

The Sanctuary of Self

by Ralph M. Lewis, F.R.C.



THE SANCTUARY OF SELF



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DEDICATION

To

Kendal Brower

*Whose companionship and sincere friendship are
as fond a memory as they were a treasured
possession during the years of
our close association in
mutual interests.*

R.M.L.

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INTRODUCTION

THIS WORK DOES not attempt a system of mystical philosophy. It does endeavor, however, to put emphasis upon those principles which are necessary to true mysticism. All of the traditional, mystical philosophies have certain common objectives. It is, therefore, these ends which we can say constitute true mysticism. In the study of such systems we find certain principles which persist, and are, in fact, the skeletal structure of the whole thought. Their continuity, or order of progression is not always the same, nor is the manner of their presentation. The systems deviate from each other principally by the interspersion of opposing dogma.

I venture the opinion that the chaff of mysticism is this dogma. It is often the result of some ardent exponent of mystical philosophy having tried to *enlarge* upon the basic and slowly evolved mystical truths. Since an air of reverence has settled as a mantle upon some of the older mystical philosophies, it has often been considered a sacrilege to amputate the offending dogma. It remains not only to plague the student with confusion and to try his patience, but also to place mysticism in an unfavorable public light.

Much of the adverse criticism that mysticism has received, especially in modern times, has been inspired by religious sectarianism. The weaknesses of human nature—envy, jealousy, and hatred—are reflected in even what purports to be noble human endeavor, such as the promulgation of religion. Therefore, misguided religious zealots have believed it their duty to attack and stamp out any thought deviating from their own. Mysticism has long been their target. It will continue to be no matter how pristine its perceptions.

There are, however, those who do not harbor prejudices against mysticism, who are, in fact, searching for what it offers. Yet, they are

discouraged by the chaff in many of the mystical systems. If one whose consciousness is ready to embrace mysticism can be made by this work to recognize true mystical precepts from chaff, then this book will have accomplished its purpose.

The author is not so presumptuous as to imply that what is contained herein constitutes all the basic mystical conceptions. As an officer of the Rosicrucian Order, A.M.O.R.C., the author has been in direct contact for over two decades with thousands of students of mysticism throughout the world. In his opinion, the success that students have had, or their lack of it, has often depended upon the degree of their understanding of the mystical precepts presented in these pages. It is for this reason alone that these precepts were selected.

It will be noted that some chapters are devoted to subjects which have no mystical content. To reach any objective, knowing *what not to do* is often as important as *what to do*. Therefore, the pitfalls of mysticism are likewise delineated. To effect this purpose, the book is divided into four parts.

Part One concerns the *Mysteries*. By “Mysteries,” we mean those vital experiences of life which, upon first contact, seem inexplicable. The fact that they so forcefully move us and appear so mystifying often results in one of two courses of action. Either the individual tries to escape such realities and thereby disassociates himself from the realm of normal living, or he counters them with superstitions—beliefs which make him a slave to fears. The first part of this book, then, is one of orientation; it is an honest gaze into the mirror of life which reflects ourselves and our relationship to existence.

Part Two could be termed: the *Technique*. It consists, as related, of those principal practices by which the mystical state could be attained. Part Three is the negative aspect; it contains an admonishment as to what not to do, and what not to think. As every diligent student knows, the boundaries of mysticism, occultism, hermeticism, and metaphysics have frequently been allowed to overlap. It is only when a student has gone quite far in one direction that he sometimes discovers that he should have turned to the right or to the left long before, for that which he really seeks.

Part Three undertakes to define the boundaries between these various subjects. It also attempts to outline the obstacles, the pitfalls that the student may expect to encounter. We spoke of chaff amidst the kernels of mystical truth. This part of the book refers to the harmful qualities of this chaff and how they may be combated. Part Four endeavors to evaluate the mystical life by enumerating what the successful aspirant will acquire as the result of his labors. It does not merely hold them up as ends, but attempts a definition of what is almost beyond description. Those who attain these ends may not agree with the positive content the author has assigned to them, for, after all, they are a personal experience. However, I believe that the reader will concur with the author in what these ends of mysticism should not consist.

The definitions have been offered to prevent the mystical aspirant from disillusioning himself by falsely imagining such attainment as would cause him to discontinue further progress. Too many students have abandoned mystical pursuits only because that which they thought was the genuine gem of attainment had eventually lost its luster. The true must be distinguished from the false. The real mystical state is always realized as such. However, if the false is not known in advance for what it is, it may arrest the expansion of consciousness until its inimical quality is realized.

Ralph M. Lewis

May 1, 1947

PART ONE

The Mysteries

Chapter I

THE MYSTICAL LIFE

IN THE MACHINE world, efficiency is said to consist of the co-ordination of all of the parts of a machine for some effectual purpose. An efficient complex machine consisting of gears, shafts, pistons, and driving wheels must have each of these parts not only operate or be in motion, but they must also function for the purpose for which the machine was created. The efficiency of the machine consists in each part contributing to the whole, doing something for which the machine was brought into existence; otherwise, if the machine merely runs, if it merely operates and accomplishes nothing, it is a waste of the energy of the mind of the designer and of all of the minds that have contributed to its construction. It is also a waste of the valuable material of which the machine is composed.

Now if such is true in the machine world, it is more so in our individual lives. In living, then, efficiency consists of the application of our lives to some Cosmic purpose to justify our existence. Presuming that each one of us is a machine, it is not sufficient that we be healthy machines or that organically our function is correct, or that we have and maintain plenty of energy and vitality (or pep, as it is commonly called), but that all of these things be used for a mission, for an end which we were individually created to serve.

Consequently, an aspect of living, and one which is overlooked by most persons, is the mystical life. The mystical life provides the reason *why* we live. The mystical life determines the cause of our individual lives and the use to which we should put our bodies and our animal vitality and magnetism. The mystical life, like the physical life, requires certain preparation. If we must study the rules of diet, if we must

study hygiene, if we must know the rudiments of good health to be healthy and physically normal, certainly we should give some thought and consideration to the mystical side of our existence as well. We must also prepare for it in an intelligent manner.

Perhaps the first requisite in preparing for the mystical life is to discard all of the popular conceptions as to what a mystic should be. The mystic is not one who fits into an objective pattern. He cannot be “typed”; that is, he has no characteristic role like Santa Claus or Father Time. The mystic is one who adopts a particular attitude of mind. Like everyone who has a noble ideal, he doesn’t always have indications of it on his person.

The mystic is a man—that is, he is of the species *Homo sapiens*—like the rest of us. Consequently he is very much a mortal, subject at times to all of the foibles and temptations of a human. He naturally has all of the physical variations to be seen in any passing throng of people. Further, the mystical life has no racial roots. Asiatic blood can bring forth no greater mystics than can the blood which flows through the veins of an Occidental. It is likewise an illusion to think that geographical location stimulates the mystical attitude of mind. There is no especial atmosphere in Tibet, Egypt, China, or India, which imbues all who merely reside in it, with mystical attributes. Like gold, the elements of mysticism are wherever you find them—that is, wherever you come to experience them.

It is well to add that the attributes of mysticism are not necessarily inherited. The fundamental qualities are latent within every individual—in some persons they might produce an orthodox religionist, actually unsympathetic toward the doctrines of mysticism. The rather unique comprehension of life, which a mystic is said to have, is not a Cosmic endowment.

Simply put, the mystical attitude of mind which is displayed is not a divine conception. The mystic is one who is *evolved*; he must use the faculties which he has, and awaken the latent qualities and direct them in that channel which constitutes the mystical attitude of mind. The mystical approach to life is not a mysterious mantle that descends upon an individual and sets him off, by intention, from other men.

In an intentional approach to the mystical life, therefore, it is first necessary to rid our minds of all prepossessions and predispositions, of the opinions we have formed, the conclusions we have arrived at arbitrarily, and especially by way of hearsay. We must mentally disrobe, remove the cloak of custom which we unconsciously had wrapped about ourselves more firmly each year. We must free our minds of all such encumbrances and be prepared to accept only those things which, as the famous philosopher *Descartes* said, arouse within us an intuitive acceptance of them, a feeling that they are true and constitute real knowledge.

Francis Bacon, eminent philosopher and, we might say, father of our present method of science, adopted this method in arriving at scientific facts. He stated that man should rid his mind of its *idols*, of the things which we have wrongly built up in our minds out of fancy, out of suppositions, the idols of tradition, the things which we accept because they have been handed down, or because they have merely the authority of age to support them. We must approach life as though stepping from a dark chamber into a lighted one for the first time, without any anticipation or expectation as to what we are to see or hear, and then subject each experience to our own analysis, not colored with the analyses of others. The person who really wishes to approach the mystical life in a frank manner, with the hope of then being able to govern himself properly, must not be a coward. He must not fear public opinion. He must not hesitate to oppose or challenge tradition.

Have you ever stopped to realize what the real value or worth of tradition is? when it is a benefit to man and when it is a hindrance? Traditions are like rungs of a ladder. They represent the elevation of man. They are intended to prevent him from slipping backward, but they are *not* intended to hold man back. Whenever a tradition holds you fast, so that you cannot raise yourself to the next rung, it then becomes a hindrance. We should look upon traditions as signs of encouragement; we should find in them a satisfaction because of the advancement that man has made. We should take from tradition the best that it has to offer, and build upon it. It is necessary, therefore, that each of us take the traditions of the day and subject them to a personal examination to see, so far as we are concerned, why it is

necessary that they should be abided by. If we can improve on the traditions, we should do so. If we cannot, we must not relinquish them unless they prove to be of no further value.

Humans are possessed of reason, a faculty found also in lower animals besides man, and we must employ that reason. We must not be like children and accept conditions and circumstances merely on faith alone; we must weigh them. The man or woman who does not employ this power of reason, has not advanced beyond the child of ten. In fact, it is safe to say that such persons have not advanced much beyond a chimpanzee, which instinctively reacts to its environment as a small child will, not knowing why it does so, or without even being concerned with the reason.

In our considerations of the mystical life we must begin with man, simply because there is nothing more intimate, nothing to which you are more closely related, nothing that you can feel so strongly or analyze so carefully, as yourself. Why begin with an analysis or an examination of the universe around you? with the planets overhead, or the other cosmic bodies, or the universal laws, or with reality generally? All things outside yourself are measured, after all, in terms of their value or relationship to you. The things you see, hear, feel, taste, and smell *may* have existence outside yourself, but the form in which they are realized and the manner in which you react to them depend on your interpretation of them and your sense qualities. Therefore, since you measure by yourself these things that are outside yourself, it is best that you start with yourself.

In beginning with man, you must realize that man alone is not Divine. It is in one sense unfortunate that almost all religions and philosophies have built up the impression of the Divine nature of man so strongly that in the minds of many people today, all things apart from what they term *the soul of man*, are declared vulgar, as hardly worth the consideration of thought, except as we need them for our existence. But such a concept is an injustice to the Infinite Intelligence who conceived all. In the first place, it must be reasoned and realized that the multitude of things which exist apart from what is stated to be man's soul, are not of man's creation, and are not the

result of effort of his mind. Consequently, they must necessarily be from that same Source, that same Infinite Source from which all things come. Therefore, everything of which we have cognizance is by that reasoning of a *Divine* Source.

It is also unfortunate that some persons refer to the acts of animals and of some types of beings, human beings, as ungodly. In each thing which has existence there is instilled its function, and, while it has that particular type of existence in its process of development, that function is natural to it and is not ungodly. Can we damn or condemn a barbaric people to oblivion because they conduct themselves and their lives in a manner which is in accordance with the intelligence which is theirs? Are they to be considered as any less Divine in nature because they have not the ability to distinguish between the right and wrong which we have conceived by virtue of a greater intelligence and a more advanced state? Would we like to think of ourselves as being considered profane, vulgar, and ungodly by a civilization of a thousand years hence, because our acts today will fall short of their attainments? Would not our plea be that we acted in accordance with the best of which our nature was composed and of what constituted our inner intelligence? No being is ungodly unless it can be shown that he has the ability to ascertain the difference between right and wrong and *then* acts wrongly. Therefore, each class of people today, each race of people, must be measured by its state of advancement and found guilty by that measurement alone.

One of the Neoplatonic philosophers, the mystic philosophers before the Renaissance of the Middle Ages, declared that man has been given will only so that he may choose the right course of action, so that he may follow what he understands to be right and to be good. Man is found to be guilty only when he directs that will in opposition to his understanding of what is good and what is wrong. So, when we approach the mystical life and begin with man, we look upon all things as Divine, because they emanate from the same source, and no being is ungodly unless we are in a position to point out that he has directed his will in opposition to what he knows is best and proper.

According to Islamic mysticism, or the mysticism of the Mohammedans—which, incidentally, is a highly organized and inspiring system of instruction—there are three stages of the mystical life. Certain aspects are veiled in the beginning and in the middle. In the beginning period, external things, the things of the world, and temporal interests so occupy the consciousness, according to Islamic mysticism, that the inner sense, or God, is veiled from the consciousness. Man then has little concern for the spiritual values of the Divine impulses. Later, in the middle period of existence, a transition occurs. The world becomes veiled because man has a sudden awakening. He has realization of his spiritual nature, and he takes such a delight in it that he adjusts his whole thought and living in accordance with this newfound and newly realized experience. He is inclined to neglect practical living, the realities of his everyday world, and so the veil again comes before his consciousness. This middle period of the mystical life is called by the Islamic mystics the period of *intoxication*. It is a period of spiritual ecstasies, an afflatus, when the consciousness takes wing and transcends all worldly interests, sometimes to the detriment of its welfare.

In the final stage of the mystical life, however, the created things, the things of the world, no longer veil God from the consciousness of the mystic. He is quite aware of the nature of God, but also his realization of God no longer veils his consciousness of worldly things. God is seen as the creator, and the universe as created things. In other words, in the final stage of the mystic's life a *balance* is struck and man has an equal appreciation of the law and the manifestation of the law. This final stage of the mystical life is appropriately called *sobriety*, by Islamic mystics. It is the soberness of understanding, the temperance of understanding. It is neither the extreme objective consciousness nor the extreme of Divine Consciousness.

Traditional mysticism may be reduced to these fundamental principles: the soul is the spiritual self of man; the soul is part of a universal soul, a soul which permeates the entire universe. That soul is God. The material world and the physical body are the negative side of this positive, absolute soul, or God, which permeates the universe—a sort of imperfection, a falling off from the goodness; and when the

soul is embodied in a physical form or body, man as a unity of both soul and body is not perfect. The body, the material, must be brought into harmony with the soul, the immaterial. Man will be confined to a body, in various lives, as long as he permits the temptations, the desires and appetites to dominate his nature. He must struggle to overcome them, to suppress them, to give himself over entirely to those spiritual urges within his own nature; these urges are the dictates of conscience which finds its expression in ethical, moral, and religious conduct.

Modern mysticism which is based upon these old fundamental principles does not state that the material body and the physical, mundane world are without foundation or existence, that they are nonentities, non-beings or evil. It does state that they are unreliable and that we cannot perceive their true nature. They constantly change, as do the senses of man, and may not be tomorrow as we perceive them today. Therefore, no credence should be given to their manifestations. Modern mysticism recognizes them, however, as part of the universal plan but imperfect—that is, less comprehensive in contrast to the mind or the intelligence of God, the Absolute.

A study and an examination into this material, mundane world is advocated, so that man may try within his limited power to regulate it, to prevent it from controlling or dominating him. Mysticism advocates intensive study and learning, so that man may know the relationship of this mundane, material, imperfect phase to the perfect absolute, or God. Thus, modern mysticism declares that there is a duality of the universe in effect, but that in essence it is *one*. All things are of that one, although there are stages of its perfection. The material world and its manifestations are not considered as perfect as the spiritual world, yet they are of it. The duality enters into the conception by declaring, on the one hand, that the soul, a part of the absolute whole, is good, and that all else in contrast, even though of it, is by graduated degrees less perfect.

It behooves the individual, therefore, who declares himself to be a student of modern mysticism and an aspirant to the mystical life, to make a very thorough study of such terms and subjects as: the

absolute, spiritual, being, material realm, free agency, and the scientific attitude of mind. These *fundamentals* and a few more like them are the foundation stones of his philosophy if he purports to be a mystical philosopher. He who has a thorough knowledge of these fundamentals will not find it difficult to assemble and reassemble them into a system that will help him to reach his goal in a rational manner. That goal we presume to be that *inner satisfaction* and attunement which the real mystics declared constituted “a sense of God.”

Chapter II

THE GOD CONCEPT

A BASIC DOCTRINE of theology is the sameness of divinity in all men. If all men could appreciate, be conscious of this essence alike, and alike rationally define its nature and function, there would be a unification of all religion. Alas, this is not so! Therefore we have religions, and each religion has its God. Each has its prophets who profess to be divinely inspired and who bequeath to their followers an ideal of God obtained through direct communion. The ideals clash. Religionists oppose and denounce the ideals of each other.

Is God an imperfect factor? Is He moving forward toward an eventual attainment and final excellence? Such an hypothesis would not be approved by modern theology, nor even be consistent with the religious conception of a barbarian people. It would detract from acknowledging His supremacy and His omnipotence. A review, however, of the history of religion and an examination of the doctrines of today's sects reveal a startling similarity to such an hypothesis because of the discrepancy in the definitions of the nature of God.

We find that the splendor attributed to God by present-day theology surpasses in many respects that of the past ages. Further, we find that His accomplishments of today are manifold in comparison to those ascribed to Him in other eras. Once He possessed a multiplicity of forms, but man now has Him as a single entity, and even as an impersonal intelligence pervading all. It is, however, declared fervently by modern creeds and sects that nevertheless, the God of yesterday, today, and of tomorrow is the same. They declare He is the only unchangeable factor in a universe of change. If He be unchangeable,

perfect, and excellence supreme, how can the religionists reconcile that with the obvious difference of nature ascribed to Him by all who recognize Him? Obviously, all conceptions cannot be right. Some must be erroneous.

If one group of human minds cannot interpret the Divine impulse in their own nature correctly, then all men can possibly likewise err. In defense of the religionists it can be said that some perceive more nearly the Divine in their nature than others, and their realization participates more closely in the Divine reality. But who are they? What criterion is there to ascertain the accuracy of man's perception of God? Sincerity of purpose is not sufficient to judge the accuracy of one's conception of God. Man, in his sincere endeavors to persuade his fellow man that he or his sect alone has envisaged God and is the medium for His word, resorts to the strangest fanatical practices—practices which in themselves detract from the sublimity of God, the sublimity one *feels* rather than knows. Which is of the greater value to man, the ideal of God that he must endeavor to approach, or the expression of that ideal in a form composed of words?

Most often man's spiritual ideal, like the moral code which he graciously accepts, is an inheritance. His father's God and his father's father's God becomes the blessed guardian of the virtues of a higher life. Much of the intolerance and bigotry that may encompass his parents' faith, he alike accepts. He resents the questioning of any of the doctrines of his faith, or his interpretation of the God he has accepted. It is not because he has come to *know* that God and through such infinite contact has experienced what he previously only believed, but merely because it affects his pride, his human ego, to have his judgment or the judgment of his kinsmen challenged.

Man, then, seems to become a smug member of religionism. Unquestionably, one might say, he has accepted a prescribed faith, one that has been prepared for him. He accepts a God not as he has come to *know* Him, but rather as He has been prepared for his acceptance by someone else. He is content to feel satisfied and assured in his righteous selection of his faith, even when his neighbor may differ from him on every doctrine of religious belief. His neighbor may be an

adherent of a faith as recognized and as established as his own, but as different as daylight from darkness. The incongruity troubles him not at all. The insistent claimants of the different faiths do not disturb him, nor cause him to realize that there can be but ONE GOD and not the varied Gods of the multi-religions.

God, to such an individual, is not a personal experience, but rather a magnificent picture or ideal that has been transplanted into his consciousness. It has not been born from a personal germ of thought, a spiritual perception, or from aspiration. God, to such an individual, is not a guide or Infinite Master whom one may call a companion, but just a stabilizing force. The God concept is merely a means of keeping him walking the straight path of society. He can change it as often as he wishes. As long as it serves his purpose he is content to go to his grave with no further intimate contact with this God, which he has taken to himself.

I say *taken to himself*, because certainly he has not developed this God from within. To such men or women, no praise should go for merely that homage which they periodically pay by participation in numerous rites and the support of exoteric ritual, for such action is not prompted primarily by spirituality. The absolute lack, in the majority of instances, of a *knowledge* of their God and the methodical manner of their devotion is indicative of an inherent fear rather than something born of inspiration. Their God has become to them a champion of a great ethical and moral code. They accept him because he is an integral part of their faith. The only impelling urge associated with their God is a fear of his Omnipotence, which they do not understand. Alas, they see no need for even an understanding. They merely follow the theology of their faith with its dogma and creed. It is difficult for those who have merely so acquired God to see the necessity for Him. They live their daily lives so completely devoid of any real comprehension of His multi-works and His all-pervading intelligence that they know naught of their true relation to Him, yet they fear Him.

Man can never know God from without, no matter how alluring and magnificent may be the description given him, if he lacks within himself a responsivity to a spiritual urge. Man cannot accept the God

defined by another if the description does not invoke within him a sympathetic appreciation. The eyes of an artist and of a physicist may view the same dawn, but the idea engendered in the consciousness of each is different. One appreciates the mechanics of what he sees, the physical law accounting for the phenomena; and the other, the artist, feels the harmony of the color, its balance, its proportion, and the exhilaration of true beauty which actuates the sensitivity of his soul. Each could comprehend the idea of what the other perceives, but neither would have the same *emotional* feeling toward that idea as he would for his own.

To every man who is a theist, God is the *Summum Bonum*, and he instinctively endeavors to pattern his life in accordance with this Divine good he sees in life and in human conduct. This is religion's greatest duty—the defining of what constitutes the good in human action and in all things perceived by man. Because of this, religion could easily be unified; but when it attempts to limit God to form, to describe His nature, confusion arises, and thereby also come into being those who are said to be atheists.

Religion has called the *first cause* God, or the equivalent in all languages. However, it is the varying characteristics which religion has attributed to God at different times, as we have stated, which have brought about the confusion as to His nature.

Let us assume that religion is right, and that God is the first cause; then do the things that follow from the cause do so by intent or by necessity? If the cause is intentional or purposeful, it must be of the *mind*. The only comparison we have for conscious causes is ourselves. If God is an intentional cause or mind, He would have of necessity certain characteristics similar to those of the human mind. He would have the faculty of perception, and thereby would perceive the present existence. Further, He would have to imagine an insufficiency that was to be overcome, or a perfection needed. Thus, this first cause, if intentional, would set for itself certain ends to be attained, just as does the human mind.

The religionists who reason thus have engendered for themselves certain ontological problems. They are in effect saying, "God is the

primary substance in which all things are said to have their existence, and yet such things are also said to be the fulfillment of His purpose.” It would appear, then, that at some time the things of His intent were not of His substance. Obviously something which already *is* would have no need to become. Did God realize that His being was incomplete or imperfect, and that He would need to conceive a plan and become purposeful to overcome such conditions? To accept such reasoning would mean that the Divine purposes or ends which God sought were more complete at one time than His own being. Further, if God had conceived the lack of something, from whence would it come if it were not already in the substance of God Himself? To answer this by saying that God evolved the ends He realized from His own nature is equivalent to saying that God was imperfect and has been evolving toward perfection. When religion offers such reasoning, what assurances have mortals that God is still not merely evolving toward perfection, and that therefore the Divine is now *imperfect*?

To meet these ontological problems, religion developed a dualism. God is one aspect of this dualism. He is absolute, perfect, and complete in Himself. Since He is conceived as a mind, He is also all-wise. The other aspect is the world, namely, all being other than God. God, as mind, acts upon this mass. He evolves and creates in it that which serves His own will. By this ratiocination, religion has not solved the problems it faced; rather it has created another tremendous breach in its arguments. “God has created being,” religion says. Thus God has created something less perfect than Himself; for though this being must be of God, yet religion will not admit that matter and the things of which our existence consists are Divine substances.

The mystic cannot accept a personal God. He cannot conceive of the Deity as being of either sex, nor as having a form which is comprehensible to man, in that it is equal to anything of which man has knowledge. To the mystic, for God to be anthropomorphic—that is, to be of the image of man—is to imply that the human, finite mind is equal to an all-inclusive realization of the nature of God. Since it is so very apparent that man is ignorant of many of the ways of his own being, for him to assume to have complete knowledge of the extent of God is to the mystic an impious thought.

Further, reasons the mystic, can God be confined by the limits, the forms which man's mind is able to conceive? To the mystic, the universe and all that exists must be explained either as a capricious, mechanistic phenomenon, with order as a notion of man's mind, or as an Infinite Intelligence, such as a moving cause, with its lesser dependent causes, which accounts for all things. As the mystic is not an agnostic, he accepts the principle of an intelligent cause, of a Divine Mind, as the primary motivating universal force. How does he overcome the difficulties that the Religionist has in explaining the relationship between a mind cause and the physical world?

If God is Mind, and therefore causative, how is matter to be explained? If Divine Mind created the gross substances which men perceive and have named *matter*, from what did this Mind create them? Since, to the mystic, the Divine Mind is All-Being, limitless, all-inclusive, there could have been no other substance from which it could create physical properties, matter—and even souls. To the mystic, a belief that the physical world, material substance, was generated out of a state of nothing is inconsistent with the nature of God. Since God is everything to the mystic, there could not be any condition or negative state of nothing which would exist concomitantly with or beyond Him. If something can be created out of nothing, then nothing is *something*. If anything else existed, then that would limit the nature of God, for at least God would not be that thing. The phenomena which men recognize as matter, and which science demonstrates as having existence, must therefore have come from the nature of God, this Divine Mind. If it came from God, it never was really created, for it always would have been. If this Divine Mind constitutes all of the realities in the universe, *All-Being*, in other words, it must always have been. There could not have been any beginning for the Divine Mind, for whence would it have come? Since the Divine Mind is eternal, then that which is of its nature, or the substances which flow from it—physical realities, for example—are likewise eternal.

To the mystic, then, the Divine Mind did not create the earth, the worlds beyond, and all of the material particulars of which we have knowledge. Their essence, the radiations and energies of which they

are composed, are of the nature of this Divine Intelligence and have always been. They change, yes, just as mind itself is ever active in the changing of consciousness. The true mystic, then, is very definitely a *pantheist*; namely, to him God is in everything, everywhere. To the mystic, the stone, the tree, the bolt of lightning, as well as man himself, are of God. These things are not creations of God, they are of the nature of God—the Divine Mind. To the mystic, this simplifies one of the greatest theological and philosophical problems of the centuries—that of trying to reconcile the spiritual with the temporal. Since all things are of the Divine Mind, there is not the difficulty of trying to show a relationship between two conditions which are ordinarily conceived as diametrically opposed. As an analogy, darkness is not a positive state, such as is light, it is only a lesser manifestation of light.

Does this mean that the mystic has the same adoration for a tree and a mountain, for example, as the orthodox religionist would have for his God? The mystic replies to this query by asking, “And where is God?” Since God or the Divine Mind, to the mystic, is ubiquitous, pervades everything and is everywhere, God, then, exists to him in all things of which he is conscious. Each thing which manifests does so by virtue of the intelligence of God, which intelligence constitutes the properties of the thing that man perceives. The mystic does not see God remote in a legendary region, or within the confines of a temple or a cathedral or off in a corner of the universe, but rather in each breath which he takes into his lungs, in each sunset, and each leafy bower.

There is this distinction—each particular which the mystic perceives is not all of the Divine Mind, but rather just one of an infinite variety of its expressions. Consequently, the mystic is not that land of pantheist who is a nature worshiper. Since to the mystic the Divine Mind pervades all, no one thing depicts all of the Divine nature. Just as the personality and abilities of a great man cannot be known by any single one of his accomplishments, even so the Divine Mind cannot be conceived by a study of any one of its myriad phenomena. Since the Divine Mind is *all-inclusive*, the mystic realizes that his devotion must also be all-embracing. Each thing of nature which man discovers, the mystic reveres as one member, one finite part of the infinite Divine

Being. He, therefore, devotes his spiritual love to no one thing or substance. Conversely, nothing, no matter how mean its effects upon his well-being, is to be considered entirely outside the bounds of the Divine Being.

God to the mystics of old was thought to be unknown for two reasons. First, the intelligence of man was so inferior that it was not possible for him to comprehend God in His entirety or to really know God in any sense of the word. Thus, the mystic contended that man should not attempt to use the brain which was of the mortal body to reason as to the nature of God or try to define Him and state what He is or what He is not, because that would presume that man's *consciousness* is capable of embracing the idea of God. Second, it was contended that man must transcend, even rise above, the use of the intellect because the intellect is of the body; that if man even presumes to say that there is a God, he implies that intellectually he has some knowledge of the existence of Him.

The mystic stated that man must give up entirely any attempt to know God through the reason or the intellect. But he must enter into a state of contemplation and meditation where he will free his mind of any conception as to whether God is or is not, and permit himself to be absorbed into the absolute; that is, into the very nature of God. When he is absorbed into the nature of God, he will have a feeling of serenity and peace, and that alone is the only divine reality by which he will come to feel God and will approach Him. When we say that man must enter a state of contemplation and permit the self to be absorbed, we are confronted with the problem of this self. What is self? What is its connection with soul? This we must now consider.

Chapter III

SELF AND SOUL

NOTWITHSTANDING THE MULTITUDE of phenomena that humans experience, they can, for our purposes, be classified into two general divisions: physical and nonphysical.

The first classification consists of those realities, objects, and events, which man can perceive by means of his sense receptor faculties, namely, his eyes, ears, et cetera. Obviously such realities, so far as our consciousness of them is concerned, have a dependence upon our physical organism, as our nervous system and brain.

The second classification consists of those perceptions or experiences which are the result of consciousness of self. These are quite distinct from physical experiences. You do not exist to yourself just because you see your body or can touch your limbs. In fact, if you were deprived of all of your physical receptor faculties, you would still have a realization of yourself. It is commonly said that we feel self, but such is a verisimilitude. The fact is that the sensations of self are not like those we derive from the touch of an object. To self there are no sensations of hot, cold, hard, or soft, nor are there sensations of pain or pleasure. You realize that you are you, quite aside from such experiences. This consciousness of self, then, is a consciousness of our consciousness.

The human is impregnated with a mysterious vital life force. We conceive that intelligence is an attribute of this life force, or that it is at least integrated with its functioning. Patently, then, this indwelling intelligence also exists in the cerebral neurons, or brain cells, wherein it provides a *sensitivity* to those impulses which come to us through

our sense organs from the world outside ourselves. In the brain, in other words, this life force and intelligence makes possible our physical experiences, amounting to our objective consciousness. In addition, the highly sensitized organ of brain can and does become conscious of the sensitivity of this vital life force and intelligence existing throughout the whole being of man. The origin of these latter sensations, it is apparent, is entirely immanent. They are in no way related to the sense organs and the outside world. The function is similar to an extremely delicate instrument made to detect exterior motions, but which is likewise, because of its sensitivity, able to discern the fine movement of its *own* mechanism.

The consciousness has thresholds. By thresholds, we mean the points at which certain effects or sensations begin to occur in the brain. The thresholds for the impulses of sound and sight, for example, are considerably lower than those of the vague impressions of self. Consequently, it is comparatively easy to lose a realization of self, if the grosser impulses of the sense organs dominate the consciousness of the brain. In other words, if the consciousness is exposed to a bombardment of sounds and an excitation of visual impressions, we know from our own experience that we lose momentarily a realization of self in these physical perceptions of the objective consciousness. Only when the thresholds of the receptor senses are partially blocked or *suppressed*, do we become fully aware of those more subtle impressions which reach the higher thresholds of the brain consciousness, and which we experience as self.

It is quite cogent that without a highly developed organ, such as the human brain, self would not exist to each of us. This does not mean to convey the idea that brain is the cause of self, nor that self is dependent upon that organ. Brain, however, is the channel by which we come to know self. It is the instrument by which our varied impulses are integrated into that notion, that state of consciousness which we define as self. For analogy, a large telescope is not the cause or creator of a nebula millions of light-years distant. It is, however, the means by which we come to discern the *existence* of the nebula.

It has been proved that when you remove the brain or completely inhibit its functioning, you have not destroyed the elements of self which pervade the human but merely the means by which we exist to ourselves. Without brain, the function of self in man would be much like the simple consciousness which exists in a blade of grass. The intelligence associated with the life force in each cell of our being would function, but there would be nothing in which it would be mirrored. As the brain reflects externalities and existences that are outside of us, it likewise reflects the world within, namely, *self*. The introversion of this consciousness of brain, its response to the inner sensitivity, is what is commonly referred to as its subconscious functioning.

To the mystic, consciousness, the state of awareness, is existence. To man, that which he is conscious of *is*. All the powers the human is capable of exerting, whether physical, mental, or psychical, can be related only to that of which he has knowledge, that which is *real* to him. For analogy, in target-shooting, if there is more than one target, a choice may be made as to which one to shoot at. If but one target can be perceived, that, then, becomes the object of the participant's efforts and whole attention. The mystic knows, however, that the realities of his consciousness are dual: those things, or particulars, which have an objective existence, as his body and the external world; and those realities of his consciousness that are inner perceptions, arising from deep within himself, as emotions, moods, inspirations. These latter may become an impetus which will cause him to have objective experiences, but their origin seems confined to the ethereal nature of his being. To the mystic, the only separation that exists is this duality of his consciousness, the inclination to make a distinction between the realities of self and those of the objective world. Actually, the mystic understands that all these realities are part of *one* great hierarchal order, a graduated scale. The gradation is according to the simplicity or complexity of their nature. The more complex the realities, the greater is their manifestation of the one universal intelligence—in other words, the more they represent the entire hierarchal or Cosmic order.

The activities of self, the realities of our inner being, are more complex in this sense than are those particulars of the material or everyday world which we experience. If, for analogy, the Cosmic order

or God, whichever you please, is the synthesis of everything, then that God obviously is complex—infinite in substance and in variety. If we become conscious of the complex, or the greater evolvments or manifestations of His nature, the closer is our intimacy with Him, the more of Him we experience.

Since the causes of the sensations of self are quite intangible, are not identified with substance, and cannot be actually localized in the human body, they have always been most mysterious to man. Further, we cannot commonly experience sensations independently of the body. The body, however, at death continues as a substance for an indeterminate time before disintegration, and apparently without these elements of self. Early observers were thus led to believe in the duality of man's nature. The body fell within the same category as all other reality that may be physically experienced as a matter. How then were the intangible elements of our being to be identified? The conclusion was that they must transcend the world, because of their inability to be experienced as of the world. These elements were held to be of Divine nature, because of their seeming infinity and immateriality. The *soul*, therefore, became the repository for all of these indeterminate qualities of man, the ancient Greek word for soul being *psyche*.

This idea of soul gave expression to the spiritual life of man. When he considered the soul's subtle influences, its strange effect upon him as his better nature, his spiritual life changed accordingly. He tried to live in harmony with the feelings of the soul and with his comprehension of what he thought it was.

How far back we may trace the idea of soul it is impossible to determine. It should suffice to say that archaeology today has traced this concept back for thousands of years. We find the soul described in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics and in cuneiform writing. We find references to it on obelisks in the Nile Valley and on clay tablets along the Euphrates, on stone monuments high in the mountains, on ruins of ancient buildings, in the wild jungles of the tropics, and on majestic totem poles in the frozen North.

Exactly how man first came to realize or became conscious of soul is, of course, a mystery which may never be solved. Still another theory offers us a very plausible explanation; it is one that has endured for several decades. This psychological theory for the origin of the concept of soul is that it arose in the human mind when there came about a disparity between the *feeling* "I" and the external "I." This means that a difference arose between the inner "I" of the ego—the "I" of the inner self—and the external or objective "I," the "I" that represents the physical or outer man.

The Babylonians were very vague in their description of the soul. What we have been able to discern, from the decipherings of their ancient writings, is that they conceived of man as a dual being, possessed of a physical, mortal body, and also of an impalpable self. This impalpable self was not exactly an ethereal being, or an energy, or merely an influence; it was an actual substance, just like the physical body, except that it was of finer composition, ground finer, if we may use that term.

It is believed that Babylonians and the Assyrians imagined the soul to be something like whirling dust particles. At death, the soul was separated from the body, and the soul departed to the underworld, to dwell there with other souls. It seems that the soul, according to the Babylonian concept, was constantly desirous of returning again to the living state, because this was considered by the Babylonians as man's proper and normal way of existence. And the Babylonians constantly feared a congregation of these departed souls conspiring against the living. Eventually, if the living did not take the proper precautions, they would be dominated by the dead; however, the departed souls could be partially appeased if they were fed and given water. We find this Babylonian custom described not only in their writings but also in scenes found upon the walls of their temples. There are views of the sprinkling of water upon the graves of the departed and of the placing beside them of choice foods.

After a lapse of about two thousand years, we find a tremendous step forward in the concepts of soul, of God, and of the future life of the soul. During the Feudal Age and the Empire Age of Egypt, from

about 1500 to 1300 B.C., we find the Egyptians definitely recognizing and believing in *immortality* as well as that the soul returns again to the body. We find the Egyptians hewing and chiseling passageways into solid rock cliffs, and enlarging them into chambers to comprise tombs. We find them carving and making elaborate sarcophagi, mummy cases or coffins, in which the body of the deceased was carefully laid and preserved. The art of embalming reached a high state, for the Egyptian desired to preserve the body so that the soul could again return and take possession of it. Deposited in the burial or sepulchral chamber were the worldly possessions of the departed, particularly his intimate personal belongings, his toilet articles, his favorite chair and weapons, his jewels, his papyrus scrolls or the chosen books of his library.

We should, most of us, be quite familiar with the Christian conception of soul. Naturally, the fundamental Christian idea is modified by the various interpretations of the different sects. Generally speaking, Christianity considers the soul as having a continuous conscious existence. The soul has, in other words, according to the general Christian view, a self-awareness. The Christian recognizes the duality of man: the mortal physical body on one hand, and the soul—the spiritual life or being of man—on the other. It now declares that both are of God—incidentally, the early Christians did not teach this. Also, Christianity emphasizes that the soul is not absorbed into God, but retains its separate identity, and that it does not, as Hindu and Buddhist philosophies contend, become completely absorbed into the universal mind or essence of God.

Furthermore, Christianity does not recognize (now this may be a point of controversy, but the controversy merely arises out of the differences of interpretation) the perfection of the soul. The soul of man to the Christian is imperfect until it has been purified, until it goes through the process of salvation.

The Rosicrucian conception of soul is a truly *mystical* one. The Rosicrucian also begins with the recognition of the duality of man's nature—the physical earthly body composed of the dust of the earth, imbued with spirit energy, the same as are all animate and inanimate things. No distinction is made between the physical nature of man's

body, insofar as its basic properties are concerned, and that of any other physical substance. All are considered mundane. Then, this Rosicrucian conception recognizes the *soul* as a spiritual and *divine* essence resident within this body during the period of its earthly existence. The Rosicrucian also declares that the soul is unshapen; that is, that the soul has no definite, concrete form that is describable or comparable with anything of a material nature. He considers the soul as a sort of energy, just as a thought has no physical form, yet may give rise within the consciousness to the idea of form.

The Rosicrucian declares that the soul in man is not a separate entity, broken off, distinct from the soul of all other beings, but that it is part of the *universal* soul energy which flows through all humans equally and alike. The soul in the most degraded individual is just as pure and as divine as the soul in the highly illuminated and spiritual being. The apparent difference which exists is a matter of expression. It is a personal reaction to the soul force, just as the electrical energy which flows along an electrical circuit may in some light bulbs in that circuit give forth a blue light and in others a pure white light, but the quality of the electric current is the same in all instances.

The soul, therefore, in man is at all times *perfect*, and, consequently, it cannot be perfected. To declare that the soul can be perfected, the Rosicrucian contends, is to admit of its imperfection. The Rosicrucian argues that, since the soul emanates from a divine source and is the only divine essence in man, are we to declare that divinity is imperfect by stating that the soul should be perfected?

The soul manifests in each of us differently, because of the psychic development of the individual, that is, his ability to react, as stated before, to the spiritual force within him. It is the ego or personality of the individual which must be perfected. As we develop and perfect our ego and inner personality, we eventually come to appreciate, comprehend and realize the soul force within us. We correct our thinking, correct our ways of living, and permit the soul to express itself without hindrance. Thus we find some individuals more *illuminated* than others, more spiritual than others in manifestation, but in essence all are spiritually alike, declares the Rosicrucian.

In conclusion, we may liken the consciousness of man unto a pyramid. The point or apex of the pyramid represents the objective function of consciousness, with its reliance upon the limited five objective senses. What the apex of this pyramid can possibly accommodate is restricted by its limited area. On either side of the apex, we drop off into seemingly nothing, or to that which is beyond the perception of the objective sense faculties. However, as we descend the sides of the pyramid, it becomes more expansive. Finally reaching the base of the pyramid rooted in the earth, upon which it rests, we find that the earth, in contrast to the limited area of the apex, holds infinite manifestations. By this analogy we mean that if we introvert our consciousness, turn it *inward* to self, we are going from the apex of the pyramid of consciousness, from the limited, objective faculties and what they reveal to us, to the essence of our being, which is unlimited and acquaints us with the infinite of the universe. The base of the pyramid represents the consciousness of self, the link with *soul*. It is our attunement with this vast infinite intelligence which permits inspirations as impressions to come to us, to be interpreted by the brain consciousness as brilliant and revealing ideas. The more we devote ourselves to this base of the pyramid of consciousness—in other words, meditate upon and analyze self—the greater it becomes to us.

Chapter IV

LOVE AND DESIRE

LOVE IS PERHAPS the most perplexing to mankind of all his inner experiences, and yet it is one had by every individual to some extent. Love is not a product of the It is not an intellectual achievement, but an emotional, psychic one had by the self. Because it is such, love has been idealized by the poets and bards to such an extent that most persons believe that it is something to be left to a chance experience, or to be mysteriously attained without formula or method.

Loves are of various kinds. In Sufism, Mohammedan mysticism, God's love is said to be expressed in man's love of the Divine. It was God, according to Sufism, who made it possible for man to love the Divine; and so when man expresses Divine love, a love of God, God is really loving Himself. When man therefore denies himself mind. Divine love, he is restricting the nature of God, and Sufism, therefore, holds Divine love to be the most exalted.

Dhu Dum, Mohammedan mystic, asked what is pure love, love free from depletion; then he replied to his own question, for the enlightenment of his disciples. He said that it is love of God, because the love of God is so absorbing that no other love can compete with it or detract from it. He further said that this love of God, pure love, is a *disinterested* one. By that, he meant that it is not affected by benefits which may accrue from it. In other words, one who has this pure love will not love God any more, because of what may flow to him as a result of it, nor will he love God any less, because it will require him to make sacrifices to love his God.

Al-Ghazali, Mohammedan philosopher and mystic of the Tenth Century, taught the Islamic mystical doctrines in Baghdad. He distinguished admirably between three kinds of love. The first is self-love, and that is engendered by the instinct of self-preservation. Though many mystics and philosophers have execrated this self-love, he holds that it is very essential because at least we must love our existence sufficiently to want to be; for if we do not, we cannot experience any of the other loves.

The second is a love of others, because of the benefits which they bestow upon us. It is a natural love, and in a sense it is somewhat the same as the first or self-love, such as our love, for example, of the doctor because of his healing art, or our love of the teacher because of the instruction which he expounds.

The third and highest love, according to Al-Ghazali, is the love of a thing for its own sake, not for any benefits which may be derived from it. The thing itself is the essence of its enjoyment. It is liked for its own nature, just as the essence of beauty is the delight which we derive from it. He uses the analogy—the love of green things, the love of running water. These are not always loved only for the reason that green things may be eaten or that running water may provide drink, but they are also loved for the mere sight of them, for their own essence, for the beauty which exists within them.

Al-Ghazali concludes with, “Where beauty exists, it is natural to love.” If God is beautiful, most certainly He will be loved by all of those to whom He reveals Himself, and the more beautiful a thing, the more it is loved.

Plotinus, father of Neoplatonism, who contributed much to the world’s mystical doctrines, also declared that there are different loves; for example, the love of creation, as a craftsman’s love of his work, the love of a cabinetmaker for his work, or of a goldsmith for the fruits of his art, or of a student for his studies. The highest love, says Plotinus, is the Hierarchal love. It is the love of the *Universal* Soul within us for the Absolute, for the oneness of which it is always a part.

For the moment let us accept the previous esthetic and oriental, mystical viewpoint of love, namely, that it is an impelling urge of the spiritual nature of man to satisfy the purposes of the soul. Do we find in the compound nature of man any parallels to love? In other words, do we find any other urges to gratify the nature of man? The physical nature of man is one aspect of his generally accepted triune being. There are factors which are essential to it, such as food, drink, shelter, and sleep. If the physical nature of man is to perpetuate its kind, there is as well the factor of procreation. These things, then, are ends, shall we say, which the physical being must attain to remain what it is. When these things are possessed, a harmonium or a state of balance is temporarily enjoyed. When there is a deficiency of them, there is unbalance. The plenitude or fullness of man's physical nature is its normal state. This normalcy is accompanied by the sensation of gratification, a kind of pleasure which we know as happiness. When there is a deficiency, a lack of that upon which man's physical being depends, we become conscious of an irritability or of an in harmony. This in harmony engenders *desire*.

Fortunately, accompanying such physical desires are ideals, the realization of what is required to satisfy them. An animal realizes those things in its experiences—namely, what it sees and hears—which will satisfy its hunger or its thirst or its passions. Among the lower animals, this realization appears to be an unconscious response. The smell of food is subjectively associated with the desire for it, and the animal seizes its prey. In man, that which will satisfy physical desire is *consciously* realized. In other words, we know what we want as well as that we want it. Our desires are then not as general as are those of animals. They are more specific. We know of things or conditions which we are certain will remove or gratify our desires. That which we conceive of as beneficial to our needs is the good. Moreover, anything which is capable of producing pleasant sensations, those which harmonize with the nature of our physical being, becomes sought after. Such things or experiences become our ideals.

Thus each of our objective or receptor senses has an ideal or a quality which is sought after. We desire fragrance in smell because it is pleasing to us. We desire sweetness in taste, likewise because it is

pleasing. We desire certain harmony of sound because it is pleasing to the ear and to the nervous system. The things which represent these desired qualities are attractive to us. We say that which is symmetrical in form, or the colors of which are appealing to our sight, is beautiful. By beautiful we mean the things of a visual experience which are pleasurable to our sense of sight. Fragrance to the sense of smell is thus a kind of beauty, for it represents the ideal of harmony to that sense. Likewise, then, sweetness is a kind of beauty to the sense of taste. Beauty is just a name for that which is pleasurable to the sense of sight. Each sense has a corresponding quality or beauty which is desired. Anything which will bring pleasure or gratification to a sense is by another name beautiful to it.

Desire, then, is the urge to find the beautiful or its equivalent. It is the seeking out of that thing or condition which will satisfy that nature which the desire serves. No one has ever had a desire for that which was not beautiful, namely, for that which did not represent a pleasant experience to him in some form or another. If a desire was not for that which would appease man, he would remain unsatisfied, and physically man would become abnormal and accordingly suffer. Ever since man has speculated upon his own complex being, he has most frequently considered himself of three natures: first, physical; second, intellectual or mental; and third, spiritual. However, he has often united the first two as one. The three natures, therefore, constitute the hierarchy of the human being. All the three blend into each other, and yet they have distinctive characteristics. After all, if these three natures are in any way related, each in turn from the highest downward must need to exercise some influence on the other. They could not be absolutely separate. The lowest or physical then has its ideals as well as any of the others. The ideals of the physical are those which, as we have stated, the senses experience as pleasurable, and which satisfy the desires of the body. The body must *marry* its ideals. In other words, the body must be wedded to those things which are beautiful in the sense in which we have used beauty, to gratify the appetites and the passions. If it does not, the body becomes deformed and imperfect.

The desires of the body are thus the *loves* of the body. To practice self-abnegation, to suppress the loves of the body, is to corrupt one

of the natures of man's triune being. Such loves are essential to the physical. They assist it to be wedded to that ideal which will maintain the harmony of its essence.

Man must realize, however, that the end of life is not merely the satisfaction of the physical desires. To pursue these physical loves alone leaves unsatisfied the desires of the other natures. It keeps man continually in distress. As Spinoza has said: "Griefs and misfortunes have their chief source in an excessive love of that which is subject to many variations, and over which we can never have control. . . . nor do injustice, misfortune, enmity, et cetera, arise except from the love of things which no one can really control." In effect, this means that we should know the limits of the ideals of the physical. Love them only for what they are able to provide and to the extent that they serve the body and not continually to pursue them for themselves, for they cannot satisfy the whole nature of man.

There are also the intellectual loves, the desires of the mind. The mind, the active intelligence, as we know, can establish ends, can aspire to purposes. These aspirations are mental ideals. The mind seeks to bring them into reality, to objectify and to realize them, just as the sculptor brings forth a statue so that he can objectively experience the idea he has in mind. The intellectual love is far greater than the bodily one. Its ideals are far more numerous. Each such intellectual ideal, though it satisfies the intellectual love in part, impels the love to create still greater ones which bring increasing intellectual satisfaction. Whereas physical love, if indulged too frequently, may become satiated, intellectual loves ever increase the enjoyment they provide the mind of man. The ideals of the intellectual nature of man are *knowledge* and *accomplishment*. The intellect must become married to these ideals if it is to experience normalcy, regardless of what loves and gratifications man may have physically.

Next, we consider the highest nature of man—the spiritual—interpreting that nature in whatever way we wish. Must we think of the spiritual love as being, in essence, extremely different from other loves, only because it seems more impersonal, that is, because it serves a greater self? Is not the love of man for God, for the Divine, likewise

a desire—a desire having a higher or more exalted end? It is a desire which is intended to keep the spiritual nature of man gratified. Plotinus, the great Neoplatonic philosopher and expounder of mysticism, said: “Love leads all things to the nature of the beautiful.”

Different loves belong to the different grades in the hierarchy of human existence. Spiritual love is the activity of the soul desiring the good, one mystic has said; namely, spiritual love is the soul’s desire for what is pleasurable to its exalted sense. “Divine love contemplates Divine beauty,” is the adage of a Sufi mystic. It may be interpreted as meaning that the highest desire of man, or spiritual love, is the inner urge to experience Cosmic harmony, or the Divine beauty of nature. Such ecstasy satisfies the soul, just as somatic loves bring pleasure to the body.

No one love of which man is capable is therefore unworthy, or to be suppressed. Each love— those of the body, the mind, and of the soul— must be wedded to its respective nature. Such is mystically the *marriage* of the trinity or the marriages of man’s triune nature. Each marriage is within its own caste or class. Difficulty is experienced only when one nature loves the ideal of another. When a man dissipates his spiritual or intellectual loves, neglects them for those of the body, the result is degeneration and unhappiness. Spinoza has said: “The love of God should be a love of the immutable and eternal. . . not stained by any defect inherent in common love . . . this love of God for the unchangeable and eternal takes possession of our mind without arousing emotions of fear, anxiety, hate, et cetera.” In other words, a love of God is a love of that which never ends, which has no diminishing nature. It is the love of something that cannot be stolen and of which no one can be envious, so it is a love that is free of the emotions that accompany the loves of the body. “This intellectual love of the mind toward God is the very love of God with which God loves himself. . . . This intellectual love of the mind toward God is a part of the infinite love with which God loves himself.” In this, we see that God’s love is manifested in man’s soul, as man’s desire to love God, to understand Him, and to be absorbed into His nature. It is like a rubber band stretched between two points. Each point or each end of the band seeks to return to the center, the more that the other is pulled away.

A Sufi mystic, Hallaj, has said: "Before creation, God loved Himself in absolute unity. Through love, He revealed Himself to Himself alone. Then desiring to behold the love—in aloneness—the love without duality and as an external object, God brought forth from nonexistence an image of Himself and endowed it with all of His attributes. This image is man."

Briefly put, this means that the love of man for God is God's love objectively reduced to a lesser state—as a reflection in a mirror is less real than the object.

Love of physical beauty, Plotinus and Plato tell us, is a legitimate first stage in the ascent to the love of the Divine ideas. The body must love that which it conceives as beautiful, its ideals, so that its nature may be happily wedded and become healthy and normal. When this is accomplished, love of the intellectual beauty, or *knowledge*, is the next and second step in the ascent. When mental or intellectual satisfaction is had, then man is prepared for the greater love, the love of the Divine beauty, the spiritual things of the world. There are, then, no single loves, but rather a graduated scale of loves. The real value of each is determined by its ideal. The more limited the ideal, the thing conceived as the beautiful, the lesser the love.

What do the Rosicrucians say of love? From a Rosicrucian viewpoint, a rational approach to love is necessary. They realize, of course, that love is not merely an intellectual experience; but, on the other hand, they also realize that it is essential to understand the *causes* of love, so as to be able to produce the most lasting effect. First, they say that basically all love is *desire*. It is a yearning or an appetite, if you will, for that which brings us pleasure. No one has ever loved that which brings pain, suffering, misfortune, or torment. Consequently, Rosicrucians contend that love is the desire for harmony. However, love of that which would be harmonious only to the physical senses would leave certain other loves unrequited. The love of the intellect for the realization of its ideals would be neglected. The love of the emotional self would be forgotten, leaving it torn with fears, perhaps. The love of the spiritual self to express its sentiments psychically would also be submerged, if we were to concentrate on a love which brings harmony

to the physical senses alone. Only as we experience the harmony of our whole being, all aspects of ourselves, do we experience *absolute* love, complete satisfaction. This absolute love is found in the health of the body and in its desire to maintain itself. It consists also of the love to exercise the creative powers of the mind and the love to express the spiritual values, such as compassion and self-sacrifice. The unity of these three loves, then, results in that great Rosicrucian ideal, *Peace
Profound*.

Chapter V

LIVING FULLY

EPICTETUS, IN HIS *Meditations*, states: “Life is indifferent.” But he also asserts that the use of life is not an indifference. This may be interpreted to mean that life fulfills its function of generation and of the development of living things indifferently, insofar as the individual is concerned. Life follows a law of order and necessity in its creating. That is all one may expect from the physical aspects of life. When you reach maturity or when you have procreated, or are able to procreate, the physical life cycle is completed insofar as it involves you. Life has no further interest in you. Life is entirely indifferent to whether you succeed in your ambitions or whether you fail. It is indifferent as to whether you experience suffering or happiness. In the nature of life, these factors do not exist. Such values depend upon the manner in which you use your life. Biological excellence exists only in that you are. The excellence of life is in the creation of you or the creation of any living thing. All other values which may be attributed to life come from the application of it. We may liken physical existence to a shovel. The final end of a shovel consists in its conforming to its design. A shovel is always nothing more. Any glory which can be attributed to it must come from its use in the hands of the user. And so, as Epictetus declares, life is indifferent, but the use of life is not.

It is also a law of life, we are told in philosophical literature, to copy what follows from nature; that is, to pattern ourselves after it. If we desire every act and every circumstance of our living to conform to nature, it is incumbent upon us to observe nature in her many moods and aspects. We may construe this to mean that nothing exists outside the pale of nature. As we have been often told, there is nothing new

under the sun. Everything has its form or its cause rooted deeply in the laws of nature. Consequently, it behooves us, if we are to follow the laws of life, to tie fast to nature the elements of our imagination and our plans. The more, in fact, we inquire into the phenomena of nature about and in us, the more doors leading to the fullness of life will be unlocked. We can see this demonstrated about us. Every modern invention has its parallel in some existing phenomenon of nature. The camera with its lens, iris, and even its film, corresponds to the human eye. The telephone receiver with its oscillating diaphragm may be likened unto the human ear, which also has its diaphragm and impulses which are carried from it. The most delicate electrical system corresponds to the sympathetic and spinal nervous systems. So if we wish to expand our living, let us follow nature.

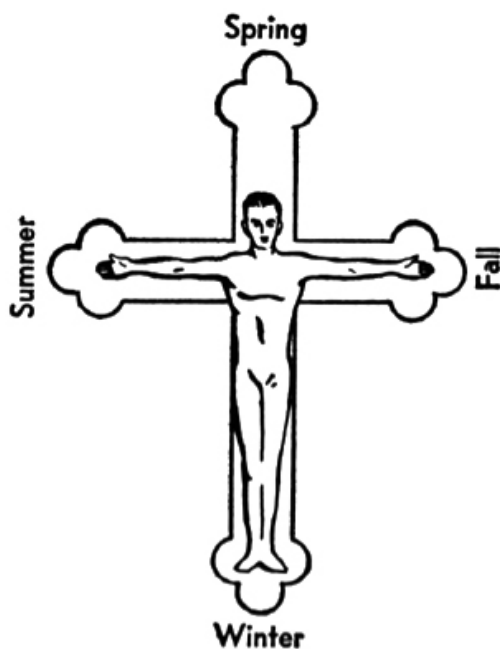
Your life, your conscious existence, can only grow as you absorb into yourself more of the cosmos in which you exist. The growth of the conscious life is a kind of accretion. It consists in adding to ourselves the things and conditions which are around us. The conscious life, therefore, may be likened unto a living cell. We must assimilate into ourselves, as the cell does, elements of the substance in which we exist, or our life will be exceedingly limited.

Pythagoras compared life to the great games, such as the Olympian games that were played in Athens. He said some went to the games to compete for prizes; others went there just to sell their wares as vendors; but best of all were those who became spectators of the games. The spectator of life is one who has a philosophical attitude. He doesn't presume that life has any single value to any man. He believes there are a variety of values, and consequently he is always alert to many experiences and participates in as many as he possibly can, because in these varied experiences are buried gems—the gems which form the diadem of happiness.

Pythagoras divided life into four quarters, each of twenty years. The first quarter is the *boyhood* period; the second quarter is *youth*; the third quarter is *young manhood*; and the fourth quarter, *old manhood*. These four quarters correspond to the four seasons of the year; namely, boyhood to Spring, youth to Summer, young manhood to Autumn, and old manhood to the Winter season.

THE SANCTUARY OF SELF

Henry Cornelius Agrippa, born in 1486 (?), was a great occultist, mystic, and philosopher. In his renowned work *The Magic Mirror* he also divided life into four quarters. The first quarter, he relates, is from the first to the twenty-first year. It is the Spring season of the life and represents youth, love, and growth. The second quarter is from the age of twenty-two to forty-two. It is the Summer period. It represents mind, intellect, maturity of thought, manhood, fruitage or accomplishment. The third quarter, covering the years from forty-three to sixty-three, the Fall season of life, he depicts as wealth, physical and mental maturity, and karma. The fourth and last, or Winter season, includes the years from sixty-four to eighty-four, and is the time of the passover, or the preparation for transition. Each of these quarters of life, he stated, begins with the Vernal Equinox, the Spring period, and each of the quarters of the life ends at the Winter Solstice, about December 21.



Agrippa also related that man has three equal points in his life. In other words, there are three periods within life and these three periods he referred to as being primary *initiations* which we must pass through during our life period. The first begins after our physical birth, the first Spring quarter of our life, from one to twenty-one years of age. The second period, or initiation, comes at forty-eight years of age, when we have crossed the meridian of life, or the zenith of our life's period; and the third period, or initiation, when we enter into the Winter season of our life, the sunset, the closing quarter. He states that the upright body of the cross symbolizes these quarters of life. For example, the upper point of the cross symbolizes the Spring season of life; the left arm of the cross represents the Fall quarter; the right arm of the cross, the Summer season; and the base of the cross the Winter season, or the close of life.

Agrippa analyzes most interestingly the value of these seasons or quarters of life, and what man is expected to do in order to utilize them intelligently. By the time one has attained twenty-one years of age and has completed the Spring season of his life, he should then have received the tools for his future. These tools may be the trade or profession in which he should be trained or prepared, or they may consist of the accumulated experiences of others which were expounded to him by preceptors in schools or universities. The Summer season of his life, the middle period, is the time for activity, mental and physical. It is a time to produce; namely, to create and manifest the ideals which should have been established during the Spring season of life. If our products, our achievements during this Summer season are not the best, it is probably due, says Agrippa, to our desultory living, to our neglect in preparing ourselves during the Spring season of our life. Agrippa states that the Winter season, or the sunset years, is the time when man calls a halt to his labors. It is the time to reap the benefits, if any, from what has preceded. He states that this is the time when man strikes a karmic balance. He does not mean that is a time when we must compensate for what has occurred in previous incarnations, but rather that it is the time we should begin to enjoy the results of thoughtful planning or living, or when we should experience the results of careless living and wasted years.

What do the Rosicrucians say of life? We say that life—physical existence—so far as mankind is concerned, is for a very definite purpose. We are permitted to experience it so that we may learn the laws of existence—our own and those of other things. This is accomplished through our combating the forces of nature which are around us. Only as we face opposition, only as we place ourselves where we are exposed fully to the laws and phenomena of the universe are all of our faculties, all of our powers drawn upon. One who excludes himself from the world, who becomes an anchorite or a hermit, fails to utilize all of that of which he is capable, and consequently learns little of the laws of existence. For analogy, we are given eyes to perceive that substance and matter visually, which might destroy us, crush us out of existence, if we could not perceive it. In fact, all of our objective senses—seeing, feeling, tasting, and so forth are given us because our existence is in those dimensions where we need these senses to cope with other substances, other masses such as ourselves.

To live in accordance with those laws, those physical properties which have given us being, we must use the senses by which they can be discerned. However, we have also been given, besides our peripheral senses, an emotional nature. This has been conferred upon us for the purpose of evaluating the relationship of things to ourselves, so we may establish such notions as good and evil, order and disorder, et cetera. Each thing lives fully only to the extent that it expresses all of those functions of which it is capable. A deer that does not run, or a rooster that does not crow, is not living fully according to those functions which it has. It is not true to the cause of its existence. Likewise, a man who does not exercise his reason, or a man who does not employ his emotional and psychic faculties and powers is not living as a human. He is neglecting that of which he is capable. In other words, he is opposing the very order of his existence. He can come to know only ennui by such living.

The Rosicrucian conception of proper living is, first, to departmentalize one's being, and then to determine what are the principal elements or factors of which one is composed. This is not difficult. You recognize your physical and material being. You know that

if you neglect your body, the physical side of yourself, you are closing a door on a part, an important part, of the complexity of your nature. Again, you recognize that you have an intellectual part to yourself, that you have such faculties as reason, cogitation, and imagination. If you neglect them, then again another part of your being is deteriorating, atrophying from disuse. If you neglect any part of your being, it is like blindfolding one of your eyes. The function of your vision becomes limited. Therefore your conscious existence may become distorted.

Chapter VI

LIGHT AND ILLUMINATION

OF ALL OF the contraries in nature, the opposites—light and darkness—are the most obvious. To the primitive mind, both light and darkness have a positive quality. Darkness has as much actuality to the primitive mind as does light. Some myths of primitive peoples represent light as being created out of the nature of darkness, but these are comparatively few.

There are many experiences which are common to light and which we are accustomed to associate with the word *light*. By means of light, all of those things which constitute our visual world have existence to us. Even dangers are tangible, definite things in light, because they can be perceived. Their visual form depends upon light. When we open our eyes, light pours in and with it comes vision and all of those scenes, events, and circumstances which we associate with light. Conversely, when we close our eyes or when the sun is veiled by clouds, or by the curtain of night, darkness comes, and with darkness all of those things which we have known and which we have associated with light disappear.

In darkness there lurks terror for the unbridled imagination. Things can be conceived but not perceived. In death also there is no objective vision but only darkness. Thus darkness symbolizes death and oblivion. In Egypt, darkness and light were not conceived alone as two different qualities, but as two different forces like poles of a magnet. We know that the god Ra was symbolized by the sun and represented the *positive*, creative force of the sun. Darkness was symbolized by the god Set.

It represented inertia in contrast to the activity related to the power of the sun; consequently darkness was a *negative* state. In fact, the Egyptians referred, in their psalms, to the sun forcing its way through the billowing clouds of darkness, of night, to emerge in the dawn, indicating that darkness was considered an inert opposition to the active forces of light.

In the Book of Genesis, in the Old Testament, it is said: "Let there be light." Then we are told that God divided light from darkness. This very definitely indicates that darkness and light were considered by the ancient Hebrews as separate creations. It also indicates that the light of day was considered a physical condition and was referred to in that sense. The Greater Light with its mystical and allegorical significance was not included in this reference, because later we are told that God said: "Let there be light in the firmaments of the heavens," and this referred to the stars and the moon, the lesser light. It concerned physical light, not a metaphor or an allegory.

The *symbolism*, of light and darkness, in the moral sense, does not definitely appear in the Bible until the New Testament, several centuries after the books of the Old Testament. There, darkness is made to represent concealment. Under cover of darkness, most crimes are committed. Consequently, darkness takes on the moral equivalent of evil. Conversely, light represents action in the open—things frankly and honestly done—so light is symbolically associated with goodness and virtue. Then we are told that our eyes may be open and our vision may be good, and yet we may not see. This implies that the *mind* is closed, that the mind is in darkness. Therefore, ignorance also becomes associated with darkness. Wisdom is related to light and to the open and searching mind.

It is often said that those who search for knowledge and for learning are dwellers in light. It naturally follows that light is commonly held to be synonymous with learning and knowledge. In fact, there are a number of fraternal organizations today who oblige their candidates, or applicants for membership, to state in their applications that they are searching for *light*, before they can be admitted. It is meant that they are searching for knowledge and for further learning.

However, the mystics of old had a far different conception of light. To them it did not mean merely knowledge and learning. The mystics and the Rosicrucians of today also distinguish between *light* and *illumination*. The distinction is a fine one, but worthy of our comprehension. Our eyes may be open and our vision good, and we may see things which we have never seen before; consequently, we have knowledge of their existence. Yet having seen these things and knowing that they are, they may seem without purpose to us. We are still puzzled, still in doubt about them, and therefore our visual experience has little value to us. For example, we may be shown a large and complicated piece of machinery or laboratory apparatus. Our vision of it is quite clear. We can describe what we see, as well as the one who has pointed out the machinery to us, and yet it is still puzzling and confusing. We may, therefore, have perceptual light—an accumulation of facts—and yet remain very much mentally in the dark. Consequently, to the mystics, illumination means *understanding*.

One may travel in light. Thus, one may be a searcher for knowledge, for new and strange facts, an unearther of information, a prober into tomes, and yet that is not sufficient. He must, with all of his light, eventually attain illumination or comprehension. In the *Confessio Fraternitatis*, which was one of the earliest public works issued by the Rosicrucian Order in the Seventeenth Century, there was a statement to the effect that the world must awaken out of its stupor and go further to meet the sun of the morning. Now during those days there was an interest in knowledge and in learning. Men had vision; they could see; and many of them sought light. But the *Confessio* meant more than that; it meant that in going further to meet the sun and awakening out of its stupor, the world would sometime have an understanding of itself and its purpose. Certainly, today, humanity is still greatly in need of understanding, even with all of the light and knowledge which we have.

In the Rosicrucian studies, it is said that *illumination* follows a period of meditation. This meditation is a deliberation upon the knowledge which the Rosicrucian student has acquired from the degrees of his study. Consequently, it proves that illumination is understanding, a

something which must follow knowledge. One of the Rosicrucian degrees is known as the Illuminati. It means that at that time the student's consciousness, the various aspects of his consciousness, should be imbued with an understanding of that which he has studied. We therefore should make *profound comprehension* our goal in life, not just a greater fount of knowledge or a greater accumulation of external things and facts. Light to the mystic always means *illumination*.

Chapter VII

DEATH — THE LAW OF CHANGE

THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHER *Epicurus* stated, why should man concern himself so much about death and fear it, for by so doing he presumes to know the nature of death, or the circumstances which surround the transition from life to death? Since man does not know these things, he should not dread death, not live in fear of it. He should not attempt to anticipate the unknown. When the end, the unknown, comes to us, it is then the *known*, and the thing that is known is never feared.

Why do most men fear death? Is it not because they dislike to relinquish the pleasures, the joys, the rewards, the power, fame and position, they have attained in life? But if they fear to relinquish these things, if they fear that death will rob them of these pleasures, they must also realize that death will deny them pain, deny them worry, grief and strife, for if death checks one experience in life, it will check all of them.

Let us consider death as being like the act of crossing the threshold into another room. When the chamber that we are in becomes crowded and no longer is able to serve our purposes, and the door is flung open and we see through the portal the room for further expression, why should we hesitate to avail ourselves of it, especially when it affords an opportunity which the crowded chamber of the present may not?

The soul of man is of the one Universal Soul, the Intelligence of God, which flows as a spiritual efficacy through all men alike. We may

again use an analogy which we have often used. The soul force is like an electric current which flows through a circuit of electric lamps. It causes each lamp in the circuit to manifest light and color, each differently perhaps, yet the essence of all the lamps, the current, is the same. This soul force within man has, or shall we say engenders, certain attributes. The principal one is known as the psychic body.

This Cosmic intelligence or soul force is not confined to one area, section, or organ of the body, as many philosophers once thought. Rather, it permeates each cell of the matrix of cells of which the human organism is composed. Each cell has its duties, its functions, which contribute to the whole purpose for which the human body exists. Therefore, as the cells in their protoplasmic substance compose the physical form—for example, of the heart—the psychic consciousness of those same cells comprises a psychic body, or that which corresponds to the physical form of the heart, namely, a psychic heart.

At death, or that transition which separates the body and the spiritual qualities or soul forces of man, what happens then to the psychic body? The soul, of course, is drawn into the Universal Soul from which it was never detached. For analogy we ask the question: What happens to the electric current when you turn off a light or switch off an electric fan? The current still exists, ready to manifest again when the material connection has been provided. The psychic body, or self of a human, is only absorbed into the Universal Soul. It is not lost. Rather, it harmonizes with all of the personalities and the psychic bodies that go to make the one Cosmic Soul. Again we ask a question to further our point: What happens to the colors *red*, *green*, and *blue* when there is no medium such as a prism to diffuse white light? The wave lengths of those colors are all blended together, to make that harmony of all the colors of which white light consists. So it is with the psychic bodies and personalities in the Universal Soul.

Just prior to the last breath, on the occasion of transition, the psychic body projects itself; that is, it seems to extend a few feet from the physical body. It is not liberated. It still is bound to the physical body by the silver cord (a traditional mystical term for that essence of the psychic body which remains attached to the living physical body).

The greatest essence of the psychic body at such a time can be sensed, or rather, I should say, perceived as a cloud or haze. Sometimes it is in the form of an oval, from an end of which there is seen to descend this silver cord as a kind of spiral or vapor. The smallest end of the spiral appears to enter the body at the solar plexus.

With transition, therefore, there ends on this plane the consciousness of self and awareness of any irritation. From the Rosicrucian concept, cremation is the ideal manner in which to dispose of the body. The physical elements of which the body is composed, in and by themselves, no more constitute man than does a wax figure. It is our duty, therefore, to aid them to return to their original state as soon as possible, and cremation does this. The long preservation of the body by elaborate embalming methods is a custom born out of a sentiment which continues to associate the personality and the self with the physical shell, or else it is the result of certain religious interpretations. It is only those intangible elements, those conditions and characteristics which compose the ego and the personality which make the *you*. When they have gone, it is best that the physical elements of the body be freed as quickly as possible and with the utmost decency.

Chapter VIII

CAUSALITY AND KARMA

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY philosopher, Gottfried Leibnitz, endeavored to show how the harmony of the body and the soul can be accomplished in several ways. He suggested that one of these several ways was the most probable one by which they were related. To explain this harmony, he used his famous allegory of two clocks or watches. He began with the supposition that two clocks keep perfect time together. This may happen in one of three ways. First, it could be the direct mechanical influence of one clock upon the other. In other words, one of the clocks would continually keep the other in accurate time, as being synchronized with it, through a mechanical process. This, Leibnitz held, is the usual conception of the relation of body and soul; that is, that the soul continually influences the body and that at times the body influences the soul, whereby the relationship is presumed to be established.

The second way, which Leibnitz set forth, by which two clocks could keep time together would be to have a skilled workman regulate the clocks from minute to minute; in other words, make continual adjustments so that they would always correspond in time. This second example is the equivalent of the belief that God or the Divine Mind keeps intervening in man's affairs. Such persons imagine that God is constantly keeping men's minds and bodies within bounds; in other words, adjusting their relationship.

The final way which Leibnitz suggested that two clocks might keep perfect time together was that each would originally have been made accurate. If each had been made skillfully from the beginning and so constructed to keep accurate time, then each clock *in itself* would not

only keep accurate time but would keep time with all other clocks. By this he meant that if the souls and bodies of men each have inherent in them their specific purpose—the reason for their existence—and have that as their end, they need not be concerned with the ends, or purposes, of each other, because such ends would naturally coincide, it being the intention of the Maker of the souls and bodies of men that they should harmonize. There would, therefore, be no reason for them to influence each other, no reason for continual adjustment from hour to hour; in other words, for God to intervene in order to keep them in bounds. We might also use the analogy of a team of horses. Each horse of the team might have on blinders. He would not see his mate, but he could see the objective, the direction in which he was going, and would continue in that direction, and thus, though each was striving for his own individual ends, the ends would coincide and the horses would be harmoniously pulling together as a team.

Now, philosophy has proposed that one of these three principles, which Leibnitz has so well set forth, accounts for the vicissitudes of our lives and the probable relationship between body and soul. However, we may arbitrarily accept any one of the three which seems probable to us, or we may reject all three. The more intelligent way to arrive at an understanding would be to inquire into human experience, inquire into natural and Cosmic phenomena. Thereby we may discover some positive governing law which accounts for happiness, for sorrow, for success, and for misfortune.

Let us start with human experience. Things or conditions are occurring continuously. Something *is* which was not before, or at least so it seems to us. However, with a little thought we will agree that a thing itself cannot change its own composition. Something which is a single substance cannot be that substance and at the same time be converted into something else, for while it is in the process of changing, it would not be that which it was. Nevertheless, common experience discloses that things do appear to change in themselves. These things which give the appearance of change are objects which are not a single substance, but are really a combination of parts, with one part acting upon the other in its nature, and that accounts for the

apparent change. Consequently, when we speak of causes, we mean some object or event by means of which another object or event comes to occur. An effect is a change produced by a cause in some other thing. Therefore, we presume that there is an orderly succession in the process of change. In other words, a cause must precede the change or effect which it produces.

It must be realized that there cannot be single causes; a thing cannot act upon itself. Nothing can be produced out of itself. If this were not so, things would soon exhaust themselves. A continuous generation out of something would mean that there would eventually be nothing of that left. Furthermore, if a thing could produce entirely out of itself, then such a thing would be absolutely independent in nature. It would have no relationship, nor need to have any relationship, to anything else. Instead of a homogenetic universe, we would have a heterogeneous one. The fact remains that we do not know of any truly independent thing in the universe. Everything in human experience points to unity. There can be no entirely self-generated things. We conclude, therefore, that things do not come out of one another, but *after* one another, as related influences upon each other.

The nature of a cause cannot be merely action, but action upon something. Action must have a thing upon which to act. For analogy, a bullet fired in a vacuum (if a perfect vacuum were possible), no matter what its velocity, could not in itself be a cause, for it would have nothing upon which to act to produce an effect. It is metaphysically and logically sound, therefore, to say that *causation* is a doctrine that concerns the relationship between two things: one an active thing, or condition, and one passive—that being so, no event or object can have a single cause. Change or occurrence is always the result of a combination of two conditions, that of activity and of passivity.

Everything, then, must have two causes, and the relatively passive cause is as necessary as the active one. If things are equally active in every respect, they may then be alike and cannot produce a change or occurrence, for things cannot act upon their own selves if they have no variant quality. Things which are alike in their actions are the equivalent of being the same thing, insofar as causal action is concerned.

In human experience, we observe, in numerous ways, these two kinds of causes, namely, *active* and *passive*. They are given a variety of names. Most of the active causes which we are able to see and which to our senses appear as being active or in motion of some kind, we call *efficient causes*. In other words, they seem to contribute directly to a result. For example, the active cause of a broken window is the ball which strikes it. There are, however, so-called *final causes*. These are really those that follow from the interaction between active and passive causes. In a sense, a final cause is the result, or an end, which may be anticipated. If we imagine a future effect as coming as the result of an active and passive cause, that future is called a *final cause*.

Contrary to popular notion, then, a true state of balance does not exist in nature. In fact, such a state should not be even desired by man, if it were possible. The ancient Kabbala, the traditional writings of the Hebrews, includes a work known as *Sepher Yeszirah*. Literally translated, this title means: “Book of Creation.” In this old work, it is related that equilibrium is the dead center between two opposing forces. Where two forces are equal and opposite in strength or in action, all strength is thereby overcome. A condition of rest then occurs. Rest is in opposition to all of nature. Equilibrium, therefore, counteracts power, by which accomplishment occurs. Equilibrium is the enemy of change and of development. The ancient Kabbala further states that balance or equilibrium is a permanent negation which produces nothing.

Eliphas Levi, in his works on occultism, also strikes at the erroneous idea often had by men that equilibrium is important in their lives. He says that if two opposing forces are absolutely and invariably equal, such equilibrium constitutes an immobility, an absolute repression of all motion, of all action by which change, or development, occurs. Such equilibrium would be the negation of life itself. Movement, Levi contends, is the alternating preponderance of an impulsion given to one side of a scale or the other, movement being therefore the positive and full quality of anything. On the other hand, if we have movement or motion constantly in one direction, we produce monotony or rest, because change is absent. Sameness, changelessness, is inactivity. Light must have its variations of darkness—in other words, gradations or diminishing of light or its intensity—or else we would not appreciate

the existence of light. If one were born and remained in a room of an intense light, an intensity which would be constant and in which room it would be impossible to produce shadows, he would have no realization of the meaning of light, because he would have no experience of the absence of it, and thus would not know it existed.

Good also must have its variations, its lesser degrees, or its apparent opposites which we term *evil*, or else good could not be. A balance of moral unawareness would be reached. We would have no consciousness of what constitutes good. There could be no ideal. In fact, would anything be the good if it did not exceed or advance or be more perfect than something else? One occultist said that good loves the apparent evil which glorifies it; in other words, that evil is the lesser degree of good or the apparent opposite by which good comes to be realized or desired.

Everyone finds a kind of satisfaction in his continuous voluntary acts; otherwise, he would not continue such acts. The doer of evil finds pleasure in the things which he does. He does not realize that he is doing evil. He may be informed that his conduct is contrary to what society advocates and that society may term it *wrong*, but, as an individual, to him it is not an evil. The rules which society has set up are not an intimate experience, not as intimate as his own acts which he enjoys. The only way one may really *know* that his acts are evil is to realize opposite sensations and sentiments from them. When he is acquainted with the contrary of his acts, then he is in a position to term some of them as good and others evil.

The natural principle of cause and effect, and of pitting opposites against each other, has led to important developments. It became the instinctive basis for the first law of compensation practiced in human society. About 2000 B.C. there ascended to the throne the sixth in line of the Amorite kings. He was known as Hammurabi. He was a genius, both in administration and at war. Under his guidance, ancient Babylonia reached the peak of its culture and became one of the greatest cultures of the ancient world. His contributions to the civilization of his period were numerous and left a very definite influence upon the world. He reorganized the calendar, caused it to conform to the seasons as we know them. He introduced an equitable tax system, a taxation against

the rich and poor alike. He permitted the humble citizen to appeal directly to him if that citizen felt that the King's ministers were not dispensing justice in his behalf.

What concerns us most is that he began codifying the existing laws. He unified all of the uses, the unwritten laws, the social and other decrees and customs. He made many changes for the dispensing of justice. He had this code of laws, which was the first in the history of the world, inscribed upon a shaft of diorite, a kind of monument of black stone. The inscription was in cuneiform, the wedge-like writing of the time. At the top of the shaft of stone was sculptured a scene which showed the king receiving his laws from the sun-god. This implied that he was enlightened in his work and that it was a decree from the Divine that he codify his laws and that he was being influenced by powers beyond himself to accomplish such work. The code provided justice for the widow and orphan who, in those ancient times as often today, were taken advantage of because of their status in society.

A prominent principle, expressed throughout the whole code of laws, is that punishment of the same kind as his injury to others be inflicted upon the culprit. For example, if someone was negligent, thereby causing injury to others, he must experience as punishment the same effect as that caused by his negligence. It is specifically related that a builder must suffer the same injuries as a tenant whose house has fallen upon him because of careless construction by the builder. Such laws of compensation are founded upon the principle that one must realize the effects of his own acts, whatever they may be. The evildoer must experience his own evil ways, it being thought that it was not sufficient that he be punished merely because of his evil, but that he must also come to know what his acts produced, by experiencing the identical effects.

Five hundred years after the time of Hammurabi, Moses is related to have received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. It is further stated that he spent forty additional days on the mountain, where he was given an amplification of the original commandments, an elaboration on their content. These later laws were not written but

were said to have been related verbally to Moses by God, and came to be called the Oral Laws. These Oral Laws, as they appear today, have been greatly influenced by modification and fashioning by the Rabbis through the centuries.

These ancient Hebraic laws may be found in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. They are commonly called the *Mosaic* laws. They are found to correspond closely to the code of Hammurabi. Perhaps the reason for this is that the Hebrews, having been slaves and prisoners in Babylonia, allowed their experiences with the Hammurabi laws to enter into the fashioning of their interpretation of the Mosaic laws, at least. The fundamental principle of these Mosaic laws, like that of the Hammurabi code, is that each must experience the effect of his own acts. For example, in Exodus 21:23-25, we find . . . thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, . . . wound for wound, . . .”

The Egyptian *Book of the Dead* is another classic example wherein the individual is obliged to experience the effects of his own acts as causes. The *Book of the Dead* is a title given by archaeologists and Egyptologists to a collection of funerary texts compiled and prepared for the dead by Egyptian priests of many centuries. It relates the experiences which they must expect in the afterworld, their obligations and manner of preparing for the future life, and so forth. In one of the myriad papyri of which it is composed, there is a scene called the Last Judgment, or The Great Reckoning. It discloses a large hall in which are to be seen the assembled gods of the polytheistic doctrine prevalent in Egypt at the time. In the center of this hall, before the assembled gods, is a great balance or scale. On top of an upright beam by which the scale is supported is seated an ape. The ape has always been associated with the god Thoth, the God of Wisdom, and in this instance is symbolic of wisdom. In one of the trays of the scale is a feather. The feather symbolizes purity and truth. In the other tray is what appears to be a little vessel or vase, and this peculiar design, almost always the same, is called the Ab. It is a symbol of the heart.

The whole scene depicts the weighing of the human virtues after death, after the deceased has reached the next world. The heart is being weighed against truth to determine how far the acts of the departed,

his conduct during his lifetime, fell short of a positive good, namely, of truth and righteousness. Consequently, there before these gods the deceased is being obliged to experience the judgment of the effects of his acts. It is Thoth, the God of Wisdom, who decides the degree of goodness or evil of the past life of the deceased.

In the scriptures of Confucius, there is still another example of how good and evil, as effects of acts, must be personally realized by us. A chela asks of Confucius if there is any word which in and by itself would serve the practical rule of life; more emphatically, is there a single word which in its meaning alone will represent how man shall live? Confucius answers: "Reciprocity." This may be construed to mean that what we do not want done to ourselves we should not do to others. In the Confucian Scriptures, it is made plain that if a man has done you an injury he shall be punished in the exact nature of his injury to you. Consequently, we find that *retribution* is the basis of the Confucian law of compensation.

From the ancient Hindu teachings has descended a Sanskrit word which signifies moral causes and effects. This word is *karma*. Etymologically, it means deed, or to do. The doctrine which surrounds this word, or of which the word is a basis, spread to many of the other principal religions in India—Buddhism, for example. According to Buddha, the soul must continually incarnate for an indefinite period. The Buddhistic ideal, therefore, is to bring about a surcease of this continual incarnation, this embodiment in physical form. The acts of each life, according to Buddhistic principles, become causes, and as causes they produce a sequence of effects. These effects are *karma*, and karma accumulates and is inherited or brought over from a former life.

The soul, therefore, must exhaust karma before it may be delivered from the necessity of incarnating, time after time, in physical form on the mortal plane. According to Buddha, incarnations are like the potter's wheel, which receives impulsations from the hands of the potter who keeps it spinning. The acts of each incarnation are an imputation which keeps revolving the wheel of rebirth into physical

form. When there is no more karma, when our acts have not produced such, there are no more imputations; the wheel of rebirth ceases its movement, and the soul is not again obliged to inhabit a body on earth.

The Buddhist says that karma is fourfold. There is the karma that bears fruit in the present existence, during our mortal existence here; the karma that bears fruit in rebirth in a future life; the karma that bears fruit at no fixed time, that is, which may occur in this life or in one of the many subsequent lives from now; and then there is the bygone karma. Thoughts which produce acts now in our current life result in karma in the next incarnation. If, however, they fail to produce effects, they have become bygone karma, which implies that they have been mitigated in some way by subsequent acts. The Buddhist makes plain that the blame for our deeds is strictly our own. It is strictly a *personal* responsibility. We cannot transfer the responsibility to others. The Buddhist further contends that there is no escape from our own deeds; the effects must follow the causes into the heavens, into the sea, or into the earth. He points out that when we experience evil, we learn to flee from it. This does not mean an escape, but once having known what effects follow from a cause, we learn to *avoid* such causes.

To the Buddhist, karma as a law is inexorable. There are no exceptions, no deviations. The Buddhist doctrines include two general kinds of karma: one is *pure* and the other is *impure*. Impure karma necessitates further existence; it requires incarnation again in mortal form. In impure karma, the suffering is always proportionate to the deed itself. The extent of the evil of the act determines the consequence or effect. Here again we have the principle of retribution for the act. Pure deeds of karma eventually stop the wheel of rebirth. The soul is liberated from further imprisonment in physical form.

Chapter IX

KARMA IN EFFECT

IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY there is little place for the doctrine of karma. In Christianity, as in Judaism before it, God is conceived of as a Father, as a supreme, munificent Being. He is held to transcend the world, and yet He is considered as having an influence upon the world and as seeking to establish a theocracy upon earth, namely, a Kingdom of God. Men are said to be His children. The relationship between humanity and God, from the Christian viewpoint, is not greatly unlike the relationship which exists between mortal children and their father. Just as mortals do, orthodox Christianity conceives of God as expressing love, hate, and forgiveness. Men may violate the Divine Father's wishes, just as mortal children disobey their parents. The Divine Father, orthodox Christianity expounds, can and will punish the erring human. This punishment consists of a personal act. It is purely arbitrary on the part of God. It is not that the individual by his act has evoked an inexorable law.

Further, according to Christianity, man is but required to love the Divine Father, and in this sincere love he will find salvation and forgiveness. Thus, according to Christianity, men's moral acts produce no independent personal effects which may react upon them. The effects of man's moral acts, the consequences of them, lie entirely in the arbitrary judgment and love of God. Thus one may leave in his wake in life, because of the manner in which he lived and his personal conduct, much sorrow and hurt to others. At death, if he embraces God, if he sincerely asks the Divine Father for forgiveness, according to orthodox Christianity, he will receive it. Thus while others may continue to experience the effects of his acts and continue to endure

suffering because of his previous conduct, the instigator of the evil may be forgiven if he embraces God and admits his wrong.

The punishment the evildoer may receive, according to this Christian dogmatic conception, may have entirely no relationship to the original evil act. The individual may be punished in such a manner that he does not experience the serious consequence of his wrongdoing. Good and evil in Christianity become but a series of admonishments, the establishment of ethical and moral rules which one is obliged to adhere to. Rules, as we all too well know, are not always understood by the individual, and thus they are not adhered to because when there is not understanding, there is not sympathy. A parent frequently admonishes his child to, “don’t do this and don’t do that,” but unless the child has some corresponding idea as to why he should not do it, the admonishment becomes merely an irksome restriction which he tries to break or surmount. If the child can experience the effect of his acts, then he will know why he is being asked not to so act. This is the reason why Christianity, in *not* including the doctrine of karma, the experiencing of the effects of one’s acts, has such a problem in the enforcement of its moral codes.

Rosicrucian mysticism also employs the doctrine of *karma*, but its application is considerably unlike that of its Oriental predecessors. To the Rosicrucian, karma is commensurate with the law of causality. For every effect, there must be both an active and a passive cause. Every act, mental or physical, brings about a result which has a value related to the cause itself. Thus, if one sets into motion a series of creative, morally good acts, they will ultimately redound to the benefit of the individual.

The law of causality, Rosicrucians teach, in mysticism as in science, permits no deviation. The effects must follow. From mistakes pain may often be experienced. The pain, however, which may be associated with the result of the act is not an intentional result. It is inevitable. It follows from the necessity of the cause, but it is not intended as a punishment. It is not a matter of retribution. From such pains, or they may be pleasures, man learns the consequences of his causative acts. He knows what to expect when he puts them into effect. Many

persons may object to moral codes. They may find the codes not consistent with reason. They may find them illogical, but man cannot argue with or refute the effects of his own acts, which he experiences. He knows they are inevitable, and he must adjust his life to them. Karma thus provides each individual with an intimate experience with Divine Cosmic laws. It is an experience which he must have in his own consciousness. It is not related to him by others. Karma thus removes blind faith, doubts and skepticism, and provides knowledge as to right living instead.

There is no excuse for wrong conduct, even ignorance. There are major and minor karmic consequences which we create by our acts. Each day, in fact, we create almost innumerable *minor* karmic consequences. For example, we may eat something, and because we do, as an effect, we may suffer indigestion. We may use our eyes too much and thereby strain the muscles, and we experience an annoying headache. Such suffering is not a punishment inflicted by nature. It is not a retribution but the natural sequence of the law of causality. It is equivalent to adding a number of digits, by which process we arrive at a sum and which sum proceeds from the mathematical necessity of the digits themselves, not because there is any mind insisting on or compelling or providing that sum.

Major karmic effects exist in the violation of Cosmic laws and Divine principles. Such a violation would be an intentional injury to others for selfish ends. It is not always necessary that the individual must bang his head, figuratively speaking, against a stone wall in order to learn from such action that it is wrong and painful. We do not always have to experience an effect to know what follows from the cause. We have been given a spiritual barometer, which is the moral sense we possess, or *conscience*. This barometer informs us whenever our acts, or contemplated acts, are contrary to Cosmic laws and principles. In effect, this may be experienced as a reluctance to continue certain acts or to proceed along the lines of action which we have in mind. If, however, we proceed in opposition to the promptings of this barometer of conscience, we then of course experience the effect, which may be an unpleasant one and a bitter lesson to learn.

It is a palmary principle of karma that an innocent violation of a Cosmic law, for example, does not exempt the violator from the effect which will follow. However, unconscious acts, or acts of which we honestly do not know the effects, mitigate what would ordinarily be the drastic results, yet to some degree the effects inexorably follow. All karmic effects are not adverse. Most persons speak of karma only when they speak of effects which are unpleasant. Very seldom do they mention, in the light of karma, circumstances or conditions which are beneficial. There are deeds which also produce beneficial effects. The so-called good luck which many persons have and which may seem to be unaccountable, which seems to descend upon people without reason or justification, may be an accumulated beneficial karma, the result of constructive, unselfish, and virtuous acts in a past time of which the recipients may have no knowledge now. We must realize that in the Cosmic there is no such thing as time. Eternity may be as a tick of a second. Our acts, as causes, may have their effects projected into the future; that future may be the next moment, as we think of it, or this day or this year. Or the future may be several subsequent lives from now. Today's experiences, today's good fortune, may be rooted far in the past.

History is a very excellent example of past karmic causes. Society, civilization, puts into motion certain causes by reason of the things which the people do, under the influence of their expressed wishes, the laws they enact or which they permit their leaders to enact. The effects of such causes may occur several generations later. Most wars, which in their origin seem to perplex the average layman, can be explained by the doctrine of karma. They are a matter of cause and effect. A selfish disregard by a people or a nation of the international situation in general may be one cause. If we let a people of another nation starve merely because within the boundaries which we have inscribed about us there are many natural resources which make us indifferent, or if we set up enormous tariff walls, shutting out a few products which such people need to sell for their sustenance and their comforts, then by that cause we may experience a karmic effect in years to come. If we let other nations attain a balance of power whereby they oppress others and monopolize that which other peoples need, merely because it does not

affect us directly, we are also instituting causes which will produce the karmic effects of war. Eventually there will be conflagration, envy and hatred. The result of our acts will break forth into flames that will sear us. It is the equivalent of negligently allowing oily rags to collect in a tight closet which, as causes, finally produce the effect of spontaneous combustion.

Thus nations, composed of individuals, create karma for themselves. The innocent peoples in such a nation are enmeshed in the war and the effects which follow. It is to be hoped that the plans now slowly being formulated for a one world will be free from those weaknesses of human nature — envy, power, and selfishness — which, otherwise, a few years hence, might produce the same effects karmically as were experienced in World War II. If the elements of pacts, as causes, are not intelligent, impersonal, and motivated by humanitarian ideals, they will be the means of precipitating another war, at which time many millions of innocent persons again will and must experience the karmic effects of the society of this generation.

When we experience misfortune, when we encounter adversity, we should not be embittered, we should not try to affix the responsibility on others, but inquire into the nature of the conditions, of the *causes*, which may have brought about the misfortune. Analyze the effects intelligently, for the determination of the cause. At least, with an open mind, accept the effects as a lesson, as one possibly teaching tolerance or humility. As you learn from adversity and accept the lesson, without bitterness, but as a means of preparing yourself for more enlightened living, you are creating a favorable karmic effect, possibly years of happiness, if not in this life, then in another.

Therefore, like that third example of Leibnitz' clocks which keep time together, we realize that the power of adjusting our lives, of adapting them to happiness and attainment, is entirely within ourselves. Favorable and unfavorable events principally lie in our own acts as causes, which we alone can institute. Each of our acts is a moving positive cause, and it acts upon the relatively passive and negative factors of our environment, as objects, events, and conditions. In contrast to ourselves, all else is a negative cause. We are the *prime mover*, the active

cause, and the two—ourselves and our environment—produce effects, and the effects partake always of the nature of their causes. If we are conscious of this, we will be cautious in acting upon the things and conditions which surround us.

PART TWO

The Technique

Chapter X

ENTERING THE SILENCE

A PHRASE WHICH students of mysticism often use indiscriminately is, *entering the silence*. It is a mistaken idea with many modern students, as it was with ascetics of old, that mortal existence is an evil one. The physical body is considered a shackle and a negation of the spiritual powers. This conception springs from ancient Greek Orphism and Zoroastrianism. There is a tendency on the part of these misguided persons to consider the objective faculties as in some way continually conspiring to deceive and debauch the soul of man. Ultimately they become so unreasonable in this belief that not unlike Pyrrho, the ancient skeptic, they will not walk from the path of an oncoming vehicle, believing its appearance but a trickery of their senses.

A writer on mysticism in the past has said that the ascetic is a kind of athlete, for he is continually wrestling with his religious beliefs. The ascetic seeks to subjugate all of his physical desires and to oppose worldly appeals to his senses, because he is of the opinion that temporal things are in continual conflict with the Divine self, and he wishes the latter to be supreme. By practicing self-mortification and abnegation—namely, a torture of the body by a failure to recognize its needs—he expects thereby to liberate the spirit. The ascetic, therefore, is wont to be a recluse, to exclude the world, to climb to a mountaintop or find a cave in the depth of a forest, and thereby enjoy that *physical* silence by which he feels the spiritual self alone can reign supreme. The early Christian monks were such ascetics. They, too, felt it was necessary for man to depart from the world of men so as to be alone with soul.

There is no doubt that our physical senses do engender illusions. To a great extent the entire physical world, all of its reality, is an illusion and must remain so. Our empirical conception of it is not what it actually may be. Between our ideas of the physical world and of what the physical world may actually consist, lie the sensations and the impressions of it which must be translated and interpreted, and which undoubtedly suffer accordingly. Consequently, if we are going to be technical, we live in a world of illusions. But we need these illusions to exist on this plane. When you discover that something is not what you previously thought it to be, change your interpretations. Don't damn away your objective senses or body as worthless. Furthermore, all enlightenment, even if it is gained mystically, must be translated into material realities, things which can be utilized right here on earth, or it has no benefit for you. This means that to utilize freely a Cosmic impression you must harness it to some reality that you can see, hear, feel, or touch objectively. A negating of your physical faculties eventually affects your ability to use them to serve your mystical conceptions.

Too many students of mysticism use the term *entering the silence* as an escape from the realities of this existence which it is their duty as mortals to confront and master. Whenever a material problem of business or domestic affairs arises, instead of first objectively investigating with open eyes, ears, and mind how it may be met and surmounted, they enter the silence. To them this means shutting out the distracting facts of the problem and seeking to pass it on to a higher mind or intelligence. Such a practice is not true mysticism and is often nothing more than *indolence*.

Mystically, entering the silence often does not mean communing with the Cosmic or escaping in consciousness to another plane. It can and often does mean freeing yourself from all other realities except the paramount one with which you are concerned. It can mean intensive objective concentration on one important factor. In other words, it can consist of creating a *mental* world, perhaps for a few minutes, in which nothing exists but self and the problem at hand. One can enter the silence so that he is oblivious of his surroundings and yet be using his objective powers of reason, applying them to the matter at hand. A true mystic feels unworthy of an appeal to the universal mind, of entering the silence of the Cosmic for the purpose of soliciting help,

if he has first failed to exercise his Divine gifts of reason and the other mental faculties which have been given him at birth.

To the real mystic, silence means for one to be alone with the consciousness of self, with self as the only companion. After all, a person may be physically alone, and yet he may be so preoccupied with problems of the day, with thoughts of things of the world, that insofar as self is concerned it has been precipitated into the midst of a teeming world of ideas, and self is thus far from being alone, even though the body is. The real mystic can enter the silence—that is, *mystical solitude*—the aloneness with self anywhere, even while standing in the midst of a busy thoroughfare, because he has shut out all else but self.

Maeterlinck, comparatively modern mystic, said with respect to the import of this silence, “No sooner are the lips still than the soul awakens and pursues her labors.” He meant by this that no sooner do we attune ourselves with self, separate our consciousness from the objective world, than we become fully aware of the activity of the soul. Men are always inclined toward silence when they are in the presence of that which is greater than what they can express in words. Thus they are inclined toward devotion and humbleness in the presence of the great, and as we introvert the consciousness to self, we experience the Great Silence.

Mohammed is reputed to have said that silence begins a life of devotion and a frequent remembrance of God. The Quakers, too, were said to have a doctrine that required periodically, at least, that the soul must withdraw into silent waiting, there to harken unto the voice of the Divine. Meister Eckhart, German mystic, affirmed that the student of God rises above the scattered, which may be interpreted to mean that the student of the Divine leaves the things of the world behind him—temporal interests and desires—and tries to find that seclusion and that silence where naught exists but the Divine.

To summarize, the occult principle of silence is to permit the soul to *hear without ears*. It is also to permit the soul to speak or commune with man by other means than that of the mouth. It consists of a complete submission of the will to the Cosmic mind, to hear that which the human ear cannot hear, and to speak through the soul rather than through the mortal self.

Chapter XI

MEDITATION

JOHN LOCKE, ENGLISH philosopher of the seventeenth century, in his treatise entitled *The Theory of Knowledge*, said that understanding, like the eye, sees and perceives all things, but takes no notice of itself. He meant by this that our objective consciousness, our objective mind, is more concerned at all times with discerning things about us, with examining the world in which we live and considering our relationship to it, than with analyzing the ego, the self, just by itself. If we must look into the mirror to see ourselves objectively, physically, it is equally as important to turn this consciousness upon itself, to introvert it, so we can know the sentiments, the feelings or urges of the inner or psychic self. This self-analysis, this *understanding* of the understanding, may be termed the art of meditation, an ancient and truly mystical art.

Briefly, to define the art of meditation, we can say that it is a state of attunement; further, a state of communication between the two consciousnesses—the objective consciousness or the outer self, and the subjective consciousness or, shall we say, the psychic self.

It is important that a distinction be made between concentration and meditation. Many superficial students confuse the two and interchange them and thereby are successful neither with one nor the other, for one cannot think that the right and the left are the same direction and that either one is going the proper way. Psychologically concentration is the *focalizing* of the powers of our mind and the sensitivity of our consciousness upon impressions which come to us in a distinct way. Objectively we are continually allowing our consciousness to vacillate from the impressions and experiences of one sense to another each

minute of the day. In other words, we are continually either looking or listening or smelling, and so on. Sometimes we believe we are doing several or all of these things at one time. This is only due to our ability to vacillate quickly from one series of impressions to another.

In concentration upon something objectively, we are exposing but *half* of ourselves—half of the consciousness of which we are capable—to impressions. We are letting ourselves be actuated by only a portion of that which can move our being. In meditation we start with a definite idea, something about which we want more illumination, which we want to stand out clearer in the light. But in meditation the consciousness is not directed into just one channel alone, to attain that illumination. In meditation we do not merely look or listen. In fact, in meditation we remain passive and allow *all* of the inner and outer impressions to collect in our consciousness and enlarge upon the idea which we have. Meditation is a great deal like entering a large assembly hall. We enter for the purpose of witnessing some performance which is to occur there. There are many doors leading to the stage or platform in that assembly hall. The performers may enter through one or they may enter through several of the doors in the assembly hall. We do not know through which one they will make their appearance; therefore, we do not concentrate upon any single door. We remain relaxed and wait for them to make their appearance so we may witness with understanding what occurs. These doors leading into the assembly hall we may call the doors of memory, of objective experiences, of intuition, and the door of Cosmic Consciousness. Meditation, we repeat, is a *passive*, receptive state, contra to the dynamic state of concentration, where we reach out through one channel in trying to bring something to ourselves.

One prepares for the experiences of meditation by simple but significant rites. The first is the ancient rite of *lustration*—or purification. Your consciousness must not be dominated at such a time by the recollections of memory. Furthermore, your emotions and appetites must not be permitted to engender mental forms, irrelevant ideas, which will arrest your consciousness and interfere with its ascending into the realm of self. As symbolic of this mental purity, it is best that you first wash your hands and face in plain, cold water, then begin

the actual *mental* purge. Deliberately call to the fore of your mind, personalities, incidents, and events which may have caused you to have sentiments which might be interpreted as envy, jealousy, and such emotions as anger and hatred. Then willfully mitigate them. Substitute for them a feeling of understanding; that is, endeavor to realize the weaknesses of human nature which may have caused them—yours as well as others. Let compassion and forgiveness replace animosity.

I cannot say, nor do I agree with the lyrical and classical writings, that you must have a love for those who may have deeply injured you. Such is next to impossible for the neophyte mystic. Any insistence that one should hold such a thought would be to attempt the psychologically impossible and might even create an attitude of self-deception, or rather, a contemptuous hypocrisy. It is easier in connection with such past experiences of which you are trying to rid yourself, to substitute a feeling of tolerance—tolerance toward those whom you imagine to have done you an injury, or who actually may have. Once this feeling has been engendered—that is, the tolerance—dismiss from your mind all such thoughts, and you will have purged yourself mentally and spiritually. In other words, you will have inwardly performed the rite of lustration.

Meditation requires a minimum of distraction. We must be as free as possible from interference if we are going to attain this attunement. If we are going to carry on this communication between the two selves, the objective mind must not be distracted in any way by sounds or sights or things that will occupy or arrest it. If you are going to carry on an important telephone conversation where every word you say will be important, or you believe it will be, and every word of the party on the other end is important to you, you want to be certain that there is no interruption. Possibly under extreme conditions you could carry on the conversation in the center of great activity and noise, but you would avoid such circumstances. You would try to find a quiet place, at least a telephone booth, to help establish the necessary condition where everything else would be excluded except what you were saying and what the other party had to say. So exclusion is necessary in the art of meditation—it is a condition of privacy.

Moreover, an *harmonious* environment is also necessary. Just to be alone in a room is not sufficient. That room must produce a congenial atmosphere. There must be no physical disturbances of any kind; for example, the room temperature must not be extreme in any sense, neither too warm nor too cold. There should be objects or things on the walls or in the room which, if you do happen to look upon them, suggest pleasant memories and feelings—things that put you at ease and bring you a certain amount of tranquility. There should be no outside noises that will penetrate. There should be no light changes. For instance, it is not advisable to have a large electric sign that flashes on and off outside one's window or across the street, because even though your eyes may be closed, these changing light values may be perceptible and will cause your consciousness to be divided which, in turn, will affect your communion with the inner self.

The next step in the art of meditation is to enter the state with some problem or some definite wish in mind, something you hope to accomplish through the communion, or a request that you want to make. You must be sincere in your wish, your request, or your problem. It must be something that you believe you cannot accomplish or find the answer to objectively. It must not be in the light of a challenge, because the psychic self, the intelligence of the Divine Mind resident within you, does not have to demonstrate its ability, its power of accomplishment, to your vain objective self. It can and will do miraculous things, but it does not have to prove it to you, and if you adopt the attitude that it does, you will only know failure. When you enter a telephone booth, or if you pick up a telephone in your home or office to make a call, you are not calling just to see whether the telephone works or if the person is at home, but because you want to establish contact with that person, to convey to him your idea, or to ask for certain information. Consequently, when you enter into the state of meditation, do so with a like purpose—for the reason of establishing the contact, for the acquisition of worth-while information.

It is not necessary that you speak out loud or make a vocative wish. You can express your desire *silently* to yourself but equally as forcefully. Visualize your words. Hold them in front of your mind so that each

word seems to be composed of burning letters, and so that you see and are conscious of nothing else in the room but just your own words. Then sink into what is known as a brown study; become oblivious of your surroundings; merely hold to the meaning of your question, the nature of your request. It is necessary that you thoroughly understand and feel emotionally what you are asking for or what your problem is. If you do not know what you are requesting, or are not sure of it, you cannot expect any answer or consideration from the psychic self.

When you have lost yourself in this brown study and there is nothing remaining but yourself, your problem or your request, and your consciousness of self within, you are apt to experience an intuitive appraisal of what you are seeking. Suddenly you may feel mortification; you may feel ashamed that you have even made the request, and concomitantly with the feeling of mortification will be the realization that your request or your problem is a selfish one, or that it is avaricious, or that it is something by which you alone will benefit and perhaps at the expense of others, and that you should not have ever consulted the inner self. You will feel contrite and conscience-stricken. You may even admit that there is an attitude of malice or vindictiveness deep behind your question or your problem. When such an intuitive appraisal of your motive occurs, abandon at once for the time any further communion with the psychic self. Furthermore—and most important—abandon that problem or question, wish or request which you were bringing to the attention of the psychic self, for you have been admonished that you had an improper attitude.

On the other hand, if your motive has been right, as well as your procedure in developing the art of meditation, you are apt to have an intuitive flash—in just a few minutes' time—of a word or idea that will come as a complete solution or as a complete answer. It will be *convincing*. You will not have to reason about it; you will not have to analyze it. You will know inwardly that it is the right answer: what you have needed, what you have sought. There will be no command accompanying it. You will not be told to do this or to go here or there. The whole problem—if it is one—will be worked out for you, or the answer will be so clear that you will know it is the right one. For example, suppose your problem was, "What is the answer to two plus

two?" If you were successful in your art of meditation, suddenly there would flash into your consciousness either the figure *four* which you would visualize as a picture, or the inner word "four." You would not have to resort to any mathematics to prove or substantiate it. You would know it was right, because of a certain emotional response that would accompany the experience. You would feel elated; there would be a feeling of happiness, a titillation in the solar plexus—that is, a sort of warmth, a glow, a thrill. There would be an ease of mind, a feeling of relief, the confidence that comes from knowledge and conviction.

You may perform these steps in the art of meditation precisely, or to what appears the best of your ability, and yet have no results. Failure may come from a number of things. Particularly is failure in the art of meditation due to three things: first, doubt. If you are dubious that your profound problem, the serious situation which you are taking to the psychic self, can suddenly or easily be solved by the Divine Mind within you, if you are skeptical that an answer about something to which you have devoted long hours of study and investigation before, without results, can come through such a method, then you will fail. Second, if you are overanxious, if you are attempting to rush the communion, to direct the inner self in the sense that you want to tell it what to do and how to go about bringing forth the results you want, you will also fail. Third, if your problem is too involved, if you have not separated it into the integral parts of which it is composed and propounded one part at a time to the psychic self, you will fail. You will be asking for too much at one time.

Presume that you have been successful, that you have obtained the essential word, idea or solution, from the source of inner knowledge. Now you must apply the physical attributes of your being. You must use the energy of your healthy body and objective mind to put the inspired idea into action—you must start to *do something about it*. You may have taken a problem, a business problem, to the Divine self. The Divine self may have outlined a course of action for you, but you must put it into effect. The two, then—the physical side, the proper maintenance of the body and of the objective mind, and the mystical life and practice—are necessary for the complete science of mystical living. Cosmic meditation is not an escape but a recourse to a fountain

of wisdom. It results in a spiritual influx, the results of which the objective mind can translate into procedures, into useful ways of living. What the mystic receives through such meditation, he must pass on to humanity. This is accomplished by transmuting such experiences into material realities, objective knowledge, in which others may indulge. Such revelations are not the mystic's sole possession, to be filed away as a mere part of a collection of his ecstatic experiences. He must use them to help others in their business, professional, or social worlds. In this way he does transmit to humanity what he has received. Such inspiration received in this manner may manifest, for example, in the conception and fine execution of magnificent works of art, astounding achievements in science by which nature's laws are more extensively utilized for the mental, cultural, and spiritual evolvement of man.

The fact remains that many persons are really mystics and have attained such mystical insight by a process similar to what has been expounded here without a realization that they are. In other words, they have not conceived of themselves as being mystics and they do not realize that they have practiced mystical insight. Frequently such individuals have gone into solitude, that is, perhaps retired to a quiet corner of their den or study and relaxed in a favorite easy chair. They have silently and without the formality of a fixed form given thanks for their many benefits, though they may have been simple ones. Likewise, they have hoped that in some way they might become an instrument by which the world may be a better place because they have lived. Thus they have offered themselves in service to humanity. While in such an attitude of mind, and relaxed, they have unconsciously performed the rite of lustration, and they have become attuned with self and the Cosmic. Then they have what to them seems a great inspiration, a hunch, a remarkable idea that seems to come out of nowhere. As a result, their hearts sing with joy. They are enthusiastic and jubilant. Their objective mind later becomes very alert and easily materializes the idea. They have experienced true *mystical meditation*.

Chapter XII

NATURE OF PRAYER

FROM THE RATIONAL point of view, prayer is a *petition*. It may be made silently, or vocatively. When we are emotionally moved, it is instinctive to give voice to our desires. The voice has power in its utterances. The sound of the voice relieves the emotions. It suggests the invoking of the force of the desire—physically as well as mentally. In fact, it is nearly impossible to prevent a vocative response accompanying intense emotional agitation. We are inclined to cry out or speak out under such circumstances.

If prayer is a petition, there must be something or someone to whom it is directed. Obviously we do not pray to ourselves; that is, to our own mental or physical being. If we believe that we are intellectually and physically capable of executing a plan or acquiring something, we proceed entirely according to our own initiative. Prayer, therefore, is an admission of an actual or imagined self-insufficiency. This self-insufficiency causes a tendency in the individual to turn outward, to put dependency upon a force, agency, or source which is *external* to himself. Patently, our conception of this external source determines to a large degree the nature of our prayer. A primitive being with a polytheistic conception imagines a plurality of gods; to him, such gods may be resident in inanimate things, as rocks, the sea, or in storm clouds. In his conception each of such gods is distinctively productive of certain needs of man. Thus, the individual has to evaluate his gods—to one he turns for health, to another for strength, to still another for support against his enemies.

When man seeks to communicate with a power vaster than himself, he devises various means of gaining the attention of such a deity. For

example, when men call upon a human potentate or tribal head, it is necessary to have the potentate disposed to their ends. Consequently, they seek to propitiate him by a presentation of gifts, the gifts being whatever men consider of value. Sometimes the approach to the god is the attempt to create a favorable environment in which the deity may receive the petitioner. Thus theurgical rites of music, song, and dance are used. In examining this method of prayer, two things are observed: first, there is the belief that the deity may grant the request if he is sufficiently *pleased* with the acts of the petitioner; second, we find there is no question of the *motive* of the petitioner. There is no concern as to whether the results of the prayer are contrary to natural law or as to whether they may work an injustice upon other mortals. The psychology in such instances is very crude. It is, in reality, conferring an anthropomorphic nature upon the god. God is conceived of as being like mortals, possessed of vanity, easily gratified by gifts, homage, and ostentation. He is further thought of as being capable of dispensing his gifts or conferring his powers, just as some earthly absolute king, without regard to reason or justice. Consequently, each man can obtain whatever he wishes from the god, if he is able to perform the proper theurgical rites. Men thus vie with each other to gain the secrets of how best to influence the gods. It is this kind of misconception that has encouraged priesthoods from the earliest known society. Priests were and are men believed to possess, or to be trained in, the proper way to invoke the pleasure of the gods for men's benefit.

Although we speak of this practice as being primitive, yet these elementary ideas have persisted down through the ages to influence greatly the dogmas and creeds of many religions extant today. Certain religious sects currently decree a mode of behavior upon the part of the individual devotee. They may decree that he must drop coins into a box, he must regularly attend certain ceremonies, he must repeat specific creeds and enter into authorized rites. If he complies, it is presumed that he has appeased God, or made the proper approach, and that the deity will incline His will toward the fulfillment of the prayer offered. I do not need to designate the sects who encourage these practices; they are known to you, being *common* in your community. These persons, then, pray in good faith and, of course, are most often disappointed in the results and frequently disillusioned as well.

There is still another orthodox conception of prayer which, although it transcends the previous example, is yet quite primitive and potentially a failure. It is the recognition of a *personal* god exercising an arbitrary will. But it is believed that he does so only for beneficial reasons. The individual confers upon this god not only the power of accomplishment but the highest moral value of which he is able to conceive. In other words, it is believed that the god is capable of anything, but will only do that which is in accord with moral good. This type of religionist, then, will not petition his god to grant his prayer if it conflicts with or is contrary to what he considers as morally right. He will not ask his god to strike another person dead or to give him money which he should not have. *However*, this religionist will have no hesitancy in asking the fulfillment of a prayer which he thinks just, no matter how contrary it may be to the necessity of universal or Cosmic order. He would, for example, not hesitate to ask God to stop a war which men themselves have brought on. Psychologically, to such individuals God is believed to exercise His will arbitrarily as against the very laws and causes He Himself has established, if man in good faith and with moral purpose asks it.

The illogicalness of such prayer never occurs to the petitioner. He may pray for his god to stop what another religionist in equally good faith is praying to be continued. The fall weather in California affords an excellent example of such an anthropomorphic conception of god and prayer. In late September the California prune growers are drying their fruit in the sun; an early and continued rain might prove very ruinous to their crop. Conversely, the cattle raisers at that time of the year are desperately in need of rain for pasturage, especially after the long rainless California summer. A cattleman, if he were one of the religionists we have been speaking of, would pray for rain. Concomitantly, a prune grower would pray that it would not rain. If God were to exercise arbitrary will, opposing the natural law of climatic conditions, whose prayer would He favor? Such a religionistic view places the deity in a ludicrous position and makes religion vulnerable to atheism. If the Divine will could and would function arbitrarily, it would disrupt all Cosmic unity. There would be no dependency whatsoever. It is because Cosmic laws perform consistently and are

immutable by the necessity of their nature that man has an assurance of dependability of the Divine or Cosmic principles.

The mystic's conception and practice of prayer is not only the most productive of results, but it is the most logical method as well. The mystic avers that all things are possible within the Divine consciousness of God except that which would oppose the very nature of God. Since the Divine Mind is all things, there is nothing which can oppose it. Therefore, a negative request or petition remains nugatory. One should not expect to find, for example, darkness in light, for where there is light there cannot be darkness. Thus the mystic does not ask for the impossible in his prayers. A mystic never asks for the setting aside of a Cosmic or natural law which he may have invoked by his own acts, whether due to malice or to ignorance. He is a firm believer in *cause* and *effect*. He realizes that to ask that a law invoked by himself be mitigated in his favor would be requesting the impossible.

A mystic does not ask that there be conferred upon him special blessings. He knows that in the Cosmic scheme there are no preferred mortals. Furthermore, he is quite cognizant that everything already is or will be by the eternal law of change. There is nothing held back. In the laws of the Cosmic, everything consistent thereto can eventually be brought about by the mind of man. Things are not transmitted to man, but it is man who directs and assembles the Cosmic powers to which he has access, in order to bring them about.

The mystic does not ask for a completed particular, but rather for the illumination whereby it might be materialized through his efforts; or, if his desire for a particular is not proper, he may ask that the desire be removed from him. Knowing the limitation of his own objective self, the mystic asks that if he cannot be shown how to satisfy his need, that he be shown how to rid himself of the false desire which causes him to think it necessary. The mystic thus proves that he does not insist that his purposes are infallible. He likewise indicates he wants to be certain that he does no other person an injustice by his desires through requesting something he should not. The mystic realizes that with proper understanding, many of the things we now pray for would lose their importance to us and would be shown to be insignificant

and unworthy of a Divine appeal. Many of the things with which we torment ourselves and regard as being so essential to our welfare are so because they have not been analyzed in the light of their broader aspect, namely, their relation to the whole Cosmic plan.

The mystic, in petitioning the Cosmic, turns his consciousness inward instead of directing his plea to a distant external entity or power. The Cosmic is in him, the mystic realizes. It is not just in the reaches of space. He knows, further, that his Soul will answer his petition. The Soul is of the Cosmic and it will guide him to *self-action*. To the mystic, prayer is really a consultation between the two selves of man. It is an appeal from the mortal mind to the immortal mind of Self within. The answer to a prayer, the mystic knows, is actually an insight into Divine Wisdom through proper attunement. The mystic thence is able to evaluate his desires properly, and he is able to act in the light of what is Cosmically right and possible.

When a mystic asks for something which is not forthcoming, he does not experience the disappointment which the religionist feels after his unfulfilled prayers. Whether or not the particulars are forthcoming, the mystic has nevertheless received an understanding which has disclosed to him the fact that his appeal was unnecessary. Prayer, therefore, is always satisfying to the mystic. Psychologically as well, prayer is beneficial to any man if it is mystically practiced. Prayer requires humility. It requires submission to the better side of our nature. It puts us en rapport with the more subtle impulses of our being.

Prayers are usually of three kinds. There are prayers of *confession* when man indicates to the God of his heart that he is contrite and admits a violation of his moral ideals. Then there are prayers of *intercession*. These are prayers in which man asks to be guided so as to prevent undesired effects of certain causes. There are also prayers of gratitude, like those of the Psalms where man hails the majesty of the Divine and expresses joy in realizing his own Divine nature. Of these three kinds, the mystic indulges the latter—the prayer of gratitude—more frequently. In doing so, the mystic avoids the necessity of the other two. If we recognize the Divine and commune periodically with Self, which is of it, we acquire such personal mastery of our own being that prayers of intercession or prayers of confession are not required.

THE SANCTUARY OF SELF

The following is a prayer embodying all of the mystical elements that we have just enumerated:

May the Divine essence of the Cosmic cleanse me of all impurities of mind and body that I may commune with the Cathedral of the Soul. May my mortal consciousness be so enlightened that any imperfections of my thinking may be revealed to me, and may I be given the power of will to correct them. I humbly petition that I may perceive the fullness of nature and partake thereof, ever consistent with the Cosmic good. So Mote It Be!

Chapter XIII

AFFIRMATIONS—THEIR USE AND MISUSE

THE USE OF affirmations is a very ancient practice. They may be found in various forms in the sacred writings of Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohammed, Confucius, Laotse, in the Old Testament, and in later religious and philosophical systems. In almost all instances it is advised that the affirmations be vocative, that is, be spoken and not recited mentally. This is based upon the hypothesis that the spoken word has more efficacy than thought alone and that the very intonations contribute to producing the desired results. Further, the voicing of them requires an action which accompanies the spirit of the affirmations, and since almost all of the ancient religious affirmations were publicly made, or in the presence of others, this also implied a sincerity of purpose productive of more certain results.

As we analyze them, there seems to be a dual purpose in these early religious affirmations. The first is to secure the support, and perhaps the intervention, of the Divine agency in behalf of the affirmer by proclaiming or reciting aloud one's pious beliefs. By the believer stating what he believes, he hopes to have the Divine power materialize or realize the nature of the belief for him. Consequently, as far back as 1359 B.C., we find Amenhotep IV in his hymn to Aton, the sole God, affirming:

*Thou settest every man in his place.
Thou suppliest their necessities.*

Lao-tse affirmed:

*To those who are good to me I am good.
And to those who are not good to me I am also good.
And thus all together come to be good.*

and Saint Patrick affirmed:

*Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ in me. . . .*

Just as one can hardly suppress the emotional reaction to cry out in pain, surprise, or happiness, so the spoken affirmation is considered religiously to be the physical and responsive aspect of the spiritual and mental state of the individual. The other purpose of oral affirmations, from a religious point of view at least, seems to be that in voicing the affirmations one becomes, or is obliged to be, more conscious of their content than if they were merely held in mind in their generality.

An affirmation actually is but the stating of what we believe or know. If it does not represent a sincere belief or actual knowledge, its value is of no consequence. For example, if one affirms: "I believe there is a sole and living God," and yet is inwardly convinced that there is no God, no matter what the conception of a deity, the affirmation is an hypocrisy of the worst kind. Consequently, it follows that what we believe or know we do not need to affirm, for it already exists as an accepted state in our minds. No continual affirmation is going to make something more cogent to you if in your experience or reasoning the affirmation is based upon a false premise. If you have a severe toothache, for example—the pain of which you are very forcefully conscious—the affirming aloud to yourself that you have no toothache or pain is not very assuring, and the very absurdity of such an affirmation makes such a procedure ridiculous to an intelligent person. Such a method of affirmation is dangerous because it attempts to cause the mind to deny realities which should be accepted and overcome in a practical way. A toothache is the result of a natural cause. To affirm that the very evident result does not exist, and consequently to neglect the cause, is to violate not only good common sense, but the very laws of nature also.

Where realities are not concerned, affirmations do have a psychological importance. They are particularly helpful in developing and retaining an individual's morale. For further example, take an armed force moving to the front. As yet, perhaps, it has encountered no hostilities, but the men know that they eventually will and that there is a probability that a number of them will never return. A contemplation of these facts would be apt to be their dominant thought while moving forward and would result in a great depression of spirits. The singing of war songs, however, and the chanting of doggerel proclaiming future victory and the utter defeat of the enemy supplants the idea of defeat with one of success. It is obvious that the emotional and physical response to such thoughts would raise the spirits. The very thought motivates and causes the kind of action, by suggestion, that is required to bring about the result. The value of an affirmation to oneself then is the power of suggestion. The suggestion, as already mentioned, must be *sincere* and must not be contrary to the more positive realities. Thus, if a man has an aggravated respiratory disease and knows that he has it and does nothing to aid himself other than the use of the empty affirmation, "I am getting better day by day in every way,"—for which the French psychologist, Coue, became famous some years ago—he will destroy himself by the use of such a method.

It is common practice for many so-called mystical and metaphysical organizations to advocate the method of reciting affirmations. The first reason they give is psychological. It is held that the positive viewpoint, that one is or will do or realize something, is very necessary to secure results, especially if it is made vocative, that is, spoken. With this, anyone will agree: we must, as stated, have the conviction that what we want is possible of coming into existence, or that it can be had. The negative attitude of mind disperses mental and physical powers.

The second and strongest emphasis these organizations give to affirmations is that the affirmation in itself will become a factor in manifesting the end desired. Thus, for example, they contend that if I affirm "I will take a journey to New York," and say it often enough, it will draw out of the Cosmic, out of the subjective mind or somewhere else, the necessary inchoate factors to materialize the wish. Such is fundamentally unsound mystically, and it is the weak aspect underlying

the practice of affirmations expounded by such organizations. The process borders on superstition and is reminiscent of magic and primitive reasoning; in fact, it is a version of sympathetic or imitative magic. It consists of setting up an image, which is the affirmation itself, with the belief that there is an affinity or bond between it and the actual thing, because the affirmation resembles it. It is the assumption that in some way the affirmation will convert that which resembles it into its own nature.

No amount of affirming, "I want a home," is going to draw the actual materials together and assemble them into a reality corresponding to the nature of my affirmation. The person who merely affirms is indolent. He is mentally and physically lazy. He is transferring entirely, to something else, what is principally his own responsibility and obligation. The affirmation serves best as a mental stimulus, as a necessary incentive for personal accomplishment. If I affirm that I want a home, I mean that that is my ideal, the end that I shall work for, but I will need to start to bring it about.

A combination of mental affirmations and mental creating is the most practical means of coming to realize what we desire. First, affirm what you want. Be certain that it is not a whim, that it emotionally moves you, thrills you when you contemplate it. When you affirm what you want, the mental picture which your words have formed, brings you happiness. Next, consider the subject of the affirmation, the thing desired, as the end; and yourself, that is, your present status, as the beginning. There is obviously a void between the two, a void that must be bridged. Be fully aware that the void cannot be actually overcome by any theurgical power or any affirmations uttered like incantations. The beginning, or your present status, must be enlarged to grow into what you have affirmed. Another way of looking at it is to think of what you want—the complete picture—as a circle. Then think of what you are, and what you have now, as a dot in the center of that circle. That dot must expand until it fills out the circle or until the dot and the circle are one.

Consequently, the first need is to try to determine how much of what you affirm, of what you desire, exists as separate elements in your

present circumstances, and knowing that, then you are conscious of what you need and what to concentrate upon. If I affirm that I shall have a home and wish as well to mentally create it, I should proceed as follows:

Reduce the picture of the home that I have in mind to its simplest components. Determine if I have the property, the lumber, the electrical equipment, paints, hardware, and necessary labor for the home. If I do not have these things, then do I have the money or the means of acquiring them? Suppose I have none of these things. I would then hold that the first step would be to acquire the money for my home. If my regular income would not be sufficient to provide such money, then I would need to render some service, to do something extra to augment my income. I would realize that really the first step would be to make myself useful in some additional way so as to get the needed money. I would then hold definitely in mind the need for such service. I would suggest to myself, to the inner self, that I be inspired in my daily observations by some idea of service. I would ask the Cosmic to help me to find in my affairs something which by my own efforts I could convert into the act of service. I would keep this thought, in its simplest form, uppermost in my daily consciousness. I would draw to myself the needed suggestions for this service.

Now, let me explain further. This drawing to myself would not be a magical power, a mere chanting of affirmations. It would be that I would become especially conscious of any circumstances or things which had any relationship to my need. For analogy, I would be like a man very much in need of a piece of red paper. As he walked down the street, everything that was colored *red* would particularly attract his attention. He would be drawing this color to his attention. By association of ideas, all red things he observed would make him conscious of his need for red paper. Obviously, then, he would locate the red paper much more quickly than if he did not keep his need in mind. That is what we mean by drawing things to ourselves. By suggesting our need to the Cosmic and to our own subjective minds, we put these agencies to work for us. They point out, as a hunch, as an intuitive flash, or inspiration, things in our environment that we can use in our process of mentally creating.

As the term implies, you are a creator. Mentally, you are a builder. You are the *doer*, the prime mover. The affirmer is a mere wisher. He wishes or wants something, and that is as far as it goes, unless he also employs mental creating. The combination of both mental creating and affirming, we repeat, is best. In fact, true mental creating is impossible without first affirming, first positively asserting to ourselves, definitely and concisely, what we want. The affirmation is the direction in which our creative power must go. It is the signpost telling us, "Move along this way. Your destination lies ahead." We cannot merely start to create. We must first have the conception, the plan of that which is to be built. Can you imagine a man sawing boards, planing them, nailing them together haphazardly, and then suddenly stopping to view what came out of his labors? That would be a kind of creating. It would be making something that perhaps did not exist before. However, without intelligent direction, the results of that kind of creating would be monstrosities of little or no use.

Of course, in affirming or establishing an objective to be realized, we must avoid one that is contrary to Cosmic principles. We must not conceive something that is morally or ethically wrong, or is contrary to natural law. If we do, we may fail in our creating. And even if we do create something which is Cosmically wrong, it may, like a Frankenstein, prove to be our own undoing. However, in mentally creating, we always have the opportunity of first *dissecting* our affirmation, our objective into its many parts. Each part then is exposed to our understanding, and if any parts are malevolent or noxious, they can be extirpated and the entire purpose or mental picture revised before beginning.

Chapter XIV

THE LOST WORD

THE DOCTRINE OF the Lost Word exists as an arcanum of the liturgies of many of our religions of today and in the rites of a number of secret and philosophical societies which are still extant. Each has its respective theological or philosophical explanation of this persistent idea. On the other hand, they are all related to a fundamental conception rooted deeply in the earliest beliefs of man.

A majority of these explanations of the Lost Word are based upon the Biblical phrase: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Cosmologically, this means that the creation of the universe was accomplished by a vocative idea—a thought expressed as a word. In this manner, God and the Word are made synonymous. God, or Mind, as a creative reason, is made to manifest only with the issuance of a word. Consequently, the creative power of God is given force only when it is spoken. The force of God is made His voice, or an intonation. It is not sufficient, according to this conception, that God only exist so that the universe and things may come forth from His nature, but it is also necessary that the active nature of His being, the law or decision of His mind, be manifest as an utterance.

It is a matter of observation among men that all natural things have a law unto themselves; that is, there is some particular cause upon which they depend, and such causes and laws are myriad. Therefore, it is the presumption among men that the Word which was first uttered must have been the *synthesis* of all Cosmic and natural laws. The Word in this sense did not fashion out of other substances the elements of the universe. It was not a Divine agent or force acting upon an

indeterminate substance—as, for example, a sculptor's hands fashion a form from clay—but rather all things from planets to specks of sand were inchoate conditions of the Word. The Word is thus conceived as a vibratory, undulating energy in which the basic essence of all things exists. For analogy, we may compare it to a single sound which could include all octaves and pitches simultaneously. Consequently, each individual sound which the ear might discern would depend for its existence upon the original cause, the single united sound. As all color is a component part of white light, so all creation is of the composite law embraced by the Word. Consequently, such a Word is endowed with the importance of being the key to the universe. He who could know and intone it would have mastery of all creation.

In line with such reasoning is the connotation that the law of creation, or Logos, once made vocative as the Word never ceased to exist, never died out or diminished. Upon its continuous tremors or vibratory nature, all things have their causal dependence. Just as the light of an electric lamp is, in effect, dependent upon its constant cause—the flow of electricity to the heated filament within the lamp—so all manifestations are said to owe their existence to the continuous reverberations of the Word throughout the universe. The vibratory nature of each thing thus fits into a gigantic scale or keyboard. Each reality has some relationship to a note (or to a combination of them) which is an integral part of the Word. Thus, certain *vowels* could contain within their combination the complete creative scale of Cosmic energy, according to this conception.

It is expounded by most of the philosophical and religious organizations which preserve the tradition of the Word, that at one time man possessed the knowledge of it as a Divine and rightful heritage, which gave him a true mastery of his domain, the earth. How man became dispossessed of such a great treasure, or lost the Word, is a tradition for which different groups offer various and divergent explanations. Each, likewise, in its own way, believes man may redeem himself and recover the Lost Word, or at least certain efficacious syllables of it. This redemption, it is generally conceded, can be accomplished through a synthesis of exoteric and esoteric knowledge; namely, through the study of the basic natural sciences and

the worship of God, or communion with the Absolute. In fact, there are perpetuated today, in rites and sacred ceremonies, certain syllables or vowels, which are said to be of the Lost Word, and when intoned do produce amazing creative and beneficial powers and manifestations. The Rosicrucians have used these vowels for centuries with excellent results in the various requirements of living. Other mystics declare that the complete Lost Word is ineffable by man; that he would never be able to utter it, even if he came to know its content, but that he can pronounce certain of its syllables from which he may acquire tremendous personal power.

We have said that this belief had its provenance in the early thought of man. A review of its history will contribute to our understanding of this mystery, which has become a respected doctrine. According to ancient liturgical text the Sumerian vocable for word is "Inim," pronounced "enem." From this word the Sumerian developed the concept of incantation. To the Sumerians, incantation consisted of the formal words of the magician or priest. In fact, the Sumerian for incantation is "inim—inim—ma," which is a duplication of "Inim." To the Sumerian, Inim or word meant to "utter a decision." The ancient Semites regarded a formally spoken word containing the force of a command or a promise as a very definite or *real* thing, that is, an entity the same as a substance of some kind. Therefore, from the words of a deity, priest or human, under formal circumstances there issued a magical and terrible power. The formally spoken words of the great gods were apotheosized by the Sumerians; that is, they were regarded as a Divine entity equivalent to the god himself.

Because of its conformity to this conception, let us recall our previous Biblical quotation in part, . . . and the Word *was* with God, and the Word *was* God." Before 2900 B.C., we find the inscription "Enem-Ma-Ni-Zid," which if literally translated, means "His word is true." Likewise, in pre-Sargonic times, about 2800 B.C., and on a Temple record of Lugaland is the phrase "Enem-Dug-Dug-Ga-Ni An-Dub," or:

The word which he spoke shakes the heavens.

The word which beneath causes the earth to tremble.

Here we see the first conception of the dynamic power of the Divine Word, expressed nearly 5000 years ago.

A further development of the Sumerians was the identifying of the Word of the god Enlil with his spirit. The word of the god was made as an attribute of his all-embracing nature, moving forth from him into the chaotic world. For example, another Sumerian liturgy reads: "The utterance of thy mouth is a beneficent wind, the breath of life of the lands." Again, by this we are reminded of the Old Testament, for in the Book of Genesis 1:2, we find, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Following this we are told that God spoke, "Let there be Light." To the Sumerians, the breath of God was a warm flood of light. The influence of the religions of the Sumerians and the Babylonians upon their Hebrew captives is quite apparent in the books of the Old Testament.

The Sumerians and Babylonians invariably regarded water as the first principle, the primordial substance from which all things came. Water to them was not a creative force, but rather the first element out of which other substances developed or evolved. Since, therefore, all things came from water, it was deduced that reason or wisdom dwelt within it. The word which the Sumerians conferred upon this creative principle of water was "mummu." The Greek historian *Damascius* said this word meant "creative reason"—the wisdom which created all things. In the Book of Genesis we find another parallel to this. That is, that water was the first substance over which "... the Spirit of God moved. . . ." This doctrine of water as the first substance found its way into an early school of philosophy of ancient Greece. Thales of Miletus apparently borrowed it from the Babylonians. Anaximander and Anaximenes were apparently influenced by their contact with the Hebrew scholars and their traditions and so they resorted to syncretism as well. They declared that the Cosmic substance was itself reason, wisdom, harmony, or *Nous*. This idea, we see, corresponds to the Babylonian Logos, or Mummu, the creative reason which is immanent in water. Heraclitus, of 500 B.C., who expounded a doctrine of evolution and relativity, that of all matter "becoming," through a process of development from fire to air and return, held that the only reality was the law of becoming, a Cosmic law—the Word.

A transition gradually occurred, in which the Word as a Divine utterance was to be replaced by the Logos (law). This Logos was the *will* of God, expressed as an immutable and active law in the universe. The ancient Stoics held that the Divine principle or first cause was *pneuma*, the breath of God which permeated all things. This breath manifested as a series of creative laws in matter. It became the physical laws which science knows and studies. In man, this breath or Logos became a lesser *spirit* and moved him as a soul.

Philo, a Jewish Eclectic philosopher, at the beginning of the Christian era, developed the Logos concept into a most important central doctrine of a philosophy which found its way into the theological dogmas of some of our present prominent religions. To Philo, the Logos was, on the one hand, the Divine Wisdom, the producing rational power of the Supreme Being. In other words, the Logos was the *Mind* of God. On the other hand, the Logos was not the absolute nature of God—it was not the substance of the deity. It was rather an attribute of His nature. It was reason coming forth from Him as an emanation. It was held to be the “uttered reason.” Thus from this we find that again the Logos takes on the significance of the Word, namely, the expressed will or “utterance” of God. The Logos or Word was held by Philo to dwell within the world. God was not immanent in the world. He transcended it, but the Logos, his Word, descended into the sentient world as a mediator between God and man.

For a summation of this topic, we repeat what was stated in the previous chapter on *affirmations*, namely, that most men have believed that a desire or wish has no efficacy unless it is made vocative. They conceive that a thought in itself is not sufficient unless it is accompanied by some active agent like the spoken word. Therefore, to the natural Cosmic forces, the physical laws of the universe, man attributes a once uttered Word as their source, which continues to reverberate throughout the universe and which he can no longer, at least in its entirety, apprehend.

The Lost Word, affirmations, and many of the principles previously considered have been synthesized in acts known as Mystical Initiation. Therefore, we must now turn to *initiation*, to understand the harmonious relationship of these elements.

Chapter XV

THE TECHNIQUE OF INITIATION

WE MUST ADMIT that the early initiations of the ancients were mostly very crude—in fact, to the extent that they were almost barbaric in their performance. However, many of the current initiations, that is, those that prevail today and are performed by fraternities and societies of our time, are purposeless in meaning.

Nevertheless, initiation is the outgrowth of two intangible human qualities. The first of these qualities is *self-analysis*. It is because of an intense urge to look upon himself, to analyze himself and his environment, that man learns to do many exceptional things. Otherwise he would contribute very little to the advancement of humanity and the progress of society. Man's natural attributes are mostly within him. Therefore he is not fully aware of them. He accomplishes certain things in life with these powers, but whence he derived them he is not always quite certain. To a great extent he is like one lost in a great forest and who, in his despair, is seated upon a chest the contents of which he never troubles himself to investigate. With the passing of time his need of sustenance, food, drink, and protection from the elements becomes greater, and if he would but open the chest upon which he is seated, he would most likely find these necessities. To use another analogy, the average man is like the individual who leans back against a rock on a hillside and bemoans his fate and his fortune and his lack of opportunity to better himself. And yet that very rock may possess a mineral content that would offer him great wealth, but because of his ignorance and his lack of inquisitiveness, he knows it not.

Self-analysis, however, does more than disclose our attributes. It also reveals our limitations, the things not yet possible of accomplishment by us. It shows how far we are behind those ideals which we recognize as a state of perfection. It points out definitely where we need to improve ourselves. The process of self-analysis includes the experiences we have had personally and the experiences related to us by others. We discover by their means our strength, our weaknesses, and we apply reason to them. We may say, therefore, that reason is the fundamental factor underlying self-analysis.

But there is still a second quality from which initiation springs, and that is *aspiration*. Aspiration consists of those sensations and desires and wants of the self as distinguished from the passions of the body. Aspiration finds its gratification in the realizing of a need or some ideal which we have set for ourselves. Though reason in self analysis may disclose our lack of something, it is aspiration that causes us to seek to fulfill the need and to lift ourselves *up* and beyond our present status.

Any rite, any ceremony, therefore, no matter what its form or how it is conducted, is in fact a true initiation if it does the following: (a) causes us to resort to introspection, that is, to turn our consciousness within to look upon ourselves; (b) engenders within us aspiration and idealism; (c) exacts from us a sacred obligation or promise which we make to ourselves or to others that we will thereby seek to fulfill our aspirations.

Initiation, etymologically speaking, is a derivative of the old Latin word *initiatu*s. This Latin word means beginning, a training, or the beginning of a preparation, the beginning of instruction. This instruction of which initiation is said to consist depends upon three very important elements. First, the efficacy, or the power of the teaching that is being given as instruction. Teachings can have only the influence of the authority behind them; that is, the value of a teaching to be imparted depends upon the authority, the *source* from which it comes. Second, the character of the one to receive the instructions, no matter what their efficacy, must be worthy; otherwise the teachings obviously will be wasted upon him. Third, there must be certain conditions in existence for the imparting of these instructions,

if they are to be beneficial; in other words, time and the proper place are important. Profound teachings cannot be discerned at any time. The proper meditation, the proper circumstances, must exist for their assimilation or the seed will fall upon barren ground.

The ancients included in initiation still another important factor. To them it was necessary that the teachings to be given during initiation were kept from the profane, that is, from the masses at large. In other words, *secrecy* was essential. Sometimes this was done because the average man, one without imagination, without aspiration, could not comprehend what was offered—would not be ready for it, to use a common term—and thus he might defile what should be a sacred trust. At other times it was said that the teachings of initiation were intended to be reserved for a chosen few who had been selected as a repository for such knowledge. Therefore, on the whole, one had to be introduced to the mysteries, as the content of initiation was called—"The Mysteries" being the laws and precepts which were imparted. In fact, in ancient Rome the mysteries were called *initia*.

Primitive initiation, or the mysteries conducted by primitive society, developed into two definite categories. Remnants of these remain today in most of the initiations of many orders and fraternities but they are not recognized by the modern candidate. The first of the categories was that kind of ceremony by which a power was conferred upon an individual for an express purpose, by some other individual or by a group of them. Thus, for example, in certain ceremonies, the shaman or the angakok, as the medicine men of the Eskimo tribes were known, would impart magic formulas to the initiates, whereby they would come into possession of a power to cause rain, to grow crops, or to advance the fertility of the soil. According to the shaman the power to do these things was transmitted in a material substance—by means of amulets, in other words. The shaman would give to the candidate, during the course of the ceremony, a brilliantly polished stone, or a bright-colored plume. These were said to have the necessary magical properties.

The second category of primitive initiation consisted of ceremonies which were an integral part of the social life of the tribes. This latter type was by far the most important of the two categories. To explain

simply, in primitive or tribal society, people of the same age and sex usually had the same interests, the same occupations, and the same tastes. Consequently there was a tendency to group these particular societies, these particular classes, according to their function, ability, or disability. In other words, the old were in one group, the young in another, those with no children in another group, those who were single, those who were ill or deformed in still other groups, and so forth. It was thought by primitive man that the passage from one group (or groups) to another produced or had certain effects upon the individual.

Now, of course, the natural effects were obvious. There were the physiological changes that took place when a boy became a man. There were also certain physiological changes when a woman entered the state of motherhood. However, in addition to these, it was believed that there occurred certain supernatural effects. For example, when a boy became a man it was believed that the power by which he became a man, or the power that brought about that change, was also transmitted to him at that time. So ceremonies were held by which the individual was initiated into his new status in society; and the new function and new powers, which he was supposed to have acquired, were explained to him.

It was not until considerably later that a distinction was made between specialized groups. This distinction consisted, on the one hand, of that performance by workers in highly developed trades, arts, and crafts, and, on the other hand, of that work which was common labor. The artisans or craftsmen desired to protect the secrets of their trade. They formed *guilds*, as they became known, for this purpose. Those who were to share in them had to be *initiated*.

There was an excellent example of this custom during the thirteenth century. In northern Italy a number of towns or cities were like sovereign states, independent of each other in every respect. Each city, with a certain area around it, was a world within itself, and they were often hostile to each other. If they were coastal cities, they had their own navies; all had their own armies. Common examples of such city-states were Venice and Florence. During this period Venice became

renowned for its manufacture of glass. It excelled all parts of the world in its exquisite workmanship. The *secrets* of glass blowing were passed down from father to son at first, but with the increase in demands for more and more of their products, it became necessary that they enlarge their output and that they induct others into the secrets of their trade. And so the apprentice became the neophyte; he was *initiated* into glass blowing, and had to take vows not to reveal these secrets to the profane.

Today in our modern society we have certain rites which amount to public initiations and which incorporate the principle of the transmission of power. In other words, the average citizen in seeking to enjoy certain legal privileges has to participate in ceremonies that amount to social initiation. Thus, in marriage, the conferring of this right upon an individual is done in the form of a ceremony that is equivalent to initiation. It is the same with the granting of the privilege of adoption to an individual. Likewise in naturalization, the person wishing to become a citizen must undergo a ceremony, and the powers of citizenship are transmitted to him.

Initiation, as other things, also went through a process of evolution, and with its development man continued to seek in it certain advantages, but the advantages became different. They were no longer just material or physical advantages; they were *moral* ones. Through initiation man hoped to become better acquainted with the gods, how they might be appeased, how their influence could be acquired, what they expected of him, and what constituted right or godly conduct. This knowledge was divulged to man in the form of dramas; that is, initiations that were likened to passion plays in which the candidate played the principal part, or had a role. The candidate, for example, might assume such suffering as he imagined his gods had endured so that he might have salvation or existence. Then again the candidate might assume an attitude of mind which he presumed belonged to the exalted state of the gods. Or he might enact a part in which he would suggest by mimicry those virtues which he imagined the gods possessed and which he desired to have them incorporate in his life.

To receive such initiation a candidate had to prove himself worthy of knowing these *mysteries*. Often he had to undergo a moral preparation. In ancient Greece, for example, all perjurers and those who were traitors, also those who were criminals, were excluded from the mystery initiations. Ancient Egypt had an even more expedient method. Only those who were summoned could actually participate in the ceremonies. One initiation was called the Osirian tribunal. It purported to reveal how the god Osiris in the court of his higher world weighed the soul of man to determine whether or not he was worthy to enter the life beyond. Those who were to partake in such a ceremony were summoned to do so.

The *structure* of most initiations, and particularly the mystery initiations of the past and many of the esoteric initiations of the present, follows *four* definite forms; that is, initiations constitute four principal elements, even though the actual activity and function may vary.

The first of these forms is that which is known as the rite of *separation*. To the candidate or neophyte is made known the fact that he is undergoing a transition of soul; that is, by certain rites and symbols in the ceremony, he is made to realize that he is changing his old order of living, getting away from his old thoughts, preparing for something new and different. During this rite of separation, suggesting a change from the old way of living to the new, he may be told that he will have to separate himself from his family and former associates for a time. He may have to take an oath of celibacy; that is, to remain a celibate until a certain age. He may have to promise that he will isolate himself from the outer world for a brief period. In other words, he may have to become an anchorite, live alone in the wilderness in meditation until a certain development takes place, or he may have to mask his personality in a certain way and resort to simple living. During this rite he may have to undergo symbolical burial; that is, he may have to lie in a chest or coffin to show that he has obliterated the past and left all old ways of living and thinking behind him.

The second form of this structure of initiation is the rite of *admission*. The candidate is made aware by the initiation he is undergoing that he

is entering upon a higher plane of thought and consciousness. This rite may suggest to him that he is having a new birth in thought and living, and this may be symbolized by having him lie upon the ground, then rise to his knees, and finally stand erect as if he is growing. He may also be obliged to come from a dark chamber into a brilliantly illuminated one, depicting the coming from the old world of superstition and fear, which he is presumed to have left behind, into one of peace and new wisdom.

Such symbolical admission into a new world sometimes took the form of what is known as the rite of circumambulation. This consisted of drawing a circle upon the floor of the temple, or upon the ground where the initiation was held, and into which the candidate was placed. Next to this circle would be inscribed a much larger one around which would be placed lighted candles or tapers. Then the mask or blind was removed from the eyes of the candidate and he would cross or step from the smaller circle to the larger one. This represented a transition from a limited world to an unlimited or lighted one. Plato, when referring to the mystery initiations of his time, said: "To die is to be initiated." He meant by this that death consisted merely of that change or process of initiation whereby we depart from our present living into a new realm of existence.

The third form of the structure of initiation is what is known as the *exhibition* of sacred effects. During this part of the initiation ceremony, there are revealed to the candidate signs which represent truths and precepts, the names of the degrees through which he has passed or will pass, and the symbolism of the order.

The fourth and final structure is the *re-entry* rite; in other words, that part of the ceremony by which the candidate is made aware that he is returning again to the physical, to the profane world whence he came. Though he returns again to the outside, circumstances will never be quite the same, because of the experiences and instructions of the initiation which he has had. And usually he is obligated to change conditions in his daily life to some extent to parallel the idealism that has been imparted to him during his initiation. Further, during such re-entry rites there is conferred upon him a badge of distinction, some

physical effect by which it can be known that he has reached a certain attainment. Though he lives again among the profane, by such a sign he is known to have acquired certain advantages.

For example, every Arab, every true Mohammedan, if he possibly can during the course of his life, seeks to journey sometime to Mecca to enter the sacred precincts of the Kaaba and to witness there the holy rites. It is an arduous journey; there are no highways to Mecca, no railroads. The Arab must travel in a caravan, or, if he is wealthy enough, he organizes his private caravan. If he is successful, when he returns he is permitted to wear wound about his tarboosh, or fez as it is commonly known, a white ribbon which signifies that he has made the journey to Mecca, that he has been duly initiated at the sacred See. After each such journey he may place another ribbon upon his fez. I have seen many Arabs in the Islamic countries with two or more such ribbons.

We know from arcane esoteric records that the ancient Essenes wore white robes after their initiations, when they returned again to society, as a symbol of the purity which they had come to know and experience because of their initiation and as a reminder of their obligations and the transition that was supposed to have taken place in their consciousness.

Let us now consider some of the ancient initiations in their entirety, or the mysteries as they were called. Perhaps the oldest of all is the Osirian cycle, the Osirian mysteries. They were called the Osirian cycle because they were concerned with the birth, life, death, and rebirth of Osiris. In these mysteries the doctrine of immortality was first introduced to man.

According to Egyptian mythology, the Egyptian goddess Nut wed the Egyptian god Geb, and they had four children—two brothers, Osiris and Set, and two sisters, Isis and Nephthys. According to legend, Osiris as a god was given sovereignty over the entire land of Egypt, and his was indeed a munificent god ship, for we are told that he introduced laws to the people, whereby they could govern themselves, taught them art and agriculture, irrigation and many of

the refinements which brought ease and comfort. He also taught them how to worship their gods; in other words, introduced religion. And the myth continues that he was most beloved by the people.

Set is said to have become extremely envious of the affection of mortals for Osiris, and thereupon he plotted to take Osiris' life. He surreptitiously obtained the measurements of Osiris' body and had made a very ornate chest which would fit only the body of Osiris. Then he gave a great banquet which he and his seventy conspirators attended, and he invited Osiris to be present. During the course of the merriment Set, in a jocular vein, remarked that he would give the elaborate chest as a gift to anyone who would lie down in it and whom it would fit perfectly. Each of the assembly, of course, tried it, knowing the intention, and it fitted none until Osiris himself lay down in it. It fitted him perfectly, and while he was lying in it they pounced upon the chest and nailed the cover down. Then the god Set gave orders that the chest be thrown in a tributary of the Nile, and this was done. It finally reached the sea and eventually was washed up on the shores of ancient Byblos, which at that time was of the old land of Phoenicia. The legend further relates that a great heather plant grew around it so that the chest was completely concealed, and the plant reached such proportions that it looked like a great tree. One day the king discovered the tree and had it felled to become a column to support the palace roof.

Isis learned of the disposal of the body of Osiris, her husband-brother, from some children, and she set about to recover it. Going in disguise to Byblos, she finally obtained possession of the heather tree. She eventually found an opportunity to remove the chest from the treelike plant and returned it to Egypt. She then placed the corpse of Osiris on the sands, and one night Set, walking in the moonlight, came upon it and was extremely angry, so much so that in his hatred he completely dismembered the body, scattering it far and wide throughout Egypt. Isis, upon discovering this, wailed loud and long. Her grief has been the source of many renowned Egyptian tales. Again she set out to recover the body, and it is said that she eventually recovered all the pieces. The important thing is that when all the pieces were brought

together she *breathed* into the mouth of Osiris, and when he received her breath he was resurrected and again was a living being—not a being of this world but of another and higher life.

Her son *Horus*, by Osiris, later set out to avenge the death of his father by Set. It is interesting to add that this tale of two brothers, Osiris and Set, is the oldest story in the world. In fact, thousands of years ago in Egypt this story was entitled “The Tale of Two Brothers.” The first translation of the story was made by the famous Egyptologist, Dr. Charles E. Moldenke. Much of this eminent person’s collection is now in the Rosicrucian Egyptian, Oriental Museum, and his original notes and papers concerning his translation of the famous “The Tale of Two Brothers” are in the Rosicrucian Research Library as a very treasured manuscript. It is also of historical interest to know that the Biblical story of Cain and Abel is generally agreed by exegetical authorities to have come about as a result of the Hebrews being in exile in Egypt and their becoming familiar with the above Egyptian myth.

This Osirian legend was enacted as a mystery drama particularly in the ancient cities of Dendorah and Abydos. As the drama unfolded the initiates or candidates had related to them by the high priests, or Hm-Ntrs, the significance of each part as a lesson learned. Sometimes these were enacted on great barges on sacred lakes in the moonlight. Often it would take several nights to witness the whole ceremony, and the candidate was not permitted to witness the next act of the drama until he thoroughly understood the preceding ones. It was explained to him that Osiris represented the creative forces of the earth, virtue and goodness, and that his brother Set was the manifestation of evil. The two forces were explained to be continually in conflict in the world. Then, more important, it was shown to him that Osiris had led a good life, had tried to aid and help others, and that when there is no earthly justice a man can obtain his reward in an afterlife. Man must not hope to receive compensation for all of his deeds merely here on this earth. Then it was shown how Osiris was *resurrected* and how he enjoyed an afterlife.

We are further told that the candidate in preparing for such initiation had to abstain from food or water as a fast for a brief time, that he

had to shave his head, and that the unfoldment or illumination of the drama took many nights.

There is still another ancient initiation of interest to us. It is known as the Eleusinian mysteries. It derived its name from the fact that it was performed at Eleusis in ancient Greece. It lasted for a period of about eight days, at a time corresponding to our September 15 to 23. These mysteries had two principal characters—the Agrarian goddesses; that is, the goddesses of agriculture known as Demeter and her daughter *Persephone*. The earliest Eleusinian mystery plays depict the suffering which Demeter is said to have experienced when her daughter *Persephone* was spirited away by enemies. Later, however, they endeavored to convey and demonstrate some knowledge of what man would experience in the afterlife and to teach the lesson of immortality. This was taught by comparing man to vegetation. It was shown how plants wither and die in winter; how they are reborn in the spring, given new life, new power; how they are resurrected from the earth in all of their former strength and glory. And it was declared that when man's days on this earth are over, he will wither away to be resurrected in Elysium, the ancient equivalent of heaven.

We know from certain historical records that the candidates had to journey great distances to the place of initiation—namely, Eleusis—and they had to walk in single file. We know too that during the course of the ceremonies they had inscribed on their foreheads a tau cross, that is, a cross in the shape of a capital letter T. They were also given as a symbol a sprig of the acacia plant to signify immortality, possibly because the acacia plant has the sensitivity to open and close its leaves, thereby representing birth and death.

Now what shall we say is the nature and purpose of the initiations such as are performed by the Rosicrucians? First, generally speaking, Rosicrucian initiation is similar in spirit and purpose to all true esoteric or *mystery* initiations, although its function, manner of performance and symbolism, of course, are different. On the face of each initiation manuscript in the Rosicrucian Order, there is the statement: "Initiation brings into the realm of reason the purpose and into the realm of emotion the spirit of one's introduction into the mysteries." That statement is really the key, as we shall see, to Rosicrucian initiation.

Previous initiations, that is, those we have considered here, were all mostly concerned with the realm of reason. They were intended to introduce to man new knowledge, experiences that had a noetic quality. They were prepared to impart to man a knowledge of his various existences, the afterlife, the nature of the gods, and the content of virtue, and so on. But reason is not sufficient for mastership in life, and man must not be solely and exclusively dependent upon it for happiness; if he were, humanity would become nothing else but a calculating machine. Justice would be solely a matter of man-conceived law, devoid of sympathy and understanding; that which we would do for each other would rise exclusively out of necessity—in other words, because it was the correct thing to do. Human kindness would be dormant. Today's society would conduct itself entirely in the manner of the ancient Spartans. Those who were weak or ill would be destroyed, regardless of any feeling or love. Merely because reason would dictate that it would be the practical thing to do away with them, since they could no longer serve the state efficiently or to the best of their ability, they would be executed.

Therefore, esoteric initiation seeks to acquaint the individual with the content of his own soul, to help him express it, to make it as much a part of his consciousness as the other things of his life. It endeavors to make the intelligence of soul not merely a philosophical principle or a rite in a mystery drama, but a *reality* to man. Therefore, we may say conservatively that Rosicrucian initiation is that process or method having as its purpose the attainment of inner consciousness, the experiencing of Cosmic Consciousness. Each man has an inner consciousness, but unfortunately in most persons it is dormant. Rosicrucian initiation has as its end the awakening of this inner self. In order that this might be accomplished, the initiations, since their earliest inception, have been so designed in their function as to arrest the objective consciousness of man and control it in a way that the inner, or subliminal, consciousness would be liberated and come to the fore.

Thus while one is objectively going through the Rosicrucian ceremonies, intoning certain vowels and burning incense, he is also stimulating his psychic centers and quickening the consciousness of the

soul within him. All of these things provide the mood, an emotional outlet, if you wish, that permits an expression of the soul. For most certainly such conditions as peace, humility, and order, which one experiences in Rosicrucian initiation, are as gratifying to the soul as food and drink are to the body. Rosicrucian initiation exercises the self, the real inner you, by placing it in an environment which stimulates it, just as the process of studying develops certain association areas of the brain.

PART THREE

The Pitfalls

Chapter XVI

OCCULTISM, HERMETICISM, AND ESOTERICISM

IN ORDER THAT we may become better oriented, let us consider some of those directions of thought which the layman confuses with mysticism. Our first consideration shall be occultism. In the popular sense, occultism is held to be a system of hidden methods, of strange practices, whereby man may acquire the way of attaining inexplicable powers by which he may do or accomplish almost anything. Such a conception holds that the occultist is able to witness phenomena which the average mortal may never experience. Consequently, occultism is thought to include subjects such as magic, marvels, miracles, and religious ecstatic experiences such as theophany and epiphany.

However, aside from general occultism as it is conceived by the man in the street, there are what are known as the occult *sciences*, and as we shall see, these truly do embrace that subject matter, those objects of knowledge, which belong to the field of science, but which nevertheless were—and many still remain to be—condemned by religion and orthodox or mundane science alike.

Religion feared occult science. It was the general opinion that the occult scientist might, through his studies and his inquiries, acquire such power as would make him self-dependent and thus independent of the decrees and the dogmas of the church. It also held that the occult scientist was interfering with the realm of God, invading the

jurisdiction of the Divinity, attempting to investigate matters which were not meant for the comprehension of man, and therefore, the occultist was in fact a trespasser on the Divine.

Orthodox science for many, many decades— centuries, in fact— was tradition-bound, obliged to follow what had been laid down as a dictum, obliged not to deviate from its established customs and practices. The occult scientist was not so bound, and therefore mundane science manifested a prejudice toward him, considering him unethical. Intermingled with that prejudice was jealousy, developed from the fact that the occult scientist was making progress and his teachings were being recognized, competing with mundane science for popular appeal and acceptance. The so-called occult sciences (it may seem strange to many readers but it is a fact) included not only those subjects which are generally thought to be of the occult, but also numerous ones which now find recognition by general science. Thus the occult sciences not only included astrology but also aspects which were definitely those of *astronomy*. They not only included alchemy but also that which was purely *medicine* and is so recognized today.

Let us take the example of Galileo, now recognized as a noted scientist, and who was in his time an occult scientist as well. He was a great astronomer and mathematician of the sixteenth century. Galileo first drew attention to himself when he disproved one of Aristotle's fundamental theories. The early Christian church centuries ago discovered that it could not completely reject and refuse to recognize science, because a wave of rationalism was sweeping over the people. Science was impressing them. And so the church felt the need of embracing science; it turned to the doctrines of Aristotle, recognized as the acme of scientific knowledge, knowledge of mundane things dealing with the laws of nature at that time, and declared that man should go no further than to the point of Aristotle's accomplishment. He was the last word in science. Galileo disproved Aristotle's theory that bodies fall in space at a speed proportionate to their weight, for in his experiments Galileo dropped various objects from the leaning tower of Pisa and proved that Aristotle was wrong. Further, he built long inclines down which he rolled objects of different weights and from which experimentation he developed the doctrine of inertia

now incorporated in the laws of physics. This was a challenge to the scientific theories accepted by the church.

His next great move was the perfection of the telescope. He developed an instrument capable of thirty-five times more magnification than the very crude instruments in existence at the time. But his startling discovery, and that which caused him to enter into a serious controversy with the church, began when he turned his telescope heavenward and gazed upon the celestial phenomena and proceeded to make astronomical discoveries, such as the moons of Jupiter. He then came forth with a definite support of the Copernican cosmology.

Copernicus, who lived a century before Galileo, had affirmed that the universe is spherical, and that the sun, not the earth, is the center of our immediate universe. The spread of this doctrine by Galileo caused consternation in theological circles, because if it were true that the earth was not the center of the universe, as the church had taught and believed, then man would not be the principal being that he was held to be. He would not be perhaps the greatest achievement of the Divine and would not be the only agent to possess soul, for if there were other celestial bodies of greater dimension and magnitude than the earth, there might also be intelligences upon them far exceeding the abilities of man, and possibly possessed of greater Divine powers as well.

So Galileo was ordered to appear before a theological council made up of the great dignitaries of the church, and this resulted in their ordering him not to teach, not to write about or to support the doctrines of Copernicus, notwithstanding the fact that he could demonstrate the Copernican theories with his telescope. He apparently consented, and after returning to his home he wrote a book entitled *Systems of the World*, dealing with cosmological theories, and which book really contained a very thinly veiled presentation of the Copernican theory. When this book was circulated, he was accused of spreading heretical doctrines and was called before the Inquisition. Ecclesiastical history relates that he "recanted." Nevertheless, his discoveries, his opinions, spread like wildfire and constituted an *occult* doctrine in opposition to the scientific concepts of religion.

There is still another example of an occult scientist. This was Paracelsus, born in 1493. Paracelsus was a victim, not of religion's prejudices but those of mundane science. His real name was Aureolus Philippus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim. He was the son of a poor physician of noble birth. Paracelsus, too, wanted to be a physician, and he was sent to study the arts in Vienna, and to conclude with a study of medicine at a renowned university in Italy. As he concluded his medical studies, however, he became more and more dissatisfied, because the professors either could not answer the questions which he propounded, or they continually referred to textbooks, the answers of which were unsatisfactory to Paracelsus.

His father had taught him to see Nature through his own eyes; not to glean the functionings, the workings of her laws, strictly through the pages of textbooks, but to look out upon Nature as she is. And so he left the university to start a voyage—a voyage of great discovery.

He traveled about the world. He visited the countries of the Levant, Egypt, Jerusalem, what is now Iraq, the islands of the Aegean Sea, and the principal countries of Europe. There he studied diseases direct as they manifested themselves in the flesh, and not as recorded in textbooks. But while he was making these physical observations, it is related that he meditated long upon man's mystical relationship to God. He contemplated life and the mysteries of birth and of death and the reasons for man's existence and the probable course of human life. The result of his investigations and meditations was the development of great new theories of the treatment of disease and the application of new medicines, and he was not hesitant to speak out strongly in favor of his convictions. He was equally as courageous in his condemnation of the shortsightedness of medical science as it existed in his time.

His phenomenal cures attracted public attention, and by public acclaim he was appointed chief physician or municipal physician of the city of Basel, Switzerland. This city at that time was a Rosicrucian center of learning, including a great Rosicrucian university—the ancestor of the French and American Rose-Croix universities. I have had the privilege of visiting that university, walking through its halls and former classrooms. It is not now a university but a monument to

the Rosicrucians. Paracelsus addressed the graduating classes there, and he even instructed some of them, inculcating into the consciousness of the young men graduates who were physicians the need for a *liberal* view, the need to be individual investigators and to pioneer, and to make nature herself their principal laboratory.

During this time Paracelsus himself published a book which became the first textbook on “miners’ diseases.” It was the first book ever published on occupational diseases; namely, the diseases contracted by men in the pursuit of their work. All of these things, that is, original departures, resulted in his condemnation by the medical men of his time, because of envy and fear, and for diversified reasons. The enmity took the form of intrigues in which he was involved; this was intended to bring him into disrepute, and it eventually did. He was challenged with the question: Who teaches you your new medical theories and practices? And he replied: Who teaches the grass and the foliage to be green? He meant that he received his knowledge direct from his study of nature, just as the grass and foliage receive their functional powers and qualities from nature.

Nevertheless, he was ridiculed to such an extent that one of his names (Bombastus) became an opprobrium for exaggerated statements, namely, bombast. And yet, just a few years ago, at a great convention, the Medical Association paid honor to Paracelsus, not only recognizing him as a great physician, but also as a pioneer in the advancement of medical science. Today there are books containing what are known as Paracelsus’ *Seven Defenses*, his great logical and fair defense of what he was doing. Had these things been published or released decades, centuries, ago he would not have been spurned all these years; but they were withheld so as to further prejudice public opinion and because he was then looked upon as an occult scientist.

Physical science, or material science if you will, begins its observation and its acceptance of reality of the things of our world by a use of the normal senses—our objective faculties such as seeing, hearing, and so on. Physical science is content to augment man’s normal senses with instruments only, such as the telescope, the microscope, and others. It rejects all so-called or actual objects of knowledge which are not perceived by such a means.

On the other hand, true occultism embraces the *psychical* functions of man, the psychic powers and abilities which man has. Occultism affirms that the functions of the emotions, the sentiments and the human moods, cannot all be explained by their organic relationship, as a purely mechanical or material process. Occultism affirms that man has powers that are subliminal, that are beyond the level of his normal consciousness, of which he is ordinarily not aware, and which are just as much a part of his being as his sight, his hearing, or his power of speech. And occultism further contends that whatever man's worldly accomplishments may be, the result of the exercise of his material objective powers, they can be greatly enlarged upon if he will but resort to the use of those unknown *inner* faculties which are his to use.

Occultism has taught for centuries that man is hypersensitive; that is, that he can react and respond to forces and energies of the universe to which the grosser organs of his physical senses do not respond. Occultism also taught that telepathic communication was not only a possibility but a fact, that men could communicate ideas one to the other without material means and without speech. This of course was hilariously accepted by mundane science and used as an example of the fantastic conceptions of the occultist. But what have we today? Today telepathy, clothed in new terminology, is an object of scientific investigation. It is called *extrasensory perception and parapsychology*. This means that science is investigating the fact that man has an extra sense in addition to the five common ones by which he can perceive.

The human aura as a magnetic radiation of high frequency from the human body was referred to as pseudo science, as an occult dream. In present times, the fact that the human body does radiate an energy is scientifically accepted. This energy has been *measured*; that it has a potentiality is known, and it is now an object of even further scientific investigation.

Color therapy, a subject long investigated by the occultist—namely, that color affects the human emotions and plays a definite part in relationship to our health, to our moods and our emotions—was heralded by the mundane scientist as another absurdity of the occultist. Today, color therapy is in the process of laboratory

experimentation, a branch of psychological investigation by medical science. It is recognized that the colors of our clothes, the colors of our environment, of the walls and furnishings of our homes, and of the lighting, do definitely affect us physically and mentally. The occult scientist again vindicated!

Contrary to popular misconception, true occultism does not seek to hide knowledge, to make it secretive, or strange or mysterious. Rather, occultism concerns itself with seeking to reveal the unknown and to unveil the mysterious, and if it is associated with secretive things it is so only to bring them to light. Occultism is also not necessarily a part of religion, nor is it an element of mystical thought. Occultism may become a part of religion, but it is *not* religion. Many oriental religions have included occultism, have infused it into their systems, but nevertheless that does not make occultism a religious doctrine, for no religion includes occultism unless in its creed or system it concerns itself with an investigation of the psychical phenomena of man's nature and the acquisition of self-knowledge.

Sikhism is an example of one of the Oriental religions which incorporated occultism. Sikhism strives to harmonize two great Oriental religions which are hostile to each other, namely, Mohammedanism and Hinduism. Mohammedanism is monotheism; it recognizes a single God—that God is known as Allah. Hinduism, on the other hand, is a pantheistic mysticism; that is, it affirms that there is a God as a force and a mind which does not exist in a being, but permeates all things and is a part of everything, working in and through it. We see that these two religions are at opposite extremes.

Nanak, founder of Sikhism, was born in 1469 A.D. As a young boy he argued with his Mohammedan teachers, disputing some of the principles which they were teaching. As a young man, instead of entering into the commercial life of his time, it is said that he preferred *meditation* and spent much time walking in the forest. It is related that on one occasion he had a great vision in which God came to him; he was advised by the Deity to repeat God's name frequently, and he left, avowed to devote his life to a high purpose but was nevertheless perplexed by the experience. Some time thereafter, when meditating

upon this vision, there came to him as an ecstatic experience a message from God which is now one of the fundamental precepts of Sikhism. It was that there is no Mohammedan, there is no Hindu, there is but one true God.

In the *Granath*, the Sikh Bible, written mostly in Sanskrit, God is alleged to be a power, a force which permeates all things. In this sense, it inclines toward Hinduism. But it is also stated that the Deity shall be referred to as *Sat Nam*, the true God, and He shall be nameless. He shall not be called *Brahma* or *Allah*, but just true God. Man should not presume to know Him by name. It is also declared that the world as we perceive it objectively is an illusion, that we cannot truly know the nature of the world, and therefore worldly knowledge is evanescent, unreliable. The only true knowledge consists in knowing God, in being absorbed into the Consciousness of God, which we might say amounts to attaining a state of Cosmic Consciousness. Now here is where Sikhism “borrowed” occultism, for it affirms that there are certain psychic practices to which the individual, the devotee, must resort before he can attain that absorption into the God Consciousness. These psychic practices are *occult* laws, not generally known or realized, and the devotee must learn these things. They are taught by Sikh teachers known as Gurus.

Occultism is frequently confused, as we have stated, with magic, and to better comprehend our way it is advisable that we clearly distinguish it from magic. Magic affirms and requires a belief in independent agents, entities existing in the universe. These entities are invisible intelligences, according to magic, which are able to exert efficacies. Some of them are beneficent influences, it is declared; others, malevolent. They are said to reside in animate and inanimate things alike— namely, living things—and stone and grains of sand have these magical properties or qualities.

These magical intelligences have no unity of purpose. Each one exercises its theurgical powers arbitrarily, according to the whims and fancies attributed to that magical element. Consequently, it is held that humans are at the mercy of these powers, and that the unfortunate believer in them is constantly obliged to invoke one magical process

against another to mitigate the forces he imagines they have, so he can enjoy peace of mind. But what of occultism? Occultism affirms that there is but one system of laws existing throughout the universe, one great governing intelligence, and that all are functioning constructively and creatively. Man is not at the mercy of these laws unless he turns his back upon them—refuses to recognize them.

There is also what is known as Hermetic philosophy or *Hermeticism*. We should know something about it to further orient ourselves in our mystical studies. Hermeticism is often confused with methods and practices intended to awaken the latent talents or powers which man has, which of course is occultism. And so, to many minds, occultism and Hermeticism are identical, which is not true. Hermeticism generally means that wisdom, that gnosis, which is attributed to a character known as Hermes Trismegistus. But Hermetic philosophy today is eclectic. It has borrowed and incorporated into itself ancient doctrines, Neoplatonism, Stoicism, Gnosticism, and elements of Christianity, several of which never had any place in original Hermeticism.

Some say that there never was such a character as Hermes Trismegistus; others proclaim that he lived before Plato, before the Seven Sages of whom Thales was one—even before Moses. However, Hermes is the name which the Greeks ascribed to the Egyptian god or legendary character known as Thoth. The title “Trismegistus” is the Greek for “Thrice Great,” or the Great Great Great. Inscribed on the Rosetta Stone, in demotic writing, is the name of Thoth—whom the Greeks called Hermes—and the statement that he was the Great Great Great. The Egyptians characterized him as a human figure with the head of an ibis, that is, the head of an Egyptian bird that used to wade, and still does, in the marshes along the Nile.

The Greeks in their ancient writings said that Thoth, called *Hermes*, was the principal source of all wisdom, a sort of fountain of knowledge. They called him the father of philosophy. The Egyptians in their ancient writings referred to Thoth as the lord of books and said he was the inventor of the science of numbers—namely, mathematics—and that he taught men to speak, and moreover, that he taught them the demotic writing. The earliest Egyptian writing was the hieroglyph, or

picture writing, and it is said that Thoth taught the demotic writing or script in the manner which we now write so that man would have many signs for many things. At present, a magnitude of literature is credited to Hermeticism. There are quotations which declare that he, Hermes, or Thoth, was the author of thousands of works, while reliable sources state that he wrote forty two books, and that these had six sections: one on astronomy, one on the science of writing, one on religion, and so on.

Manetho, great Egyptian historian of the third century B.C., and for a time in the past thought to be a legendary character, whose works have since been translated, was known significantly as the Truth of Thoth, and as the First Priest of Thoth, which would mean that he was a teacher of the wisdom of this great character. In the writings of Manetho, we learn that he was commanded by Ptolemy Philadelphus (Ptolemy II), who presided over the great school of learning and the library of ancient Alexandria, to collect for that library the vast learning of the ancient Egyptians. Manetho presented to Philadelphus the sacred books of Thoth, one of which is known as *The Shepherd of Man*, and it is interesting to note that a phrase in that book anticipates a statement in the Book of Genesis, namely, that God begat man equal to Himself.

In the records in stone inscribed on the Monuments of Egypt, the tombs and temples, we find much reference to Hermes, or to Thoth as they called him, and it is said that the principal seat of the school of Thoth where his wisdom was taught was at Khemennu, which the Greeks later named *Hermopolis*, or literally translated, the City of Hermes. It is said that this school was a “place on high ground” where Ra, the sun, first rested when it rose in the East. Of course, this is allegorical, because these records further relate that the school was a place of *initiation* for the mystery school candidates. During such initiation, the candidates ascended the mountain of their inner nature, their inner consciousness, and when they reached the top the *spiritual* sun rested upon them. In other words, when they attained within themselves a state of Cosmic Consciousness, then they were bathed in illumination or spiritual understanding.

Profane or general history, in all of its investigations, can disclose no reason for Thoth and for Hermes being called the Thrice Illustrious or Thrice Great. Rosicrucian records, which are a continuation and a perpetuation of that knowledge transmitted to the Order from the Old World, tell us that there *actually* was such a character as Hermes or Thoth. He was not a god but a great sage, and he was born in Thebes, ancient capital of Egypt, in 1399 B.C., and attained a great age. He received the appellation “Thrice Illustrious” because he participated in the organization of the great mystery school, had the experience of seeing the illustrious Amenhotep IV initiated as a Great Grand Master, and further, had the experience of seeing the work perpetuated by his assisting in the initiation of the successor to Amenhotep IV.

Metaphysics is wrongly used by many persons as a generic term to be all-inclusive, to cover a number of subjects which should be under occultism, esotericism, Hermeticism, or some other branch of learning. It is well that we know the true nature of metaphysics. The works of Aristotle were first collected and arranged by Andronicus of Rhodes circa 70 B.C. Andronicus realized that it was necessary to classify the branches of human knowledge so that they could be perused more easily; this he set about to accomplish, and humanity should be eternally grateful to him. Various names were assigned to these different branches, many of which we still use today, such as *psychology* and the word *physics*, which at that time included all material science. Aristotle himself invented a method of formal reasoning to assist in understanding. This he called *logic*, a term we still use for such a method. To metaphysics Aristotle gave the meaning: literally that which is beyond the physical, beyond the material, in contradistinction to that classification of knowledge which he called *physics*.

In antiquity and today, however, metaphysics is concerned with *first causes*, the primary beginnings of things. Now the causes with which metaphysics is concerned are not pragmatic. They are not material or mechanical causes, such as science investigates in examining a physical phenomenon; rather, they are rational causes, conceived by the mind in its process of reasoning. Metaphysics is a priori knowledge. It is a knowledge which begins with the general, and thereby seeks to explain

the particular. It is a knowledge which starts in the mind rather than outside of it, a product of pure reasoning or abstraction.

Perhaps we can better understand just what metaphysics may be by enumerating some of the topics with which it is concerned. Metaphysics has a great interest in the primary substance of the universe. What is it from which all things come? What is the underlying cause beneath all phenomena? What is the relationship between all things? Metaphysics embraces the topic of ontology: the nature of being, but what is pure being? If everything is reduced to its fundamental state, can there be any such thing as non being, or an absence of it?

Science, for example, recognizes evolution and teaches it. Rosicrucians, as well, recognize aspects of the doctrine which are concerned with natural laws. Science studies the manner in which evolution functions. Metaphysics, on the other hand, questions into *why* should there be evolution, what is the moving principle behind it, why should things develop successively and relatedly, from a simple to a so-called higher state? Science says, "here is how something functions." Metaphysics seeks to know: why does it function as it does?

Rosicrucianism seeks to reunite man with the divine purpose. If its members pursue merely one aspect, they go off at a tangent. They must be drawn back into the whole. So Rosicrucians avoid having any affection, any particular love for a special bypath, so as not to get sidetracked on their climb upward. They investigate all paths, and that is why Rosicrucianism seeks to include all *tried* and *tested* branches of knowledge. Make certain that whatever the direction in which you move in your thinking, you return again to the main trunk; otherwise, you will be opposing your philosophical purpose—the unity of all knowledge.

Man is not free to devote all his efforts to the pursuit of his ideals. He must also combat the weaknesses of his nature. It is these foibles which we shall now consider.

Chapter XVII

ILLUSIONS OF THE PSYCHIC

TRUTH DOES NOT always bring an immediate satisfaction. The realization of it is often quite disconcerting. It may cause a distracting adjustment in our affairs. Consequently to seek, or at least to embrace, a truth often requires *courage* and *sacrifice*. Though many persons affirm a desire for truth, their statements are from the lips rather than from the heart. When confronted with a truth that requires an abandonment of their customary ways of believing and living, they will often actually oppose it; they will prefer an hypocrisy or a self-deception because it is familiar, or because it requires less effort.

Truth that is suddenly thrust upon us is often not as appealing to the emotional self as some fantasy. Many persons cling to superstitions only because they intrigue the imagination and are surrounded with an air of romanticism, which the reality of the truth that exposes them does not possess. To summarize, there are persons who prefer a world, an existence of their own explanation, even if it be contrary to the facts. Many such persons are *students* of mysticism and of psychic phenomena. Really they should not be called students, for they are but dilettantes of the subjects. They like to have their curiosity sustained. They enjoy residing on the *outer* circle of mystery, with the excitement and suspense which it provides. For example, they attend séances of a spiritualistic nature, and listen to the purported communications from those who have gone beyond. They are visibly awed and thrilled by an apparent ectoplasmic manifestation of a “soul,” in a darkened room. They love to interpret every impression of a visual or audible nature

they may have, as a Cosmic Master directly imparting wisdom to them. Every light they see, and which to them has no corresponding objective reality must be, so they insist, of psychic origin. They extol every book or public speaker who confirms their opinion. They thoroughly enjoy assumptions, *and such are assumptions*, for these persons have not one iota of fact to support the majority of their conclusions.

Many have not actually formulated a rational system of premises by which to explain that their experiences are mystical or exclusively of the psychic. Most regrettable is their antagonism to any rational analysis of what they experience. They openly refuse to participate in any experiments or discussions which might easily prove that their psychic experiences are actually not of psychic origin, but are optical illusions or physiological or psychological reactions to environment, which anyone might have under similar conditions.

I have actually seen persons indignantly walk out of a public gathering, because an intelligent lecturer tried to show that every vision seen in a crystal ball, for example, was not a divination or necessarily a mystical experience. To others, they would afterwards relate that the speaker was a “materialist,” who was not prepared for the “higher truths.” By *higher truths*, they meant the many false conceptions which they personally wished to cherish. A higher truth, if one means a Divine principle, will stand the most analytical, materialistic, or scientific scrutiny. It is stronger in its effect upon our minds, subsequently, by reason of such examination. The person who refuses to have what he conceives as mystical or spiritual laws tested or tried, or at least examined in an open manner, is fastening his mind on just what he wants to believe and rejecting what actually may be true.

The statement by a lecturer that something is not a psychic phenomenon, of course, should not be accepted in itself any more than your idea that it is. If, however, he can show you that the same results can be attained in a physical and psychological manner, and if you are really a “seeker of truth,” you will readily admit your former deception. You will *not* want to confer upon a strictly physical phenomenon the designation “psychic” or “mystical,” if it is not. Suppose, for analogy, someone gives you a brick, and states that it is made of gold. You examine it carefully but because of your limited experience concerning

metals, it seems to be gold. Later, suppose a reputable chemist and assayer would, by a spectroscopic analysis, show you that the brick is in fact *not* gold, but just an alloy plated, would you be indignant at his revelation? Would you become adamant and insist that it is gold just so that you would not have to relinquish your own erroneous opinion—and thereby continue to deceive yourself? I believe you would not. You would perhaps be disappointed, but grateful in knowing the truth and for learning the way to determine real gold. Then, likewise, if those experiences which you believe to be psychic or mystical cannot stand the test of just and liberal examinations, discard them as such. Expend your efforts in the search and study of the genuine. Place your affection upon and give your devotion to the truth, not to chimeras.

Again we say that if those who are interested in *mysticism*, *metaphysics*, and *occultism* would devote some study to basic science, physics and psychology preferably, in addition to their esoteric studies, they would derive so much more from their exploration of the realm of the former. Not having any such knowledge, even elementary, of the above-mentioned sciences, they are not prepared to recognize true occult or mystical principles and manifestations. They often waste years of their lives in self-deception, in believing certain of their reactions to be of Cosmic origin, when they are indubitably purely psychological or physical.

It is for this reason that the Rosicrucian teachings also include and stress a study of nature's principles and laws, as they are manifest in the various physical sciences. As we also study our physical being and the physical world, we know to what parts of the scale of Cosmic manifestations to attribute that which we experience.

Let me cite *an actual case* of how persons, intelligent enough, sincere in wanting to master mystical and metaphysical principles, deceive themselves through lack of knowledge of the elementary, basic laws of the physical sciences. A woman wrote and said: "I have a small room in my home set aside for my devotions. I notice that almost immediately after prayer in this room, my body becomes exceptionally charged with a Cosmic or Divine energy of some sort. It jumps from my body when I approach the door to exit from the room. This does not occur in any other room of the house. Further, I notice that if I

go through a little ritual which I perform, the energy becomes more intense. This ritual consists of walking about the room three times, and each time facing one of the cardinal points of the compass for a few seconds, where I make a symbolic sign. Once I was in a hurry because of the pressure of personal matters and omitted this ritual. My conscience was bothering me because I neglected it. As I departed from the room, the energy which usually shot from my fingers to the door, at a distance of about an inch, was lacking. Then, again, I was prevailed upon to take down the draperies in this devotional room, and send them and the rug to the cleaners. Inwardly I felt this rather a sacrilege, that is, the temporary disturbance of this place which was sacred to me. I am convinced that I experienced immediately thereafter an act of retribution. During this time or interval, until the return of the draperies and rug, I did not experience the discharge of the energy from my fingers, no matter how long my devotionals.”

Here was a difficult situation. To state frankly that what the woman experienced was a self-deception, that there was no relationship between the discharged energy and any desecration of the room or neglect of the ritual would have been offensive to her. It would have disturbed her confidence in us. Further, we did not have enough factual information as yet to prove our theory of the physical causes of her experience. We wrote and asked for a description of the rug and the door, as well as a few questions unrelated to these things, so as not to cause the woman to suspect that we were making entirely a scientific analysis of her experience. She cooperated. She explained that the rug was Oriental, beautiful in coloring, and with a high nap. It had been made in India and presented to her as a gift by her brother, who was an engineer in that land. The devotional room being small, the rug entirely covered the floor. The room had once been used by her brother as a laboratory and the side of the door facing into the room was lined with sheet metal, finished to appear as wood.

Without appearing to digress from the subject, we asked her to conduct a little experiment for us. We asked if she had another room about the same size, and with a door having a metal knob or handle. She did. It was a service room off the rear entrance of her apartment. We asked her to place the rug in it and then to perform her ritual. Next,

to leave the room, and as she left, note what she would experience. We requested her then to remove the rug from the room and repeat the same ritual and depart, and also relate what she experienced.

After an interval, she made her report to us. At first, after performing the circumambulatory ritual, that is, walking about the room on the rug, the discharge of energy was noticed as she departed from the room. The next evening she removed the rug, and, personally attired just as she was the night before, performed the ritual; she observed that no energy was discharged, even though the ritual was repeated twice. The woman was obviously now quite confused. The experiment had convinced her that in some way the rug was the cause of the energy from her fingers. She was intelligent; she didn't believe the rug was imbued with any supernatural force. She, therefore, with an open mind, begged for an explanation. It was then simple for us to explain to her the natural physical phenomenon of *frictional or static* electricity which she had produced within herself.

As far back as 600 B.C., Thales, Greek philosopher, found that amber when rubbed with woolen material would attract bits of straw and other light objects. Now, we know that many other objects of different natures, when rubbed together, will produce this same effect. Objects which acquire this property of attracting different other objects when rubbed together are said to be *electrified*; that is, they possess an electrical charge. Some substances which have an electrical charge produced in them retain it—that is, it cannot escape from them—and they are called *insulators*. Substances which lead off electrical charges are called *conductors*. Metal substances are all conductors. The woman, by walking about the room, was rubbing the soles of her leather shoes on the high nap of the rug. This friction produced an electrical charge in her body. This electricity was *at rest*, or static, because it could not escape her body, which acted as an insulator. When, however, she reached out her hand to grasp the metal doorknob, the metal being a *conductor* of electricity, led the current from her fingers. It jumped the gap of space, and at that moment she experienced a prickly feeling at her finger tips, and saw the electrical discharge as small bluish lights.

When she did not perform the ritual, that is walk about, *insufficient* friction occurred to generate the electrical current within her body. Likewise, when the rug was removed entirely, no noticeable frictional electricity was generated. For a considerable time, this woman (and many with actual experiences similar to hers) deceived herself into believing that she was experiencing a psychic phenomenon instead of a demonstration of common physical forces. The weeks or years which such persons have been content to recognize these effects as having Divine significance could have been devoted to a study of that which actually concerns the more profound and infinite principles of the Cosmic. Do not fasten an explanation upon an effect you experience until you have first exhausted all channels of investigation and information.

As a guide, we offer the following definitions of mystical and psychic phenomena, since the two are often confused with each other. When they are understood, they cannot be confused with phenomena which are purely of an objective nature.

MYSTICAL:

A. Any phenomenon which is the consequence of man's consciousness of the Cosmic or Divine mind through the self; likewise, any principle by which it is accomplished.

B. In the strictest sense, a *mystical* experience involves a unity of the mortal consciousness with that of the Divine or Cosmic mind for a varying period of time. The following are the results which in part, or as a whole, always follow:

Noetic: Illumination, that is, an influx of knowledge which transcends that ordinarily had by the individual. Such knowledge always furthers the highest moral ideals of which the individual has been capable.

Physical: The individual experiences great exaltation or ecstasy. He feels as though he has been in the presence of his conception of the Divine.

Psychological: The recipient of the experience is either permanently or for a time following the experience freed of all habitual fears. His moral resolves and self-confidence are given tremendous impetus.

C. Obviously, to the mind, the *illumination* must take the form of either visual or auditory impressions. Such impressions are self-sufficient. They need no further elucidation, or else they would not be illuminating. Where the individual struggles for interpretation or where he experiences fear or conflict with his moral values, his is not a mystical experience.

PSYCHIC:

A. Any phenomenon which cannot be attributed to the physical or objective faculties of man, and which reasonably may be held to be the consequences of the Cosmic or man's spiritual self; likewise, any principles by which it is accomplished.

B. It is patent that before any phenomenon is attributed to the *psychic*, a thorough search for all possible physical causes of it must be made or else the individual is apt to delude himself. A psychic experience parallels objective experiences, in that its sensations may correspond to all of those which are physically realized.

Psychic experiences may be divided into two general kinds:

First: Those where you are conscious at all times that you are the recipient of impressions coming to you. In such instances you are as a spectator watching an orderly sequence of happenings, namely, that one thing properly follows another as a cause and effect.

Second: Those experiences where you are conscious at all times that you are the motivator or prime mover, as, for example, when you are momentarily conscious of *self* as being distant from where you actually are physically. In such an instance, you are aware that the *self* is the cause of what occurs.

C. True psychic phenomena have the following effects upon the one experiencing them:

Mental: That which is experienced is quite understandable, insofar as it is perceivable. As stated previously, things which occur have an intelligible order and frequently give rise to subsequent inspirational ideas. The reason for the experience or the means by which it is realized is not always immediately apparent, however, and may require subsequent personal experiences, or study. *Consequently, no interpretation of it by someone else can be held valid.* When, of course, the individual is the intentional or prime mover—in other words, precipitates the phenomena—he knows his reason for so doing.

Psychological: When fear is had of a true psychic experience, it is *not* because the elements of the manifestation threaten the well-being of the individual, but only because the individual is afraid of the unfamiliarity of the event. However, any experience which by its incidents induces fear for ones person or chastity, is not of psychic origin in the Cosmic or spiritual sense.

Physical: The individual may immediately thereafter experience a highly emotional state for a few minutes, like one having witnessed an exciting event. The emotional reaction will not be unpleasant and will often stimulate the intellectual faculties. Conversely, more often an equanimity and complete relaxation are experienced.

D. Frightening experiences which have no apparent objective origin, and which are fearful in their elements and seem to threaten the *mental*, *moral*, and *physical* well-being of the individual, or which repeatedly harass and perturb him, are due to dreams, physical disorders, or mental aberrations. By no means should these be considered true psychic experiences in the occult sense. Further, such persons are probably ill and need a physician's care.

Chapter XVIII

SUPERSTITION

IT MUST BE understood that superstition never exists where the actual causes of a thing or condition are known, or where fact can supplant supposition. Superstition, then, grows out of ignorance and flourishes on fear. Let us take the example of the commonly accepted superstition, among certain peoples, that a broken mirror brings seven years of bad luck to the one who has broken it. This belief has actually survived for centuries. It goes back as far as the time of delicately made, finely polished bronze mirrors, which likewise could be broken by being dropped. It is rooted in the early religious belief that the shadow or reflection of a human face was the ethereal form of the soul, and to shatter that which reflected the human face or form of the soul was to bring upon oneself the penalty of seven years of misfortune. This reasoning can easily be understood, for, in the first place, there was no desire to question the religious precept upon which the superstition was founded—namely, that a shadow or reflection of the face was in reality the soul. The soul being Divine, it consequently followed that anything which marred it brought a penalty upon the guilty or careless one. Had it been possible to prove that such reflections were not related to the soul, the supposition and superstition would not have arisen.

Superstitions which arise from interpretations of religious dogmas and creeds are the most difficult to remove. Any attempt to disprove them reflects upon the individual's religious precepts and causes a hostile reaction, which, to him at least, justifies his continued support of the superstition. Religious superstitions can be removed only by the personal evolution of the individual—that is, at the time when

he reaches for higher concepts because of an inner urge, and, after grasping them and being assured, sees the faults in his previous superstitions and is, of his own volition, courageous enough to cast them aside. Many superstitions, though, have no foundation in religion whatsoever. Take the modern talismanic practices as an example. It is the belief held by millions that some article carried or worn on the person as a charm imparts certain of its conditions to the wearer or will bring him good fortune. What caused some of these amulets to be so venerated and traditionally accepted, even today—such as a rabbit's foot for example—would be a matter of speculation; however, we can easily understand how they originated, by comparison to the origin of our more modern talismanic beliefs.

For example, as a man is walking along a thoroughfare his attention is arrested by something glittering in the sunlight, lying perhaps in the street gutter. He finds, upon picking it up, that it is a small metallic disk somewhat resembling a coin. For a moment he hesitates and debates whether or not to destroy it since it has no intrinsic value—it is really worthless; yet, the fact that it caused him to stop and examine it and the realization that it is similar in appearance to a coin eventually make him put it in his pocket without further thought. So far such actions are quite ordinary and indicate no tendency toward superstition; they are things which either you or I would do under similar circumstances. Presume, however, that during the day following his finding the disk, this individual had experienced a number of outstanding and unexpected favorable events; the natural inclination would be to try to trace the cause of the event or events—that brought them about—and if no logical reason would become apparent a credulous person would then begin to seek beyond the natural, or, in other words, for some supernatural cause of the good fortune.

The fact that the individual cannot find a natural cause for his good fortune, of course, does by no means establish a supernatural one. It may mean that he is unobserving or not able to realize the factors which caused his good fortune; nevertheless, being credulous he attributes his good fortune to the supernatural. Some credit must be given him though, for his seeking to justify his belief in the supernatural. He combs his memory for some incident or sign that occurred recently

which would point to some such efficacy. He recalls the shining metal disk which he found earlier in the day and that the fact that it attracted his attention and resembled a coin seemed strange. Immediately thereupon the mind grasps upon this as now having some significance. The reasoning followed is that certainly it was not a coincidence that he found this metal disk—something must have been intended by it. It must have portended something, and of course that something he conceives as being his recent good fortune. Thereafter that disk becomes his talisman—his “lucky” piece. He will relate the incident to others, with all sincerity, and he will tell how the disk brought him the good fortune he experienced.

Psychologically such a superstition strangely affects the reasoning of a person. Each time he clasps, or strokes, or kisses the talisman, and desires it to bring him “good luck,” if he receives the things, materials, or circumstances that he has wished, the talisman then receives full credit. The belief in the superstition is consequently strengthened. On the other hand, when the charm fails him, as it frequently does, he excuses the failure and offers some good reason to himself as to why the wish was not fulfilled. In other words, the talismanic devotee is reluctant to abandon his belief.

Almost all professional auto race drivers, when in the race, carry some amulet, which they hope will bring them “luck” and cause them to win. In fact, very few drive without these amulets. I have been told that in a race in which twelve cars are participants as many as ten of the drivers will carry some such “lucky” piece or charm, in which they have the utmost confidence, and yet only *one* can win. It would be interesting to learn how, if they lose or experience injury during the race, they explain away the fact that the talisman seemed to have lost its efficacy.

Almost every man believes that nothing really “just happens” and that there is a cause for all things, either known or unknown to man. If man understands the cause he either utilizes it to the utmost or tries to avoid its results, if he considers them injurious or detrimental. When he, however, cannot perceive or understand the cause he still does not declare the occurrence an accident. Most frequently, instead,

he attributes it to an unknown cause. Now these *unknown causes*, unless he is quite intelligent, he most often credits to supernatural powers; that is, if he cannot perceive a cause or understand it, in his opinion, it must belong to another world or sphere of influence. In this we also see man's ego. Man has a fear and respect for those things which he cannot understand or master. If events occur which are favorable to him and are related to some incident which for lack of understanding he considers supernatural, that incident then becomes a sign or omen of good. On the other hand, if the circumstances were unfavorable to him the incident then is thought to have portended evil, and whenever it occurs again it will be thought an ominous sign. Some things, as we have seen, in the minds of men seem to take on certain supernatural powers. Thus beads, coins, stamps, peculiarly-shaped stones, and even customs such as throwing salt over one's left shoulder, or happenings such as walking beneath a ladder or having a black cat cross one's path, become superstitions.

Many persons practice their superstitions privately, because even in their own reasoning they can find no logic to support them, and they would be embarrassed if others knew they gave credence to them. Yet, these persons are very susceptible to custom and they fear to trust their own reason because they believe there just possibly might be something to the superstition and rather than risk the consequences they pay it homage.

There is no relationship between education and lack of superstition. In other words, one who is educated is by no means free of superstition. Many highly educated persons, even in professional walks of life, are exceedingly superstitious, mainly because they have given no thought to the subject and have made no analysis of the origin or its effects upon them, and consequently they fall in line with the superstitious customs of those with whom they come in contact. On the other hand, the really intelligent person cannot accept superstition. Its foundation is too primitive, too inconsistent with what we know as fact today. There are many professional people who practice little superstitions, who do so as a form of habit, not because of a belief in the principles upon which superstition depends. If these individuals took time to consider the origin of these superstitions they would soon discard them.

Fetishism is also another kind of superstition. In its popular modern form it consists of carrying or wearing on the person the belonging of a relative or dear friend who has departed, with the belief that this article has a power that protects the wearer or owner. We all have sentiment, deep sentiment, for such things that have been left to us. We are proud to wear them because of the memories they revive. These personal belongings of others which we choose to wear or carry become a natural mental stimulus to us, and in that there exists no superstition; but many persons go beyond this. They believe that the article possesses some of the attributes or powers of the original owner, which are now imparted to the wearer, and this belief definitely is *fetishism*. They come to depend upon the article, itself an inanimate, material thing, to exert some influence in a crisis—to accomplish something in some mysterious way which they themselves could not do. To them the article they wear is no longer a symbol or a beautiful suggestion and reminder, but? thing which actually has become infused with a supernatural power.

We must admit, therefore, that superstition is prevalent today and there is not a great deal of indication that it is on the decline. It is quite true that some of the older forms of superstition no longer survive, but new ones have taken their place, the reason being that superstitions come from the minds of humans. The mind that is susceptible to superstition will originate its own kind, in any age.

To avoid being superstitious, as we all must do, first try to understand the causes of things; if you cannot, do not presume to know a cause. Such a presumption, without a foundation in fact, is dangerous. Second, remember that there is no such thing as the supernatural; there are but the Cosmic and natural laws existing throughout the universe. Supernatural is a term invented by man to explain to himself, or try to, what he does not understand. Remember that radio music coming out of a small square box, or the human voice emanating from such a small cabinet, to the aborigines in the interior of Australia, is supernatural—why? Only because they are ignorant of the natural laws involved. There is just about as much foundation for the supernaturalism of our superstitions that exist today as there is for the belief of the aborigines that the radio music or voice they hear is of supernatural origin.

Chapter XIX

NATURE OF DREAMS

DREAMS ARE PERHAPS one of the oldest mysteries of man. Perhaps they were likewise the first experience that man had of the duality of his own being. In fact, some authors on the subject of primitive religion and the psychology of religion believe that the idea of soul and of the inner self came to man from his dream experiences. To the primitive mind, dreams were as actual as the waking state. The acts which occurred in dreams were considered as being those of another self—an ethereal being that departed from the body to perform the acts of the dream during sleep. It is not strange, therefore, that superstitions have developed about dreams, many of which persist today.

In modern times, as a result of psychological experimentation, we have come to learn much about the causes of dreams. We know that dreams we are still not certain as to the exact cause of every type of dream. We do know that all objects and actions which are set forth in a dream are *symbolic*; they stand for some subliminal, some subconscious thought or experience. The difficulty exists in finding the relationship between objects of a dream and that which caused them. A certain thing or conduct in a dream is a symbol of some antecedent thought or experience, or at least associated with one. But which one? Why do I dream that I am falling? What is the cause of my dreaming that I am flying merely by flapping my arms? The superstitious person attributes omens to the elements of his dreams. In other words, he relates them to some incident of actual experience from which he tries to draw a meaning. However, the psychologist knows that the actual stimulus which caused the dream may be quite different from the one which the thinking mind attributes to it.

Many of our dreams are the result of sensory stimulation—that is, the stimulation of our receptor senses of feeling, smelling, and hearing, while we sleep. Such dreams are caused by external agents. The stimulation of the senses during sleep will not generally produce the same results as when one is awake—only random ideation may occur, causing dreams. The body may be slightly touched while the subject is asleep. The stimulus will not be sufficient to awaken the sleeper. The ideation or the ideas which he has, as a result of such a sensation, will not be exactly the same as if he were awake. Such ideational processes have a low degree of integration, that is, the ideas are not tied together in as orderly a fashion; they are haphazard, resulting in the peculiar nature of a dream. In a waking state, if you experienced certain sensations from which ideas would follow, you would be governed by the law of probability; you would logically reject certain ideas that would come to mind as being highly improbable, as being the cause of such sensations as you had experienced. In the dream state, where this low integration, or joining of ideas exists, the law of probability would not exist and whatever ideas would follow from the stimulation would constitute your dream.

Let us cite a few examples. Auditory sensations, while one sleeps, like the rumbling of a distant truck, may be elaborated into a dream of a battle or a storm. Cutaneous (skin) sensations sometimes give rise to dreams of wading in water or lying in the sun. Some persons suffer from head noises. These, or sensations arising from circulatory changes in the ear, are interpreted during sleep as thunder, and the elaboration of the dream adds lightning and wind.

In an analysis of seven hundred fifty dreams made for psychological tests, gummed paper, an inch square, was placed upon various parts of the sleeper's anatomy. Various dreams were the result of the sensations had from this mild form of stimulation. A gummed slip placed upon the sole of the foot caused a dream of dancing. Why did it cause a dream of dancing? Perhaps because of a similar antecedent sensation arising from the sole of the foot after dancing. At least there was some association between the ideas as a result of the test stimulus and others had from some previous experience.

Stroking the hand of a sleeper with absorbent cotton has produced a dream of a cow licking the hand. A bottle of asafetida held to the nostrils brought dreams of a dead horse. All the excitation of dreams, however, does not originate externally. Many dreams are directly caused by strong subliminal stimuli, such as aversion, *fear*, and hope. These are very often firmly planted in our subconscious minds, even though we may not be consciously aware of them. Some experience of childhood, which cannot even be objectively recalled, in later years may frequently produce fearful dreams. Certain elements associated with the original incident will always appear in the dream.

A young and innocent boy became at one time almost guilty of an act of sex perversion. Several years later, the full realization of his near act dawned upon him. The memory was very revolting to him. There was also the fear that such inclinations might be latent within him; though, in fact, they were not. He consciously abhorred and avoided all conduct which might reasonably lead to or be construed as improper sex relationships. The aversion became more than normally established in his subconscious mind. It became a deep-seated *fear*. Frequently thereafter he would have dreams of revolting sex acts, the very conduct toward which he had such a strong aversion. During sleep any internal or organic stimulation which might arouse sex ideas would immediately cause dreams, having the nature of the fear complex.

As to why such dreams recur, they cannot fail to do so when the elements of which they consist are continually aroused. Most thoughts that we have are complex. They are made up of a compound of many simple ideas. Sometimes we do not realize all the ideas which enter into a thought that we have. A thought may consist of the simple ideas of colors, tastes, and sounds, or a combination of these with other ideas, as the result of reason and reflection. Take the idea of a *church*. If it is analyzed, it may be found perhaps to consist not only of the visual ideas of the edifice itself, its belfry and its Gothic windows, but of the sound of its bells, the heavy perfumed scent of flowers mixed with an odor of varnish, and the mustiness of a place not properly ventilated. Consequently, any sense stimulation, which may be related to one of these ideas of the church, would cause the *whole* idea to recur as a dream embodying the church. One time the stimulus might be

merely the sound of bells; another time, a scent, similar to that of an association.

Why are most dreams unpleasant? This has been one of the problems of psychiatrists and psychologists. I think we can advance a logical theory, but confirmation by future experimentation is needed. That which produces the greatest emotional reaction makes the most lasting impression in the subconscious mind. This is an established fact. Fears, aversions, and profound hopes are accompanied by deep emotional impetus. This in itself will result, in most instances, in having dreams that are unpleasant. Where the desires are the instigation of dreams, the dreams are frequently pleasant, because they concern the satisfaction of the desires.

Again, as stated previously, dreams consist of a low order of integration of ideas. This means that the ideas are not united in a consciously rational manner. Consequently, the elements of the dream are often distorted, unnatural, and therefore, unpleasantly disturbing.

Chapter XX

PREDICTION

PEERING INTO THE personal future in all of its diversified forms is a dangerous pitfall but currently a big business. Annually, in the United States alone, millions of dollars are spent in this pursuit. Expenditures range from the deposit of a ten-cent coin in a vending machine for a “ready-made” horoscope, to the payment of one hundred dollars for a “special seance.” Such practices do not necessarily connote that the persons participating are morons. It rather indicates how firmly rooted are the instincts. Blindfold a person in a place with which he is even quite familiar and observe his hesitance to step boldly forward. You will note that as a precaution he extends his arms and gropes ahead as though to fend off some possible obstruction. Man, in life, when he is able to realize it, finds himself in a similar or blind state. He finds that he has consciousness of just his present existence. Where he is now and has been since birth are the only realities that he has to depend upon. Where he, as a spiritual entity, existed before his birth from the religious and mystical point of view, and where he, as a physical being, will be next month or next year, are vagaries insofar as his actual perceptions and experiences are concerned.

Millions of persons today, as in past ages, are very conscious of the evident futility of planning. Today’s accomplishments may be shattered by tomorrow’s unforeseen events. Therefore, just as the blindfolded individual reaches out to guard against a possible unknown danger, so millions try to tear aside the veil of the future to get a glimpse of what lies ahead. Even the revelation of but one year in advance would quite patently be a tremendous asset in establishing confidence and evading possible catastrophes.

Fortunetelling, or divination, relies solely upon one factor, whether its adherents realize it or not. The factor is *determinism* or predestination. It is manifest that unless a future has been prescribed or determined in advance for mankind, it would be absurd to seek it. Consequently, the average system of fortunetelling necessitates the belief in fatalism. This fatalism consists of the belief that man's future has been laid out in detail for him; in other words, that there is an agendum of his life available. Some power or intelligence, it is presumed, has decreed as to what shall occur for him hourly, daily, yearly, until he relinquishes his mortal consciousness at the time of death.

If such a future were to be entirely favorable, it would indeed be gratifying and most comforting to know with the passing of each second that we were approaching these eventual climaxes. However, one need only look upon his own life or the lives of friends and acquaintances to see that fate is not always a benefactor. Therefore, a glimpse into the future, if possible, would likewise reveal for many untold suffering, pain, and tragedy. Such a future would best remain undisclosed, for peace of mind is often found in ignorance of the future moment.

The fact that so many constantly seek to know what the morrow will reveal indicates that either they possess courageous spirits or possibly the belief that the unfavorable *may* be evaded. If fate is absolute and the course of man's life or his destiny has been created for him, and he must pursue it like a ball rolling down a bowling alley, then it avails him little to know of it in advance. Such knowledge could not make it possible to escape misfortunes, for such would be the natural course of events of his life. On the other hand, if man can exercise his reason and power of mind to correct and avoid the future of which he may know, then the future is not absolute and has not been definitely decreed for him. For analogy, if it has been decreed that it shall rain on Tuesday, and I will become drenched by the downpour, and that that is my fate, knowledge of this in advance obviously would avail me very little. However, if it has been decreed that it shall possibly rain on Tuesday and such a prognostication has no relation to me, I am then a free agent, and as such I can prepare in advance not to be caught in the storm. Thus it appears that those who resort to different systems

of fortunetelling believe that the future is vicarious. In other words, things may occur, but the individual can create or choose a substitute course of events.

Therefore, the person who is a follower of methods of fortunetelling founded upon supernaturalism, and almost all such methods are, concedes first that a plan of his life has been mapped out for him. Second, he may, if he knows of it, either submit to it or change it at will. It does not require deep philosophical lucubrations to prove the falsity of such reasoning. Man either creates his own future by his own acts of commission and omission, or the future is determined for him, and it is beyond his control to alter it, whether he knows it or not. Man cannot ride the fence in matters of belief of this kind. The very fact that most persons seeking to know what the morrow holds for them do so in order that they may prepare to accept or avoid it, immediately implies that whether they realize it or not, they think that a great deal of the future lies within their own hands—which it does entirely.

All of the above, some may say, may be quite a simple corollary, and yet there are numerous instances where persons have had their fortunes foretold and the things related have come to pass. If a future does not exist for man except as he himself creates it, these enthusiasts and others may ask the question, "How do you account for such experiences?" I am not going to attempt to belittle such experiences by saying that they are all imaginary and that persons relating them are wont to exaggerate the incidents told them. The fact remains, however, that in the majority of instances such is actually the case, and I dare write from personal investigations dealing with such phenomena.

It is needless to say that many practicing the "art of fortunetelling" are charlatans. However, even where gullible people are concerned, a certain technique is required to insure a successful venture. Consequently, many of the practitioners enter into a dramatic portrayal of their purported powers. Ostentatious gestures and surroundings add to the psychological impression created upon the client. Odd paraphernalia suggests the conjuration of supernatural forces and also adds to the impressiveness of the setting. Aside from that, many of these practitioners have the native ability to analyze their subject

quickly and thoroughly. In a few minutes' conversation, the subject has inadvertently divulged a few words or phrases which become definite clues as to his character and reveal his inclinations and even his wishes. From these the practitioner is able to weave an imaginative and highly probable tale of generalities. When the subject leaves, he dwells upon the generalities, ruminates upon them, and speculates, for example: "I wonder if the woman that he mentioned with the red hair and who loves music is my Aunt Geneva," or "whether the dark man with a business proposition was the chap who came into my office with the brief case yesterday looking for me."

We find, too, that the subject who is loud in his praise of his favorite "prognosticator," often is one who in his ardor has confused the relation of events similar to the predictions. For example, there may be made the statement: "There is soon to be a marriage in your family." Lo and behold, a son, daughter, sister, brother, or some other relative does marry. This is taken as a sign of the merits of the practitioner, but what is remarkable about it? Upon a little impartial inquiry we soon discover that when the general statement was made, "There is soon to be a marriage in your family," in fact the person was already engaged or keeping "steady company," and anyone making even a conservative guess and not knowing any of the facts could have been about as accurate. The details of predictions, as related afterward by the subject, are often not what the practitioner said whatsoever. It is not that the subject deliberately fabricates them, but he jumps to conclusions; his imagination provides the data.

I personally attended, with an intelligent businessman, a session conducted by an "eminent" fortuneteller. My companion had marveled at what he claimed to have been a former accurate revelation of facts, and he wanted me to witness the amazing powers possessed by this person. This businessman had previously had, according to him, a disclosure of the events of the "next" year of his life, and he was now returning to have the second future year's events revealed. I was unknown to the practitioner but was permitted to sit with the subject while the practitioner read from cards. At the close of the meeting my companion was ebullient with enthusiasm, but frankly, the prognostications consisted of the most inane generalities I had ever

heard. My companion “was going to travel.” He would “close some big deals within the next six months.” “He had a local rival who was attempting to undermine his business; he must avoid putting trust in a stranger with a pleasing personality who would visit him in a fortnight.” Could these things come to pass? Certainly, in any businessman’s life, almost anywhere in the world. Needless to say, my future was predicted in like general manner. My companion called me a skeptic.

There is considerable danger in prediction when one considers the psychological effect on the mind of the many who practice it. The direct suggestions as to conditions that are to occur and will occur according to the oracle or medium, as the case may be, are apt to compel one to fall into a state of fatalism without a realization that he is doing so or without an appreciation of what fatalism means. For example, if a certain seer, fortuneteller, or a certain type of astrologer predicts a period of ill-health which, according to him, one absolutely must expect, the subject resigns himself to the prediction. He relegates his consciousness to the mental picture given him. He accepts the suggestion as final. Many persons, when told by so-called fortunetellers that a certain year was to be extremely bad for business ventures of any nature, no matter what they did to prevent it, have regulated their affairs accordingly. They immediately retrenched in business enterprise when that period came about. They would not consider any attempt to oppose the prediction, accepting the prediction as absolute, and of course the prediction was fulfilled—their business did fail—but they themselves were responsible for its failure.

A woman in Australia wrote to me stating that she must be in receipt of materials from me by a certain time, as she had only until March of the following year to live. An astrologer told her, so she alleged, that in March she was to enter transition. She so accepted this negative, fatalistic suggestion as to actually prepare for transition as though she had in reality received a death warrant from the Almighty and He had set her execution for that time.

However, to do justice to the subject, I must not omit an explanation of some results that cannot be depreciated to a status of fraud. Often individuals recount how, with the most precautionary measures that

could be taken, and even with admitted doubt, upon coming into the presence of the practitioners they had been immediately told not only their full names but the names of friends, exact dates of happenings, and minute descriptions of places they had been to or of properties they possessed. Further, they had been told what were their innermost and cherished hopes and desires. Such experiences have been investigated under the form of research known as *psychical research*, and it was learned that they are definitely caused by hyperesthesia—a super sensitivity.

These practitioners themselves do not altogether know by what means they accomplish their feats. The majority of them are ignorant of the fundamental laws of psychic phenomena, or even the elementary principles of psychology. Therefore they attribute their accomplishment to the intervention of external powers or forces. The mediums which they use, such as cards, crystal balls, tea leaves, planetary positions, or whatnot, have been proved as being superficial, and actually such persons can perform the same amazing results without them. In fact, most of them do not need them and know they do not, but they constitute their “props,” in other words, the necessary atmosphere for creating an effect upon the subject. These persons actually have highly developed psychic powers, and *telesthesia* or *telepathy* is inherently simple for them. They use no technique any more than you do to hear a sound that naturally reaches your ears. In other words, they instinctively and effortlessly attune themselves with the radiating aura of the subject and the conscious and subjective minds of the subject.

A great desire, hope, or wish, firmly implanted within the subjective mind of an individual is an ever active power, whether the individual consciously dwells upon it or not. The psychic practitioner *feels* these emanations. To him they are sensations and they undoubtedly agitate or engender ideas in the cerebrum corresponding to those in the mind of the person before him. At times it is noticed that the practitioner seems to grope for an interpretation of the sensations he or she feels. Thus he or she is apt first to make a statement that is not fact, and he or she will realize it and perhaps say: “No, that is not it— just a moment and it will come to me.” And finally they form, from the

sensations they have received, the right idea which they then relate. This procedure, of course, which is not uncommon, is not actually foretelling the future. It is, however, truly reading the mind. An earnest hope, which one is determined to make an actuality, can thus easily be grasped by a *natural psychic*. Likewise, a subject may sometime in his lifetime realize his hope or dream. Consequently, it makes it appear that the psychic predicted his future.

These demonstrations are interesting from research and study points of view, but they are not very practical for, although it may be amusing to have someone read our thoughts, we gain nothing by that, as we already are aware of them before we consult someone else. It reminds me of tests in cases of hyperesthesia that have been made in psychology laboratories. One possessing those powers and standing at a distance is able by concentration to tell what lines on the page another is reading by merely looking at the back of the book. A remarkable feat, true, but hardly necessary from a practical standpoint, especially when one has the book before him and does not need another to tell him what the contents are. There is so much need for the *useful* activity of psychic powers that it is to be deplored that they are diverted into channels for attempting the impossible—fortunetelling—and likewise encouraging frauds. Scientific prediction based upon the study of actual causes and their eventual and natural results is the only kind of fortunetelling that is rational, and it is far removed from any form of supernaturalism. Examples of this kind of fortunetelling are to be found in chemical formulas, in the charts of weather bureaus, and in charts based upon cyclical periodicity of natural laws.

PART FOUR
Attainment

Chapter XXI

MASTERSHIP AND PERFECTION

MASTERSHIP IS NOT only the ability to advocate a way or procedure by which something is to be done. It also consists of the personal power of accomplishment.

Therefore, mastership includes not merely theory or abstraction, but *practice* or *application* as well. You would most certainly not refer to a musician as a master, even though he knew the theory of harmony in music or the science of coordinated sounds, if he could not play an instrument or compose a number, or arrange an orchestration. Mastership then consists of having a complete knowledge of something and the developing of a technique to use such knowledge for the purpose of accomplishment. Every apprentice in a craft or trade, and every student whether of bookkeeping or engineering, if his study is not perfunctory, is seeking mastership.

It is indeed unfortunate that students and teachers of occultism and mysticism have made it appear that they have appropriated the term *mastership* for the exclusive use of those who seek perfection in such subjects. Each of us who aspires to a full, intelligent life is really striving for *mastership in life*. If there are any differences in mastership, they are to be found only in that which man has mastered. Mastership is a technique which we develop, and that technique can consist of one thing or another. It is apodictical that if one becomes a master of playing cards he cannot possibly serve humanity as well as can the one who is a master of the laws of health, for example.

After you have mastered a thing you are able to direct it at will. What is it then that you want to direct? In the answer to that question, you will find whether *your* mastership has more merit than that of someone else. A mystic may have a *series of masterships*, as many often did. Leonardo da Vinci, recognized mystic and philosopher, was a master artist, scientist, mechanic, and musician. Sir Francis Bacon was another of these multi mystic masters. Dr. H. Spencer Lewis, Imperator of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, with his many accomplishments and attainments, was still another example. To them, as to all mystics, personal mastership—the mastership of the objective self and the Cosmic principles of living—was the highest state of attainment, superior to all of the other masterships.

A man is strong in nothing, who is weak in character. No man can rise very far, if he is possessed of uncontrollable passions, or inhibited with deep-seated fears. No possession or achievement is secure, if it is built upon the faulty foundation of superstition and personal spiritual insecurity. The mystic knows this. He knows that man's objective mind is not infallible, that it is subject to vicarious moods, and that its stock of ideas easily becomes depleted. The mystic wants an inexhaustible source of supply, a dependable power that he can draw upon before he attempts mastership in mundane things, such as the arts, sciences, and crafts. He knows that the intelligence, the mind of the Cosmic is ubiquitous, that it pervades all. Every mystic in this sense is a pantheist. He knows that this Cosmic mind is not located off in a distant corner of the universe, nor is it inherent in some remote object here on earth. He is aware that it exists in his being as a higher form of consciousness, as an intelligence which directs and which is *all-inclusive*. He knows that this Cosmic mind does not have ready-made answers and formulas to be released to him, as one would receive them from a slot machine into which he had deposited a coin. Rather, the mystic perceives this infinite Cosmic Intelligence as properly influencing his own processes of syllogistic reasoning so that from his own mortal, objective mind may come the necessary thoughts, points, or principles of living. Since the place where he is most contiguous with the Cosmic Intelligence is *within himself*—the recesses of his inner consciousness—it is there that he turns for this inspiration, this stimulation.

Mystic mastership or mastery of mysticism is therefore the finding of the God Power within oneself. Its practical application consists of learning the usage, to the fullest extent, of these powers and forces with which the Cosmic has endowed us. The mystic wants to secure his position in the Cosmic. He wants to know his relationship to it and how he might draw upon the Universal Consciousness and develop and put to use the faculties he already possesses, before he sets out to accomplish anything of a material nature. Most men, however, function conversely in their own lives; that is, they set about to reach and master some material end before they have any understanding of themselves. Notwithstanding, many succeed by such means—but it is a painful way. They succeed because they eventually discover many Cosmic principles, by first violating them and experiencing the consequences. We would not think a workman trained—or even very intelligent—who sought to build or construct anything without first having knowledge of the tools needed and how to use them. The mystic, by seeking wisdom from the God Mind within himself, learns to use these natural tools before venturing out on a worldly enterprise.

The road to mastership must be a personal one, for it unfolds within yourself. Consequently, you cannot be led or propelled along it. The preparation for mastership is a series of all-embracing, intimate experiences, such as we have endeavored to set forth in the previous chapters. These experiences, out of which the principles may be gleaned, can be had in the privacy of one's home or office, or they can be had in a field, a forest, or atop a mountain. The place is immaterial. Wherever *self* is, and where also exists the honest desire to try certain methods for possibly producing the needed experiences, there is the ideal place. If a master can provide you with helpful methods, he has served his purpose. From then on, it is a matter of personal application.

It is not necessary to sit at the feet of a master in Tibet, in Egypt, or Los Angeles. If what he has shown you or what he may be able to relate to you does not quicken the entire consciousness of your being, so that you may experience the underlying principles of the desired mastership, continued association with the master will avail you nothing. Persons who have associated themselves with masters of an art for a long time are often able to be as successful in some

one application of the art as the master. But if they are able to express themselves only in that one medium, they are not masters, for they have acquired but a single end and are not directing a power at will, which is necessary to mastership.

The mystic does not have to wait until he is a complete master of self to enjoy the advantages of his study. As he learns these Cosmic principles he can gradually apply them to the things of the world. The loose popular use of the term *mastermind* means one who is a genius, or exhibits exceptional ability in some intellectual capacity. As applied to mystics, it means one who has mastered or is mastering the sources and powers of the Cosmic mind expressed within him.

To help humanity to help itself, through a knowledge of self and the Cosmic laws, is the spiritual master's main concern. How this is accomplished is not a process or method that can be standardized so that all immediately recognize it. Men of each age are different. As much as we admire and venerate the ways of Christ in sacred literature, can you imagine Jesus Christ today on earth in this twentieth century, conducting Himself in public in the manner related in the Bible? It is not conceivable, for His ways of then would not be compatible with these times. His spiritual motives would need to find an outlet and expression in forms that would be comprehensible to the people of today. He could no longer speak to the people in parables concerning the life and problems of the simple "fisher" people of Galilee. He could not use the analogies of the camel. Neither could He demonstrate phenomena such as today might likewise be accomplished in a hospital or laboratory. He would not impress people with the magnitude or import of His message, unless He used ways consistent with the age in which He was living.

The Great Master today would need to amaze our scientists and startle them into recognition by His masterful knowledge of physical laws and the properties of matter with which they are struggling. He would need to astound psychologists and psychiatrists with His profound understanding of the functioning of the human mind. He would need to show that there are intangible qualities existing in the blood and in each living cell of the matrix of the human system, which

are contributing to the psychical qualities of man, and which could not be weighed, dissected, counted, augmented, or substituted. He would have to reveal to physicists that the key to the mechanical principles of faster transportation and communication lies not in greater combustion engines, or revolutionary principles affecting the existing ones, or some higher frequency or energy of an electrical nature, but rather in the human mechanism, in the processes of thought, and in the nature of consciousness. He would have to show the chemists of today that life can be chemically created, but that something more than life has made the greatest manifestation of all—*man*. He would have to introduce such systems of diet and hygiene as have not yet been conceived to make plain that right living is far more essential than the development of complicated systems of therapeutics for the cure of the ills that come from improper living. He would not dress conspicuously; He would not appear austere; nor would He walk about in sandals, nor speak in a strange tongue. To the intelligent classes He would be proclaimed as a supreme, *uncanny genius*, but He would win their respect and admiration by His brilliance and by His *actual accomplishments*. His greatness, by contrast, would make them humble and they would seek to be His disciples. They would flock to hear Him speak. He could not proclaim Himself as the son of God; instead, He would proclaim Himself as one of the brothers of humanity, all of whom were sons of God. He would not exhort mankind to be saved, but rather that they cease wasting their divine privileges of living and allow Him to show them what God had created for their use and understanding.

A lesser master than the one just described might not be so diversified. He might devote himself unselfishly to but one great human enterprise, by means of which to best serve humanity and lift it upward. He might, like Pasteur, or Madame Curie, or Edison, or a host of others, bring about untold happiness, by his accomplishments—or more important, a respect for God's laws as manifest in nature. He might cause thousands upon thousands of people *to think*, to turn their consciousness inward, to meditate and cogitate, as have some of the great poets, philosophers, mystics, and Rosicrucians. He might create great works of art, the beauty of which would cause mankind

to sense in earthly forms a transcendent beauty and by its attraction be compelled to seek and to aspire to an understanding of the harmony in all things.

If you want to know where masters may be found, look through the Hall of Fame. You will see in the great deeds done unselfishly for humanity and civilization, by the men and women whose names are inscribed there, the souls and minds of masters, even though they were not so proclaimed. There are masters with us now. They do those things in our midst which stimulate our imagination, cause our pulses to pound and awaken and quicken the psychic powers within us. They cause us to aspire to the spiritual life—what more could any master do?

Is there a relationship between mastership and mystical perfection? What is ordinarily meant by mystical perfection? To one who has the proper mystical viewpoint, there is no *absolute* perfection by which all other things are found to be proportionately imperfect. To the mystic all natural causes are Divine. A Divine cause produces no imperfect effects which, by a series of developments and changes, must ultimately reach the perfect state. There exists no goal beyond Divine causes, which those things depending upon the causes must finally reach.

Advanced mystical doctrines no longer proclaim that the universe consists of a graduated series of realities, each less perfect than the other, depending upon how far they have emanated from God. This ancient conception is traceable through Plotinus to Plato. It originated in the belief that all was once Divine and as things emanated from or fell away from the nature of God, they became less real, less perfect. The solution was held to be a gradual retracing, a return upward to the Divine source. Advanced mysticism contends that since everything has its nature by Divine cause, no thing is false. Everything has a relative value in relation to the whole Cosmic. The ancient Sophist said: "Man is the measure of all things." This is a truism, because it is man who determines in his own mind the value of the whole and of its parts. If it is lumber he wants from a tree, the leaf has little or no importance to him. If it is shade that he wants, then he conceives the leaf as the important factor. In developing a shade tree, perfection to him means

a large leaf and denser foliage. An ape is only imperfect by what we expect in man. A child is only imperfect if measured by that which we expect in an adult; in his own capacity in nature, neither one is imperfect.

Mystically, perfection means *complexity*, the accretion of additional powers and faculties. A forest is more complex than a single tree. It is no more perfect, however, than any of the single trees of which it is composed, except by the arbitrary value which man confers upon the complexity of the forest. Most often, man means addition and complexity when he says *perfection*. Consequently when he speaks of evolving toward perfection, he means evolvment toward greater *expansiveness*.

A spiritually enlightened person, often referred to as a master, is not a more nearly perfect one mystically. He is, however, more expansive. He has unfolded and is utilizing more fully what he has always had as a latent capacity. For analogy, an opened umbrella is not a more nearly perfect umbrella than an unopened one, except as we wish to apply it.

Chapter XXII

SPIRITUALITY

A STATE OF SPIRITUALITY denotes conduct indicative of man's spiritual nature. To live a spiritual life, then, is to be governed by aspirations, urges, and inclinations originating in the divine self, and as expressed by the dictates of conscience. It is also the use of these higher powers and faculties of which man is possessed and aware. There are, therefore, certain noble virtues which are characterized as being spiritually endowed. Such virtues, if not practiced by all men, are at least known to them. A few of these are *truth, justice, modesty, and mercy*. These, of course, can be applied to daily life, its labors and its habits. If we accept the viewpoint that the noble virtues are the quintessence of spirituality—as well as that observance of such commandments as the various sacred works and the different religions expound—then a man who is discerned as displaying them is spiritual.

It is not sufficient to know of the virtues, but to *live them*. A man cannot retire from the world and display justice toward his fellows. A man cannot be truly modest in his own presence alone. One who lives as a recluse can hardly extend mercy. Man must consequently suffer himself to mingle with the world. He must get his feet into its damp soil, bathe in its waters, partake of its fruits, rub shoulders with humanity, share its social, economic, and political problems. He must be an absolute humanist. He must avoid none of the responsibilities, hopes, and aspirations of humanity, and yet transcend its temptations, resist its contaminations by the strength of his virtues. He must, as well, indulge his appetites and heed his bodily desires, and yet circumscribe them with the discipline of his mind. Unless a man participates in life,

his virtues are but an aphorism, an untried moral theory. Goodness, Aristotle said, is the excellence of a function. There is no quality of goodness in man unless he uses his spiritual powers to their perfection; that is, not to suppress his somatic existence but to regulate and control it. An honest man is not one who is always surrounded with only his own property, nor one who is under constant surveillance. Honesty exists in the capacity to be dishonest, and the intentional refraining therefrom. A man is merciful, who is afforded the opportunity to be otherwise.

The spiritual life is thus seen to be a very practical one, for it requires participation in very realistic affairs. The spiritual man is the one of whom people say, "His word is his bond. I would trust him anywhere with anything. You can always expect fair treatment from him. He has a heart as big as himself." These are homely expressions; they fit the man of the street, the worker, the painter, the carpenter, the bank teller, the mechanic, the salesman, the clerk. They are the true testimonials of spirituality, yet they do not proclaim for the individual a masterful knowledge of spiritual doctrines, nor astute wisdom of Divine laws, nor proficiency in exhorting peoples to follow certain paths in life. Spirituality is thus found not in high-sounding interpretations and definitions of sacerdotal phrases, but in that reaction of human conduct to a personal inner understanding and conviction.

The spiritual life is being lived by him who tarries long enough on his way to offer succor to one who has fallen by the wayside. It is not just lived as is done by the one who tells of the need to do this in prettily worded speeches in a book or from a rostrum or pulpit. One's deeds travel farther, faster, and are more lasting and convincing than his words. The soul is a mover of the body; the latter never disturbs the former. Coarsened hands are far less a barrier to the spiritual virtues than soft hands accompanied by a coarsened character. The chewing of tobacco can never stain the inner character as can lies, deception, and cruelty, no matter how finely they are polished. Give me any man pursuing an honorable trade or work, no matter what its nature, who lives the virtues, and I will show you an earthly saint, for all of his overalls and brogans. There is no necessary relationship between the sensitivity of the inner life and crudeness of external manner. Many a vile creature

lies behind a mild demeanor and a cultured exterior. One does not need to be an aesthete, know the technique of drama, the intricacies of the great musical compositions, and be sensitive to the penumbras of color, to be spiritually inclined. Those who are spiritually actuated need not sacrifice their mental acumen, the sharpness of their reason, the keen delight in consummating a sale, the joy of participating in worldly competitions and in the legitimate trafficking in food, minerals, or even gold and silver. Nothing they can do is profane, or a violation of the spiritual, if it is always measured by the virtues to which they respond. Nothing of the earth can blemish their lives, if the soul is the master at all times. One who thinks that business efficiency, good judgment and management in material affairs, and practicability, are signs of a lowly and profane nature, is a hypocrite or is experiencing an unfortunate delusion.

Spirituality is sexless; there is nothing effeminate about it. It is a state of adjustment of the Divine consciousness to the world in which we live, and it is not found in a certain type of individual, nor does it consist of a physical function. One can be masculine, virile, conscious of the strength and vitality of his body, and yet possess the tenderness of spiritual understanding.

I have known persons who excused their lack of efficiency in business, their poor powers of concentration, their deficiency in creative and executive ability, by laying claims to spirituality and an austere aloofness from the proficiency of living. I have heard them say sardonically, "He is a good administrator and therefore his mind lacks those finer esoteric spiritual qualities." One who excuses mental and character weaknesses and indolence by claims to spirituality is more than a sanctimonious hypocrite. He is a desecrator of the Divine, by attempting to relate it to his own mortal ineptness.

Chapter XXIII

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

A NORMAL MYSTICAL state is one wherein an individual receives the incentive, the stimulation, and the determination to strengthen his character, to follow the course of righteousness and to develop the commonly accepted virtues. Such mystical states of consciousness are encouraged by society. Civilization and society in general need all such religions and systems of philosophy which lead man to dwell closer to his God or the God he conceives, and which will strengthen his character and cause him to follow what he understands to be the spiritual aspects of his inner self.

One of these true mystical experiences is that of inspiration, the sudden and complete enlightenment of man in an intuitive way, rather than through the laborious processes of reason or study. However, every inspiration, the result of the ecstatic or mystical state of consciousness, is not a sudden influx of new knowledge or new truth, or a revelation of facts and circumstances. Frequently it is a consecration, the incentive to devote one's life to a certain ideal, to be loyal, to be truthful, or to attain a worthy goal. There are certain tests to determine true mystical experiences. Let it be said here that mystical experiences are not exempt from those tests to which any other experience had by a rational observer would be subject. When one believes that incoherence and obscurity are signs of mystical consciousness, he is making a serious mistake, for the mystical experience must be coherent, it must be rational, and it must be comprehensive.

There are *four points* which, as mystics and many eminent psychologists alike agree, determine whether or not one has had a mystical experience, and has truly entered and attained the state of mystical consciousness.

The first point is known as an *ineffability*. The mystic finds upon return to his normal state of consciousness that he is unable to express in words what he has experienced, and that he cannot convey his revelations adequately to another who has not had similar experiences. This is because mystical consciousness is more a phenomenon of *feeling* than an intellectual experience. Each of us knows how difficult it is to describe to others truly the value or the growth of certain feelings which we have had. The ear of the musician may detect fine tones which he alone can perceive and appreciate, but he cannot make others understand or feel them, unless they too have an ear like his own. The great artist can discern certain symmetry in forms and shades of coloring that escape the eye of the average person, but he cannot possibly make another experience them.

The second point of determination is known as the *noetic* quality. This means the intellectual quality of the mystical consciousness. One has the realization that that which is imparted to him comes from a Supreme or Higher Intelligence, that it is a knowledge or a wisdom that far surpasses anything which could be conveyed to him by word of mouth of mortal man, or that has ever been written for the physical eye to see. Further than that, he experiences apperception, that is, a complete understanding, an illumination. It is not just a matter of receiving certain sensations or impressions. It is a matter of completely and thoroughly comprehending them. It is an insight into God's nature and into the depth of one's own soul. Further, the acquired knowledge is always accompanied by the weight of authority. What is experienced is never adumbrated or detracted from by any question or any doubt as to authenticity. There is always an inner conviction.

The third point is known as *transiency*. This concerns the duration or length of time of the state of mystical consciousness. It is generally conceded from a matter of record that the state cannot be sustained for longer periods than from one-half to one hour. Further, the details of the experience are always recalled imperfectly. One has a full appreciation of the result of the experience, of the thing in its entirety, but what had contributed in detail to it cannot be objectively recalled. We may liken it unto a drink which a thirsty man takes. When the thirst is quenched, he experiences a great gratification, and yet he

would find it extremely difficult to describe the drink. Certainly he would admit, to himself at least, that the coolness and the wetness of the water were adjectives entirely inadequate to describe those qualities which had produced the gratification he felt. Also, whenever the state of mystical consciousness recurs, the recurrence results in a continuous progress. Each experience begins where the last left off. There are no unexplained interims, always a progressive development. It is as if one were looking upon a motion picture screen at a story being unfolded, and suddenly at a certain point the projector was switched off, the light would be extinguished and the shadow pictures would disappear. Perhaps minutes, hours, or days later, if the projector were again started, the visual impressions on the screen would begin exactly where the tale last ended. Nothing would be left unexplained or incomplete. One never goes backward, and there is no retrogression in the state of mystical consciousness.

The fourth point of test and determination of what constitutes the mystical experience of Cosmic Consciousness is *passivity*. Regardless of the performance used to bring about or to induce the state of mystical consciousness, whether it consists of concentration on some fixed idea or some principle or word, or place, or whether it is engendered by some physical exercise, once that kind of consciousness has set in, the individual feels himself in the presence of a superior power, of an omniscience. He has a sense of humbleness, of humility, which overwhelms him. Ego, vanity, arrogance, individuality all drop from him, and his soul stands in all of its pure nakedness before the Supreme Authority. There is no inclination to dictate, to demand, to command. One is inclined to be merely receptive, to wait for a disclosure, for a revelation, like a spectator, with great expectation but always with humility.

Rosicrucian mysticism, as expounded in the official *modern* monographs and teachings of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is a synthesis of those important time-tested, profound Cosmic laws and principles which lead to Cosmic Consciousness. The Rosicrucian teachings include many of the Oriental mystical principles, with such modifications as make them applicable to the Western mind.

Let us consider Sufism as one such example. Sufism is a form of Mohammedan mysticism. It developed in the second century after Mohammed, or Kutam, as he was commonly known, had had his great theophanic experience in a cave on the slopes of Mount Hira, in Arabia. The origin or etymology of the word *Sufi* has not been definitely determined. Some authorities proclaim that it came from the word *Safa*, denoting purity—spiritual, moral purity, as distinguished from the contamination of worldly and mortal things. Others say that it is derived from the word *Suf*, meaning wool, inasmuch as the early ascetics of Arabia, many of whom were Mohammedans as well, wore wool as a sign of their spiritual office or calling. Be that as it may, certain Mohammedan votaries, more profound perhaps than their fellows, more spiritually inclined, began to abhor the religious ostentation of the average believer, the pomp and ceremony of some of the rituals, and the raucous recitation of the Koran. Such demonstrations suggested hypocrisy to them. Also, to these more devout Mohammedans religion meant an inner experience rather than an outward display. They finally became convinced that the Koran, Mohammedan Bible, contained a certain secret text not meant for the casual believer. Very studiously they examined it and selected certain phrases upon which they meditated at great length, seeking that inner experience and enlightenment.

Jalal-ud-din Rumi is generally accepted as the father of Sufism, because it took an organized form, developed into a definite system of mysticism under his preachings and missionary work. Jalal-ud-din Rumi was born in the year 1207 in Afghanistan. His father, a wealthy man, was devout and a noted ascetic. The young Rumi also displayed the qualities of devoutness and spiritual discernment very early in life. Some time prior to departing on his great mission, it is related that he had erected in the courtyard adjoining his home a marble pillar, somewhat taller than himself, around which he would entwine his arms as in embrace and clasp his hands. Then, leaning backward so that his weight was upon his hands, he would slowly walk about the pillar, revolving, as it were, until eventually his consciousness, as he declared, would be lost in an “ocean of love.” This we may define as meaning that he had been absorbed for the period into the Cosmic, into the absolute, and had experienced *mystical consciousness*. After returning from

this submerging in the “ocean of love,” he would be greatly illumined and would disclose his revelations to those who listened intently; these eventually became some of the doctrines of Sufism. Such physical practices have been dispensed with by modern mystics.

It is well that we consider, to some extent at least, a few of these principal doctrines of Sufi mysticism. All being, all reality, no matter what its nature or kind, its form or experience, comprises one unity. God is *unknowable* in His pure, absolute essence. No human consciousness can embrace God. His manifestations, however, can be known and thus to a degree men can also comprehend God. The Sufis recognize substance or matter as an actuality. It is the outer or physical, material world. It is an attribute of the great unity. It is not as some schools of mysticism and of philosophy affirm, an illusion—a product merely of man’s receptor senses. It *is* and includes actual substances. Things are as they seem to be. All matter is a negative aspect of this one great unity. The positive aspect or attribute is invisible. It is a higher world, a world which man experiences within himself, the world of soul or spiritual inclination. We, mankind, so the Sufis claim, are an objectification of God, the material form of God, His consciousness clothed in substance. God is necessary to us; no one will dispute that, but the Sufist goes beyond that. He declares that we are necessary to God, because God manifests Himself or His consciousness in our physical form, and without us God would have no expression in substance.

The method of attainment of mystical consciousness, as advocated by the Sufis, is really a *trilogy*; that is, it consists of three experiences:

A. The realization of *self*, that man must truly be aware of the individuality of consciousness, that he is, and also that all other things are; that he has not an independent existence but rather an independent expression, and that is self;

B. The realization of *God*, not an absolute knowledge of God, not that man’s conscience can so embrace Him as to comprehend God and thus know all things and thus be God, but rather that he have a personal inner conviction when alone by himself, and without lip tribute to religion, dogma, or creed that a God does exist;

C. The realization of the *Absolute*, that is, that it does exist, that there is a unity, that God, self and substance are, the one flowing into the other, and yet each has its purpose and its place and man must be able to realize a distinction between them.

This triune attainment comes as the result of the disciple following a path. The path is termed *Toriqua*. It consists of several stages or steps. After all, it is not strange that it is stated that one must pursue a path or a course for attainment, for even our various Christian sects expound a path which one must follow to attain "salvation," or to "enter the Kingdom of God." The Sufi, however, is not required to await an eventual reward for the labor and efforts put forth in pursuing this path. There are progressive rewards which he earns as he attains each stage. Some of these are charity, enduring patience, trust in God, humility, and Peace Profound.

To many of the other Oriental mystics, the sum total of all mystical experience was *ecstasy*, a sublime pleasure, a harmony of all sensations of which the human consciousness is capable. This ecstasy was a momentary absorption of self into the Cosmic, an afflatus of the soul. All sense of time and space were gone. In fact, the supreme ecstasy meant not even to be aware of the self as we ordinarily think of self. There was no consciousness of one's personality, one's character, one's identity, or such finite things as name, weight, or race. Consequently, it was with reluctance that the Oriental mystics returned to the world. They psychically experienced Being, that is, they were part of all things, and all things were of them and in them, and yet they were nothing in particular and nothing had any particulars.

To the true mystic, however, physical existence and mortal existence are not something to be cast aside in favor of a permanent absorption into the Cosmic. In fact, the true mystic realizes that the soul can never be so free that it can be absorbed permanently into the Cosmic before death. Until death, then, the mystic may only hope and be happy in the opportunity for mere glimpses of the Cosmic.

Meister Eckhart, great medieval mystic, stated that an *object* and an image are bound in one. We cannot think of fire without likewise thinking of heat. And he went on to relate that, therefore, we cannot

separate an image from its object. Now the Cosmic is the *object*; it is real. Conversely, the physical or material world is the *image*; it is a reflection of the object or the Cosmic. We know that a poor mirror distorts an image and so, too, our objective consciousness often reflects an image or picture of the whole Cosmos that is not a true one. It may be very incomplete, very imperfect.

The mystic consciousness, however, to which we should resort periodically, reveals a true image of existence. The true mystic, then, uses his *illumination*, the result of his mystical experiences, to fashion life, his mortal existence, after the Cosmic. The true mystic is not unlike an artist painting the landscape from within a cell in which he is confined. Over the window of the cell there hangs a shade, and occasional breezes fluttering it permit glimpses of the great sunlit beauty of a landscape without. After each glimpse the artist imparts his experience of what he has seen to the canvas before him in the cell, and after many glimpses and much labor, the canvas gradually partakes of the realism and splendor of nature. Finally, when looking upon the canvas, he experiences that same rapture which he did when peering out of the window as the shade permitted. Therefore, the Rosicrucian mystic, the modern mystic, makes his world include all of the Cosmic virtues and values which he has been able to glean in an understanding of his mystical experience. The Cosmic is the object, the world is the image, and the mystic makes that image conform as closely as possible to the object. He interprets his experiences of Cosmic Consciousness in terms of constructive, creative, humanitarian enterprises here on earth.

The mystical consciousness, therefore, in function should result in an integrating of the so-called spiritual and material worlds. It should make it possible for man to create more fully in his limited, objective world. Man expands spiritually, not just through experiencing the greater majesty of the Cosmic, but by *emulating* it, by converting his illumined consciousness into creative, unselfish, mundane achievements. The mystic, therefore, as part of his technique, needs not to lose his touch with other mortals in the material world. He must train himself objectively. He must become proficient in some trade, art, or science. These are the tools by which he shapes his mastery of

life when he has the Cosmic illumination by which to set for himself a particular objective.

A mystic should and can be capable of executing some plan in the business, scientific, or art worlds, that will win the respect of his fellow workers and associates, just as easily as he can turn his consciousness inward and experience the majesty of the Cosmic. It is only their ignorance that causes some to conceive a mystic as inept to confront the mundane realities of the day. It is an insult to the powers which the mystic has developed within himself to believe him helpless, inarticulate in worldly surroundings, and that he should therefore hide himself away to some mountain retreat to escape life's realities. This false conception, which is too generally held, purports to make a mystic a failure where other men succeed.

If you would know a mystic, do not confine your search for him to monasteries and temples, but look for him also on the highways and byways, in towns and hamlets, and in the hustle and bustle of the great cosmopolitan centers of the world. When you find a man who is industrious, studious, compassionate, loved by his friends and neighbors, tolerant in his religious views, and who can point out to you the magnificence and efficacy of God in the simplest of things, you have found a mystic. With these qualities, whether he be attired in a sacerdotal robe or in the overalls of a mechanic, he is none the less a mystic.

We have not meant to imply in all the foregoing that there is but one specific, fixed technique which everyone must use to attain a mystic consciousness. There are those who will read these chapters who have found more responsive methods. Eventually each individual acquires intimate personal ways and means which afford him a greater facility for reaching the sublime state of attunement. However, as in crafts and trades, certain fundamentals must be learned first, and the foregoing have been offered as rudimentary principles which, if followed faithfully, intelligently, and with true purpose in mind, will lead to a technique of mysticism and the full life it affords.

THE END

THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER, AMORC

Purpose and Work of the Order

The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is a philosophical and initiatic tradition. As students progress in their studies, they are initiated into the next level or degree.

Rosicrucians are men and women around the world who study the laws of nature in order to live in harmony with them. Individuals study the Rosicrucian lessons in the privacy of their own homes on subjects such as the nature of the soul, developing intuition, classical Greek philosophy, energy centers in the body, and self-healing techniques.

The Rosicrucian tradition encourages each student to discover the wisdom, compassion, strength, and peace that already reside within each of us.

www.rosicrucian.org