are particularly relevant to the difficulties of our time.

Tr. from German; first edition 1957, reprint September 25, 1980; 22 x 14cm; 192pp; softbound; £5.95; 0-903540-42-8

The Three Years

The Life of Christ between Baptism and Ascension

Emil Bock

Bock leads more deeply into the events of Christ's life through creating an understanding of the implications of such a unique occurrence as the incarnation of a divine cosmic being into the body of Jesus on earth.

Tr. from German; first edition 1957, third reprint September 25, 1980; 22 x 14cm; 288pp; softbound; £5.95; 0-903540-41-X

Christianity and Islam

A battle for the true image of man

Rudolf Frieling

The current resurgence of Islam and the attention it draws have prompted this book. It becomes a statement of the basis of Christianity without which Christians cannot confidently encounter any other religious outlook.

Tr. from German; first edition 1978; 22 x 14cm; 144pp; softbound; £4.50; 0-903540-18-5

Christianity and Reincarnation

Rudolf Frieling

The question whether or not man returns to live on earth is a matter of concern to many people today. Little has been said on the subject by Christian thinkers and the recent theory of 'Total Death' excludes any possibility of reincarnation.

The author presents the essence of Christianity and shows how it harmonizes with the teaching of reincarnation and examines its relationship to the Bible.

Tr. from German; first edition 1977; 22 x 14cm; 118pp; softbound; £3.95; 0-903540-05-3

The Spirit of the Circling Stars

Human Needs and Cosmic Answers

Adam Bittleston

How can we begin to understand our own personal destinies — the illnesses that befall us, the friends we make, the difficulties that beset us? In human beings today there is a deep longing to understand such things, not trivially, or as matters of chance, but having some relation to the great universe. Many feel that there are relationships between the movement of the stars and the planets and the pattern of human destiny which are not just fanciful, but founded in a deeper reality than the conceptions of physical cosmology.

First edition 1975; 21 x 14 cm; 192pp; hardback; £4.25; 0-900285 25 7

Towards a Third Culture

Charles Davy

The 'two cultures' — the old arts culture and the new scientific culture — is treated here in relation to the evolution of consciousness.

Second edition 1977; 18 x 11 cm; 178pp; paperback; £2.50; 0-903540 14 2



**Floris
Books**

If ordering direct from Floris Books please send cheque with order and add postage (inland & surface abroad) as below:
Order value up to £7 add 50p
up to £20 add £1.10.



**Floris
Books**

Send for complete catalogue to

Floris Books
21 Napier Road
Edinburgh EH10 5AZ



*An adult centre of training
and research based on the teachings
of Rudolf Steiner.*

Full particulars from:

THE SECRETARY, EMERSON COLLEGE, FOREST ROW, SUSSEX.

KOLISKO ARCHIVE PUBLICATIONS Works of

E. and L. Kolisko, Rudolf Steiner,
W.J. Stein and Karl König

Latest Editions

Eugen Kolisko, Zoology for Everybody
No.4 (Protozoa)

£1.80

E. and L. Kolisko, Lead and the Human
Organism

£1.50

W. J. Stein, Man and His Place in History

£1.60

Eugen Kolisko, Medical Work in Education

£0.75

Karl König, Illnesses of Our Time

£1.35

Catalogue
15p - post
62 Frederick Road
Bournemouth
BH 9 2 NA

MICHAEL HALL FOREST ROW

Co-educational School on
the principles of
Rudolf Steiner

Day and Boarding

Recognised by the Dept.
of Education and Science

Prospectus from:

The Bursar

Michael Hall

Kidbrooke Park

Forest Row, Sussex

RH18 5JB

Tel: Forest Row 2275

STD 0342 82

Rudolf Steiner
Press

£2.25P