

# PRACTICAL MAGIC AND THE WESTERN MYSTERY TRADITION

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Unpublished Essays and Articles by  
W.E. Butler



Compiled and Edited by  
Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki



# PRACTICAL MAGIC AND THE WESTERN MYSTERY TRADITION

W. E. Butler, a devoted friend and colleague of the celebrated occultist Dion Fortune, was among those who helped build the Society of the Inner Light into the foremost Mystery School of its day. He then went on to found his own school, the Servants of the Light, which still continues under the guidance of Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, herself an occultist and author of note and the editor of this volume.

PRACTICAL MAGIC AND THE WESTERN MYSTERY TRADITION is a collection of previously unpublished articles, training papers, and lectures covering many aspects of practical magic in the context of western occultism that show W. E. Butler not only as a leading figure in the magical tradition of the West, but also as one of its greatest teachers.

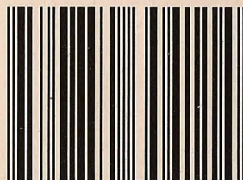
Subjects covered include:

- ★ What makes an occultist
  - ★ Ritual training
  - ★ Inner Plane contacts
  - ★ Telematic images
  - ★ Words of Power



THE AQUARIAN PRESS  
Wellingborough, Northamptonshire

ISBN 0-85030-411-3



9 780850 304114



First published 1986

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Butler, W.E.

Practical magic and the Western mystery tradition.

1. Occult sciences

I. Title II. Ashcroft-Nowicki, Dolores

133 BF1411

ISBN 0-85030-411-3

*The Aquarian Press is part of the Thorsons Publishing Group*

Printed and bound in Great Britain by  
Anchor Brendon Ltd, Tiptree, Essex

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To Mrs Gladys Butler  
with love and gratitude for her unselfish sharing of W.E.B.  
with others.

## Foreword

In the days before the bombing started, Belfast's Smithfield Market was a favourite haunt of mine. You could find me there almost any Saturday afternoon, a solitary teenager driven by desperation to the only decent source of science fiction paperbacks within a hundred miles.

It was on such a Saturday, sifting through the Asimovs and Heinleins, that I came across a tiny maroon-backed book entitled *Magic: Its Ritual Power and Purpose*. Its author was listed as W.E. Butler.

What the work was doing among the spaceships, I never did find out. But I began to browse through its pages with a growing excitement. Even in those days, my interest in the esoteric was well developed. I had devoured most of the standard Victorian tomes on psychical research, read extensively on spiritualism and even attended a seance or two. But the little book on magic was something of a different order. It was the first strictly occult work I had ever seen. And reading it, I felt I had suddenly come home.

Anyone with an interest in practical magic will recognize (or at least remember) a fundamental problem: where to learn the techniques that make magic work? It is less acute now than it once was, since many fine books have become available at reasonable cost, but for the beginner, there is still the difficulty of deciding where the chaff ends and the wheat begins. The little book I found was an overview of the subject rather than a workbook, but it positively oozed the sort of insight which only comes from long experience.

There is a theory, often expressed in the pompous terminology occultists still enjoy, that when the Pupil is ready, the Master will appear. In my experience it describes a process rather than a literal meeting on some windswept moor. At 19, I was as ready as I've ever been and *Magic: Its Ritual Power and Purpose* was the key which opened floodgates.



Before very long, I had tracked down and purchased everything the mysterious W.E. Butler had ever published at that time, including the minor masterpiece, *The Magician, His Training and Work*. The books were my introduction to the Western Esoteric Tradition, a *corpus hermetica* I had not even realized existed. From Butler I moved on to Fortune, Regardie, Crowley, Mathers and the vast compendium of Qabalistic lore which so profoundly influenced them all. I took training in London and, inevitably, eventually added a little to the source material by writing some occult books of my own.

The glamour which surrounds occultists is directly proportional to the distance from which they are viewed. While family and friends quite rightly consider my interests eccentric to the verge of lunacy, three young Californians once hitchhiked some 3,000 miles in the hope of learning face to face those deep dark secrets which are never committed to paper. In the event, they were disappointed. Since there is less to me than meets the eye, the only benefit I could offer them was home-made beer. Tongues loosened under its influence, however, and they finally admitted our meeting was not the sole purpose of their amazing pilgrimage. They had, they said, already met a most impressive man whose photograph they produced. His name was Ernie Butler.

Ernest, it appeared, had made their trip worthwhile. God knows what they had expected, but what they found was a friendly unassuming individual who knew more about the art of magic than the rest of us might hope to learn in half a dozen lifetimes. He did not set out to impress, because he did not have to. He spent more of his time listening to their theories than propounding his own.

I have always envied those three Californians, for I never met Ernest Butler face to face. I learned from his books and trained in the organization he founded, but the closest we came on a personal basis was the correspondence which passed between us. It began when he took gentle issue with my use of the term 'mesmerism' in one of my books and continued for perhaps a year or two before dwindling into oblivion.

Not all his letters dealt with esoteric themes. I learned, for example, that he was coping with a heart complaint which had already manifested in a full blown cardiac attack. It did not worry him unduly: he had a job to do and assumed he would be permitted time to do it.

Years later I learned with sorrow of the horror which accompanied his death; and with pleasure of the fact that, having

passed beyond the pain, he was sensibly using his occult talents to communicate with some of those close friends and co-workers still in incarnation.

And for the rest of us, he continues to communicate through the magic of the printed word. His published books are still in print, as eminently useful and satisfying today as they were at the time of their first editions. The loosely-knit group he founded, now called Servants of the Light, continues to expand its influence through a world-wide training programme.

The present, somewhat reluctant, head of SOL is the experienced ritualist, Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki, a friend, pupil and admirer of W.E. Butler and his esoteric work. Like Ernest, Dolores has a job to do; and part of it at least is ensuring as few as possible insights of a remarkable man are lost to those who enter the Western Esoteric Tradition now. This book is one result — a compendium of information garnered from unpublished sources.

Read it and enjoy. It will be a long time before you meet his like again.

J.H. Brennan



## Introduction

W.E. Butler has become a household name in occult circles for his down to earth approach to the Mysteries, a reputation he deserves wholeheartedly. To those who had the good fortune to know him personally he was the epitome of the Wise Old Man, he was also very human and warm hearted. This was not to say he did not 'lose his cool' once in a while, when W.E.B. told you off, you got it hot and strong, then it was forgotten. Those of us who were trained by him have many memories that are dear to our hearts, and a fund of experiences to be told and retold to those who come after us. It is not surprising therefore that everything he wrote is treasured.

In the early days of what was then the Helios Course, a quarterly newsletter was put out. At first this was edited by Gareth Knight, in issues 1 to 14, then, when unforeseen circumstances brought about a need for some rearrangements in duties, W.E.B. took over what was and still is known as *Round Merlin's Table*.

Each issue contained a piece by W.E.B., little gems of occult know how and the deep musings of a man whose whole life had been spent in the service of the Inner Level Teachers. Until now these writings have never been published elsewhere, and it was by chance that in looking for a particular essay in a back issue I came across the very early editions of *Round Merlin's Table*. I quickly forgot what it was that I had been looking for and spent an entrancing evening looking back over several years of my old teacher's thoughts and advice. Much of what he said then has come to pass in the last few years, some of it came close to prophecy! It was too good to keep in the archives simply gathering dust, there and then I decided to print these miniature essays so that nothing of his should be lost to students of the occult, particularly those who have come into the Mysteries since his death in 1978.



He was an exceptional man who rose above many hardships, barriers and even tragedy to become one of the best loved teachers of his time. He gave unstintingly of his time and knowledge to all who came to him, and gave the Servants of the Light a foundation on which to build for the future. He called himself 'The Server of Merlin', a name not without significance to those who have been part of the momentous rebuilding of the Table Round at Hawkwood College during the last few years. To us, he was 'Cheiron', the teacher and friend of many years.

To those of you who come new to the Mysteries, read and learn, the language may seem a little old fashioned to you, for he was not of your generation, but the wisdom is there and that never changes. To those of you who knew him, these writings will re-unite old friends for a while.

Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki

## 1.

### Keys in Practical Magic

*There are many who will remember with pleasure attending the lecture meetings held by the Esoteric Society at Caxton Hall in the 1970s. It gave people a chance to see and hear many of the outstanding names in the occult field at that time. W.E.B. loved going there and lectured in the York Hall sitting in the huge carved chair that stood on the platform. Due to a leg injury sustained in a car accident some years previous he usually lectured sitting down, but far from detracting one's interest this gave a cosy, almost intimate atmosphere to a room holding some three hundred people. One felt that this small bright-eyed man was speaking to you alone. This was one of his many talents, that he could turn an audience of hundreds into an informal gathering of friends.*

*This lecture has been transcribed from his actual speech and has not been edited purposely, to give the reader a chance to savour and recognize his very individual style of delivery, his phrasing, and the similes he so often used, but though the language is simple the wisdom is deep and the knowledge profound. This lecture remains one of his best and certainly gives old and new students a comprehensive outline of the art of practical magic.*

D.A.N.

Friends, I hope you will forgive me if I sit down, for standing for any long period of time is a bit of a chore these days. And I feel that if I sit down, it is symbolic that no one of us is greater than anybody else in the field of esoteric science, we are all in one category, just as all three parties in the House of Commons today are all minority parties, so too are all students. None of us are



experts. We may be experts on one thing or another, but we're always students, and we're always learning. The moment we cease to try to learn, we automatically shut ourselves out from the true brotherhood of esoteric science. So I shall sit — and that combines both material and moral reasons why I should sit. I think it was Socrates who said that a discourse should be like a dog — it should have a head, a body and a tail; and I'm going to try and shape my discourse along Socratic lines.

First of all, some definitions. I want to talk about the esoteric field today. You know, anyone looking at the advertisements in *Fate* or *Prediction*, or any of the other periodicals, might be excused from imagining that we're a queer lot. The early Christians were a queer lot to the pagan Romans around them. Everyone who steps out of the established way into another way is queer according to the people who remain in the old rut. Don't forget this — whereas parish customs are ruts, mental ruts, they can be very handy — you try riding across a ploughed field in a chariot and you'll soon find a nice well-made rut of a road is infinitely preferable — you can get somewhere with it. So ruts can be useful, but I think we are all well aware of the remark of the professor at the breakfast table that the only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth. And you can get in a rut and you can wear that rut so deep, that you've virtually imprisoned yourself in a grave. You've ceased to be active. Now that particular happening is constantly at work and to jog people out of their ruts is a very difficult task. Old man Crowley\*, of great renown, did it by being very rude in a Victorian atmosphere. In the middle of some beautiful philosophic discourse you would suddenly find a piece of obscenity that brought you up standing. And Crowley delighted in that because he jolted his readers. He made them think; they came out of their ruts with a jerk, and if he jolted them sufficiently badly either they began to think he had a reason for doing it, or they were so revolted and disgusted by the old man that they packed up studying him — both ends of which were just what Crowley wanted. And I think that although his methods were a little extreme, somewhat like the methods of that film 'The Exorcist' which is also apparently jolting some people, I think that there is a certain justification, now and again, for giving people a push out of their rut so that they can have a look at the surrounding scenery, and see if it's quite so bad as they imagined it was. They might find some quite nice views. They might find a new road. They might find new things. But, and this is absolutely

\* Aleister Crowley.

imperative, at no time and in no way, will the true custodians of the Mysteries ever attempt to force anyone out of their rut against their will. This is one of the cardinal principles of true esoteric science.

Now in the nineteenth century, the most prominent exponent of things esoteric was the Abbé Constant, Eliphas Lévi, and possibly half of modern occult terminology has been built, and a great deal of the practice formed, from his work. And then a man called Barrett, who produced a book called *The Magus*, laid the foundations for umpteen magical orders, societies, fraternities and what have you, and they flourished and multiplied abundantly. I've lost count of them. One day I looked through about half a dozen magazines and just took the names of the different orders and fraternities, and retired to weep. However, one of the greatest magicians of the Middle Ages was Albertus Magnus, and he made the remark which most would-be magicians seem to forget — conveniently. He said 'The true magician is born, not made.' He said the true magician has to be born as a magician. He has to have the innate power from birth if he's going to do any work, and this has been quoted again and again, and it's quite true. There are certain people who cannot take part in magical work to any effect. It's not that they don't try, that's the trouble — too many of them try, but they just can't do it, because it is not for them at this particular period of their evolution.

Now I can't play. I have no ear for music. I'm tone deaf, as a matter of fact, which is very sad, because I can only just distinguish between 'Jerusalem' and 'God Save the Queen'. What's more, when I was a boy at school, when the singing lesson came round, the teacher used to give me a book, usually on mythology, the classics of Greece and Rome — McAuley's *Days of Ancient Rome*, I read that by the ream. I read during the music lesson, because not only could I not sing but if I attempted to, no one within fifty yards radius could sing either. And there's a good many people who, when they come into this magical and esoteric work, are in the same position with regard to magic as I was, and am, with regard to music. Now, amongst others, Bulwer Lytton, was a pupil of Lévi and he was deeply concerned with magical orders which existed in England long before his time. So many people think that the magical revival which occurred in the nineteenth century, was the beginning of it all, but it wasn't. There were magical fraternities running in the Middle Ages in this country, and before then. And as the witch people will tell you very, very, forcibly, the Old Religion has been going on right



the way through from pagan days, right from way before Christianity.

Of course, when we talk about pagans we're on rather touchy ground. All 'pagan' means is people who live outside the town — early Christianity spread in the towns, it was an urban religion mainly, and it didn't touch the rural areas very much, simply because of travel difficulties. So the suburban districts, the country districts, and the rural areas were the last to accept Christianity. They were the people outside a certain boundary. They were *pagani* — pagans — those who were outside that limit. And the word is not offensive — it simply meant that they were a bit unfortunate — they weren't in touch, as it were. Then with the — shall I say — the crystallization of Christianity, the pagans became evil because they would not accept; in the same way that heresies in the early Christian Church were different ways of looking at things, and anybody might have a heresy of his own simply by having a different approach to things. But as soon as the Church became powerful, it began to think that its point of view was the only way in which things could be seen — all the others were wrong, evil. And the pagans were put down with the force of the law behind them. And so heresies became the subject of persecution. It doesn't just go on in Christianity, it goes on in Buddhism — people think that Buddhism is a beautiful religion of mildness; I've seen two Buddhists trying to knock each other's ears off. They're just like other human beings, don't forget. Mohammedanism (or Islam to be correct), Buddhism, or any other 'ism' always has this. There will always be those who will try to impose their will upon the others, and that's why I told you just now that the true esoteric science never imposes its will on anyone, any more than the Divine Source of Light imposes its will upon anyone.

Now I'll tell you a story about Bulwer Lytton which you may, or may not, have heard. You know of course of the Theosophical Society, which by the way has done magnificent work in popularizing esoteric matters. It is a habit among some esoteric students to sneer at the T.S. as a lot of old women who gather around a gas fire and talk a lot of high-flown theory. But that's unworthy of the whole thing. The T.S. has done magnificent work all over the world. And Charles Leadbeater, who was one of their foremost clairvoyants and seers has done magnificent work — there are thousands, hundreds of thousands of people who owe to Leadbeater much of their spiritual happiness.

Leadbeater as a boy was taken by his father to Knebworth House. His father was an associate of Lytton's. And sitting there, watching Lytton look at his correspondence, quite suddenly one of the envelopes slid off the table, and as envelopes will, it slid right across the floor. So little Charles Leadbeater was about to run after it to pick it up and bring it back. Lytton said 'No, No', looked hard at the envelope, and the envelope wandered back along the floor, climbed the table leg, and landed back on the table. And that made an impression on Leadbeater which he never forgot. In Francis King's *Ritual Magic in England* you will find a similar case where a man in a pub made a sixpence crawl up the wall, and of course it made most of the habitués of the pub crawl up the wall too! Such psychokinetic phenomena are pretty common — I've seen them dozens of times. They are fairly simple, and they produce quite a lot of kudos. I can talk to you about the philosophy of the subject, but a gentleman who can make an envelope walk across the table without touching it will immediately arouse quite a lot of excitement — because it's unknown, it's strange, we haven't seen a gent doing that before. That's why Uri Geller is getting so much publicity, we haven't seen anybody capable of doing that before.

I had my first occult experience when I was nine, and I'm seventy-six now, so that's quite a long time ago. I saw my first materialized form, ectoplasmic form, when I was about twelve, and I've been mixed up in this particular subject ever since. I've seen some funny things. Now those things are facts, or else we're all a lot of liars. But as we all lie from different parts of the world, and we all say the same thing when we lie, even though we have no connection with each other, it suggests that there may be an underlying fact behind it. And there is.

Now we must get to definitions. It was Doctor Samuel Johnson, of dictionary fame, who said, 'Define your terms, Gentlemen, define your terms.' It saves a lot of argument, and doesn't it! Half the problem today is lack of communication. Why? Because we have no common terms, and there's nothing more pitiable than to see someone of my years, or younger than me perhaps, trying to communicate with a youngster and using the idiom, using the particular terms which have just gone out, and he thinks he's so with it. But he's not with it, he's missed the bus by a hundred yards, and he simply seems to the youngsters to be a silly old fool. It's very difficult — equally difficult when a youngster attempts to talk to me, or to someone of my age, and to tell me just what he

feels about something, again there's a difficulty of communication. And half the difficulty is in definitions. That's why the scientists went to the dead languages of Greek and Latin to label their particular discoveries, in order that once used, that is a definite thing, it was derived from a certain Latin or Greek word which means something. And so a scientific statement could be made, and it couldn't be twisted to mean anything else.

Now in occultism and esoteric science, we cannot do that by the nature of the thing. It is rather like *Alice in Wonderland* where they played croquet with flamingoes as clubs and every time they tried to strike the ball the flamingo lifted his head and looked around. So they didn't get on very well! And in the same way esoteric science is so fluid that it is very difficult to define things in terms. If you question that, read a passage in *Moonchild* by Aleister Crowley, where he deals with the astral plane and the reversal of values and other things on the astral levels. If you have a modicum of clairvoyance you will soon find out that it's quite true what he says. You tend to reverse things — you reverse numbers, 32 is 23, and so on, and you reverse things in the most amazing way, simply because the astral light has a set of laws which are not the same as those of the physical plane.

I am going to define three terms and then we'll go from there. The first is 'Keys'. One thinks of keys as the means of enabling us to get in out of the cold. The key to a lock. We get the idea of the key enabling us to open a lock, simply that. It doesn't enable us to look into a room which has closed doors, it doesn't enable us to see things which are not opened by that particular key. It only enables us to open that door, and look in as far as we can. And any key which is given to us performs that function only. We must not expect to use that key as a 'Master Key' to get into all the rooms in the house, all the rooms in the Temple.

Now the next term is 'Practical'. Have you ever seen a chimney sweep's advertisement? 'So and so — Practical Chimney Sweep'. Ever seen a theoretical chimney sweep? Well, if there's a practical one, there must be a theoretical one. But it wouldn't do your chimney much good if you brought a theoretical chimney sweep along. So we have to define practical. What is a practical occultist, a practical magician? Well according to Dion Fortune it is one who causes changes in consciousness by will — changes in states of consciousness. Crowley had a more literal definition — change in things generally. And there are many definitions of what that might be. Now most people think of the word practical in terms of 'What do I get out of it?'. Just that. We all do, I do. We all do

because that's innate within us, we are born that way. The acquisitive interest is but an instinct to acquire. It's come up through millions of years of evolution, you don't throw aside the habit, the rut, of millions of years just by saying, 'Oh, I'll be very good, I'm going to be selfless, and I'll never think of anything for myself'. That is pure foolishness. We always relate everything to ourselves. We've got to. We can't help ourselves. We are persons, individuals, and we have a personal way of looking at everything, so we say 'What does it mean to me?' Well, the esoteric sciences mean to you whatever you like to make them mean. You can either make them an opportunity to serve God and man, or to serve yourself entirely, or to have what is more usual — a glorious mix-up of all three.

So we serve God, we serve our fellow man, and we serve ourselves, and the proportion in which we do those things determines whether we are on the right-hand path or the left-hand path. You know that is again such a false dichotomy. There are those on the right-hand path who are Lords of Wisdom and Love, and those on the left-hand path who are Lords of Hatred, and of Separation. But in between is a vast body of us all who are simply grey — some a nice pearly iridescent shade of grey, and some are a rather gloomy kind of grey, and some — that the angel of Revelation in Apocalypse spoke about — lukewarm, neither one thing nor the other. And the angel said, 'Because thou art lukewarm I will spew thee out of my mouth.' What he means is, I've got no room for you. If you're lukewarm you'll get nowhere, and if you go into magic in the spirit of the atheist who was dying and who said, 'O God, if there is a God, save my soul, if I've got a soul' then you won't get very far. You have to have dedication in magic, just as you have to have dedication in esoteric science. And you must have some guiding line to start with.

When I went first of all to the door of the lodge in which I was initiated, there was I all dressed up like a dog's dinner, beautiful robe on, and a hoodwink over my eyes, all in darkness. Just as a mason does when he goes to the door of his lodge, he has a hoodwink over his eyes. He knocks, seeking the Light. And a voice from within the Lodge says, 'Who stands without?' and I said, 'One who desires to enter your mysteries and to learn from your teachers'. And the voice said 'Why do you wish to learn of our mysteries?' And I answered, prompted of course, the only answer that gives you the key, the true key, to esoteric science, 'I desire to know in order to serve'. Then of course you can go a little bit further and say 'Serve what? Serve whom?' A reverend



gentleman named Duncan\* chased me over the coals the other day in a book of his because he said, 'You can serve other things can't you', or words to that effect, and so you can, serve God and serve man, who is made in the image of God. Well, that being so, that solves that one — practical, and then we have to think about the term 'Magician', one who practises magic.

But magic can be of many kinds, don't forget that. And many a mother smoothing her child's head as she helps him through a difficult time is performing true magic. But many a person who would shriek with horror at the word magic will nevertheless do quite a lot of magical work by the power of their thought. And you will find that the word magic and magician simply comes from, in the end, 'wise men'. You know in the new translation of the New Testament in the New English Bible, they've translated 'Wise men from the East' in a different way: 'In the days of Herod the King, there came astrologers from the East.' Now that's emasculated as effectively as it could be emasculated. But wise men means also 'men of power' — magi — and they were called the Magi, not merely astrologers, although astrologers can be men of power too if they use their astrology correctly. But that's reduced the thing down. The name just means 'man of power', a man who gets things done. So if anyone has the idea that they can enter any order, fraternity or anything like that, and walk into it without any trouble, without any kind of test or change, and produce themselves as a magus instantly, like instant coffee, they just can't do it. They may be able to start to open their eyes and become clairvoyant, and their clairvoyance will be untrained and unregulated and unadjustable, and what use is it to anyone, except themselves, they can boast, 'I can see things, I can raise up spirits from the vasty deep'.

Well, as the character in Shakespeare said, 'I can call spirits from the vasty deep'. And his pal said yes, so can I, so can any man, but will they come? And that which appears to the untrained vision is not necessarily the reality which they think it is. I've been caught on this a good many times, so I'm speaking from experience.

I want to explain one more definition, and this is Mysticism. Let's get out of our heads that hybrid term mysticism, when it's used in connection with the esoteric sciences. Mysticism has a meaning all its own: the word itself is pinched from the ancient

\* Anthony Duncan.

mysteries, the ancient Greek mystae were those who were the thyrsus bearers, those who were initiated in the mysteries, and they were called the mystae, and from that comes mystic. But mysticism, whether it be the theocentric mysticism of Islam, Buddhism, or Hinduism, or the Christo-centric mysticism of Christianity, has nothing whatever to do with esoteric science as such. You can be a mystic and see nothing, hear nothing, have no experience of psychic matters whatsoever, and be a true mystic. Or, on the other hand you can be an esoteric scientist and have all the knowledge you like, and it's nothing in the eyes of the mystic. Because the mystic is seeking the One in a direct approach to reality, spurning everything of manifestation, of diversity, in his search for the unity. The esoteric scientist is searching for the One in the diversity, he's working with all manifest things in Malkuth, the Kingdom of Diversity, and through them, reaching through to the Angel of the Countenance which is in Kether to the unity behind. They are two different methods of approach. There are many who are inclined inwards to one or the other who partake of both to some extent. And it's true enough that esoteric science in itself is amoral. That is to say it's not a religious system, it is a science like any other science. And it's capable of being used for spiritual ends. I don't like the word spiritual, it's what I call toffee-nosed, it's one of those feeble words, spiritual means something different from that. Get away from all this kind of orthodox Christianity. Don't forget I'm a Christian priest so it's not a matter of hitting at my own particular religion. But get away from the orthodox conception of Christianity. Get away from this kind of planetary conception of the Eternal. Get away from that. Think of the great universe, of the galaxies, of all the millions upon millions of suns and planets. Think of the Creator and Preserver of all those things. The Eternal — that's the best term. The Eternal. Think of that as your God, and then make yourself a religion which is worthy of the God you worship. It won't be orthodox Christianity, or orthodox Buddhism or Islam or Hinduism. We're all planet-bound . . . and we live in Malkuth, and we work everything under the veil of earthly things. Well, having said that I come to another point.

People in this present day and age, I hate that term — I used it deliberately. Why can't we say Now — it's much simpler, better anyway, in this day and age. Now. Just Now — that's all it means. But it sounds a lot better, doesn't it? It's very fine to say, 'In this day and age'. I get a lot of fun from the television, listening to the announcers making these remarks, and I smile. But now there are

so many people who are looking towards esoteric science as a means of attaining something which they haven't found anything able to give them — religion has failed them, or rather they think it has, anyway. The trouble is that religious forms have failed them. The presentation of religion has failed them. I get literally hundreds of people — young, old, middle-aged, who come to me and pour out their sorrows upon my chest and tell me all in connection with what they believe or don't believe and things like that, and the troubles they're in. And it invariably comes to this: they don't know what real Christianity is, they don't know what real religion is. They don't know what real Buddhism is, or Hinduism. They may shave their heads and go chanting, 'Krishna, Krishna', and all the rest of it, but whether they know something of the inner meaning of Hinduism is another matter. But there's a search, this is the third quarter of a century, and it has been said that in the third quarter of a century a wave of influence comes over the world, and a new aspect of spiritual consciousness is opened. It is said that all the sects and all the particular past religions come to the top because the spirit of man has reached out and there's a force, an influence behind it which is reaching out with him, which is bearing him along its tide. And so every attempt, every new religion is, in a way, the aspect of a spiritual, using that term in the Qabalistic sense. It's an influence from the Angel of the Countenance in Kether which is working through the Kingdom of Malkuth, and all beings — not only we, but Nature, that living organism — feel it too. I see just lately that they've been trying some experiments with plants . . . A man thinks nasty thoughts about a plant which is about twenty feet away from him — really nasty things, threatens to have its leaves burnt or something like that. And he doesn't say anything — he simply thinks, and immediately the plant gets the jitters and sends an impulse through an electronic device which starts a little toy train running along or turns on a light. There's quite a lot of research going along on those lines, suggesting that there is a connection between the vegetable kingdom and the animal kingdom and the human kingdom. And so far from the kingdoms being separate, and so far from the lower kingdoms of nature being insensitive, they seem to be pretty sensitive in some ways. Reflex action is some of it. And this extends right the way down to the mineral kingdom too, as occultists know. So the whole living planet and ourselves are a unit. And the power of the tides which affect the planet affect us too. The tatvic tides, the . . . tides of the seasons, and the great tides which sweep through at

periodic intervals and which impel, from behind the scenes, all the revolutions and all the disturbances which go on in the world. They are motivated, in the true sense, from within, not from without. We, with our politics and political parties of various kinds, think that we do it all from the outside. But really it is done through us, and through the whole of animate life, from inside, from within.

So our magic, then, will be a co-operation with the whole of life on this planet. We can't opt out and do a bit of magic on our own account. You try to control the elementals — one of the easiest jobs of the lot, one given to the first of the neophytes to have a shot at. Just control one little elemental and get him to do what you want it to instead of doing its own particular will or rather what its been told to, what is in its program. Try that and you'll soon find out who you are. There is only one way of doing it, and this is one of the keys. Can you control that type of elemental within yourself? Fire elements — can you control your temper when somebody stamps on your toe? Or drops a brick on it? Or when somebody makes a most offensive and slurring remark about you or yours? Can you control any manifestation of temper, and not only that, can you stop being upset and annoyed? It's alright, as Crowley says, for those with poker faces; it's fairly easy. Dion Fortune on one occasion told us that at Dr Moriarty's school where she was training, every independent pupil had his own garden to themselves and they all used to look out from the dining room at their own little gardens. Very nice too, and periodically Moriarty used to arrange for a local goat to be let loose in the garden. And the idea was that while you were having your dinner, you looked out and lo and behold, Billy or Nanny was happily devouring your pet flowers. And the idea was not to have any resentment towards Billy or Nanny, because he was just doing his own particular thing in his own way. They had to sit with poker faces and get on with their dinner and not go out with a broomstick and lay about the goat. But as she said, for anybody with a poker face it was perfectly easy. The people who got caught out, and showed their disfavour, their annoyance at their hard work being undone, were the people who didn't have a poker face — that was all. So anybody who could play poker and not show whether they were winning or losing could carry on with their eating; what they said about Billy or Nanny once they were out of the dining room was another matter altogether. But that was no real test. You get a test — a real test, when you start to try and control the elemental kingdoms, and the test is this: if you



try and control them and you haven't controlled the power within yourself which is their analogue, then the inner elementals betray you to the outer elementals. So if you don't like fires popping out all over the place, and things catching light spontaneously, don't go invoking fire elementals until you know that you have controlled the elemental forces within your own self. At one time I had a very vivid reminder of that when I didn't do what I was told and I got it well and truly in return. Now that is one of the keys; that all these things come through ourselves, in fact all the powers work from within ourselves.

Now you have a choice when working in occultism. You can work by yourself, and you can work with others. And this is where very many snags come in. If you work by yourself at least you've only got yourself to blame. If you make a bloomer, if you drop the laboratory instruments on the floor and all is smashed, then you have to take the can — you can't blame anybody else, just yourself. If you had another person with you, almost inevitably you would start saying to him or to yourself, 'I wonder if it was your fault'. Because we do hate taking fault upon ourselves. It was the other chap that did it, like the little kid who was pulling the cat's tail and the mother said, 'Willy, stop pulling the cat's tail'. And he said, 'I'm not pulling the cat's tail Mummy, it's the cat that's pulling it'. And so it is with our magical work — we will try if we're working with others to pass the buck on to somebody else. So many times we have a kind of magical inquest after the trouble. Things go wrong, and when they go wrong in a magical circle you very often get the most amazing smell of sewer gas or something of that kind — drains gone bad — and then people are looking around to see who was responsible for that: 'It wasn't me', 'It wasn't me'. And we all claim that it wasn't us. But when we come to boil it down and do an inquest on ourselves we find out who the culprit is — mostly ourselves. Just that — we've done it. So the first thing, if you're working magic with others, is perfect honesty and perfect commonsense. Commonsense is a very rare commodity — it's not as common as all that. The first thing you learn in true occultism is that all the airy fairy business, all the wonderful, imaginative terms and ideas have got to go by the board. It's just as practical, it's just as real, it's just as — shall I say — bald and bare as any chemical laboratory's experiments. You mix sulphur with carbon and saltpetre and something happens when you set light to it. I blew my eyebrows off with it once or twice when I was a kid, it produced gunpowder! And so with many other things — the chemical laboratory is no time, no

place for any sentiment or sentimentality, no place for hysterics . . . they'll bust up the experiment and the laboratory too. And so in occultism you have to have commonsense, and commonsense means a balanced outlook — it's the Middle Pillar on the Tree of Life. You've got to be balanced in your outlook in whatever you do, and whatever you're doing you must do in that spirit . . . and you can work yourself up, as it were, but always in the background there must be that framework of scientific principle, and that is why people work the Tree of Life, because it gives us that scientific principle behind all our work.

Now, you'll often find this. You'll form a group — I've done it scores of times. You form a group and you've got say ten or twelve. And you're all working together, doing this magical work. And little by little you find that dissension creeps in. First it's wonderful — everybody makes their robes and sandals and all the rest of it, all according to the book or they buy it from the shop when nobody's looking — you should make them yourself you know, but it's a bit difficult nowadays, most people have no idea of how to work with cotton, for instance. You've got to buy something and there are plenty of occult haberdashers of various kinds who will produce the goods for you. Anyway, you all get to work and make a lovely place up, and then bit by bit it deteriorates and the first thing you notice is that curious frictional feeling of indecision, a feeling of something unsafe. It's a peculiar feeling, and if you get it, it's a key to what's happening. It's a curious feeling of uncertainty, and everybody looks around and says, 'I wonder who's throwing the spanner in the works?' Of course, *you* wouldn't be. And you go around on a witch hunt of your own. 'Ah, it must be Mr So-and-So, or Miss So-and-So'. And then they'll be doing the same thing. Of course they wouldn't have done anything like that, of course not. Mr So-and-So — yes, I don't trust him. And so, in a few weeks the group is splitting into little coteries all proudly damning each others' eyes. And all the work is gone. And that's simply because commonsense wasn't used, and varying temperaments were slammed together without any regard for their compatibility. If you were going to send a team of space people, of men to explore outer space, what would you do? You would choose, by psychological tests, a hundred people or more, combing them out gradually, bit by bit, testing them all the way until finally you would get three people who as far as you could see were absolutely compatible one with the other who could be left alone in space for quite a long time, and wouldn't go off the handle. And so it is in occultism. So



if you start a magical circle, don't forget this: it's very rare that more than two of the original members are there six months later. The rest have gone. But if you keep on getting the type you want, sounding out the note you want by meditating on the principle you're working with, gradually you'll get the people you want coming together, because they're drawn to you by the power of thought which is greater than people realize. And then you can form your circle and go ahead. But always commonsense, always balance.

Now you sometimes find amongst the members of a magical circle one person who seems to get nothing. They don't produce any power, they don't produce the slightest glimmer without a match, and they don't seem to do anything. Yet those people, if they're missing one night, you'll find there's something wrong. Things don't go so well. They're enzymes, as it were, ferments. They don't do anything themselves — catalysts would be a better term. Because they aren't affected, apparently. But they do have their purpose, and if you have one of these people in a circle it'll go ahead like a house on fire, things all over the place happen. So if you ever get a person who doesn't seem to be pulling his weight at all though he's trying hard, it may be that you've got one of these people who can easily prove their worth if they stop away for a week or two. Now that's an interesting point, and I give it to you as a point well worth consideration — the power of some person who apparently has no power.

Very often in a circle of this kind, when you start your magical work, you come up against tests. Tests of earth, air, fire and water. What are these tests? Let's get rid of the glamour of them. Earth, air, fire and water. Have you ever dreamt that you were in the middle of a fire and had to go through a fire. And the dream turns to a nightmare, you dread it, yet you hold on to it. Well that is the kind of test you get. For the time being your volition is held up, but your power of Inner Will is still there and you will have to use it. But you've got to know it's there, you've got to look within yourself, and pull from within the power that you have. And so you come up against the flaming fire, and it seems to you in that glamoured condition (the glamour is cast upon you by the Hierophant) it's real fire, it is no illusion, it isn't a kind of suggestion or anything like this, it is real fire, and I can feel it. And you've got to feel 'Well then, I've got to go through it', 'But I can't go through it, I'll burn myself, I'll kill myself'. Well you must go through it and to take one step is like walking through clay with big boots on, you get about a quarter of an inch at a

time. And you force yourself agonizingly. Nothing there? Fine, you've done it. But unless you bring back from within, the inner you will retreat with a cry and say, 'Oh, I can't do that', and you've lost. The same with the test for water. I can't swim, and one of the greatest troubles came to me when I took that same test of water. Not only can't I swim in ordinary water, but this water seemed particularly nasty. 'I can't swim, I shall drown'. And how I got through that I don't know, but I did. The same with the element of air. Think of yourself up in an aeroplane ready to parachute out, you're dithering on the edge and you suddenly recollect that you haven't got a parachute on, and you want to draw back but you can't, and you're falling. Either you conquer that and you jump, or you don't and you've failed that test. And then there's the test of earth — would you like to be buried alive? Never thought of it? It's very nice and deep underneath, you're still alive and can't get out. You carry that out and see where it lands you when you think about it. Try and feel it. Try and feel it and realize that it might be true, because the judgement is out when you're glamoured in this way. If you pass through that then you've passed the test. And then there's one more test which isn't always mentioned in the books. You are in a place where you see nothing, you hear nothing, you smell nothing, you taste nothing, touch nothing. Nothing from the outside world impinges upon you at all. You're like Greto Garbo — you're alone. Very much so. There's nothing under your feet, you can't feel anything, there's nothing around you. Nothing coming in at all. You're in a state called Avichi — the waveless. That, by the way, is the ultimate hell of Buddhists. You're not responding to any outside vibrations of the personality whatsoever. And then the only thing you can respond to is a vibration from the Inner Self, and you've got to turn inwards again to see whether you have enough contact with that inner self to enable you to stand firm when everything else around you goes. And remember this, there is a true saying, a true teaching, that everything in the end returns from whence it came, to the eternal. And those spiritual centres of consciousness who have not yet learnt to stand on their own will inevitably cease to be able to respond — they are in a waveless condition and they can no longer respond, they can no longer respond to spiritual things. If they have not evolved the capacity to experience spiritual things, then when the night comes when no man can work, when the heavens are rolled up as a scroll, on the great day of Brahm, then those souls who are in Avichi, the waveless, so remain, until far away in the future they will once again begin



their life's work in a manifest universe. So if you can do it in this life, all to the good. That's the test of Avichi.

Now we've heard a lot of nonsense talked about the Dweller on the Threshold, especially in Theosophical circles. He's a real bogey man you know. There are two Dwellers on the Threshold, the Lesser and the Greater. What does that mean? Let's get down to it. Bulwer Lytton in *Zanoni* brings in the Dweller on the Threshold when the Neophyte does what he shouldn't do and conjures up the Dweller and it haunts him for the rest of his life. Can you remember the nasty things you've done in the past? *All* the things you've done in the past? Of course you can't, mercifully our memories are not quite that good. If you have a good eidetic memory you can remember further back, and the first thing you can remember might come right the way back from the ages. But in your own mentality there are a good deal of things which are veiled from your memory. But if you can think of all the nasty things you did, in all your lives, no excusing yourself at all, but simply thinking of those as one unit, you are visualizing the shadow, and this is how the mind works when you get in this particular condition when you experience the Dweller. The mind has been to some extent, glamoured. And you meet him in this way. Of course I couldn't have done those things I did. Things which have been repressed in the subconscious, all those repressed complexes, all those dirty little thoughts, all those nasty little thoughts, all those mean little thoughts, all those murderous little thoughts. 'Of course it wasn't me, of course.' But they all come up as one big lump, not as little individual thoughts, not as individual complexes. Although individual complexes can tell you a lot of it, believe you me, this comes up as one big complex. And that's you as you are in that aspect of your nature. The shadow self as Jung called it. And you meet the shadow on that threshold of consciousness, you will know what the Dweller on the Threshold is. And it's not very nice. It's not a nice experience.

There is also a greater Dweller. But so many people are fools, they ask for the Greater Dweller on the Threshold before they've faced the Lesser Dweller. They are so eager to learn about their past lives, what they were — Cleopatra, Julius Caesar or whatever. A man I knew once, a vegetarian athlete, he said to me one day, 'I strongly object to being a sixth part of a man'. I said, 'What do you mean, a sixth part?' 'Well, somebody has just told me for the sixth time that I was Julius Caesar. I've met five other Julius Caesars — so I object to being the sixth part of a man.' All

that kind of nonsense is just fantasy, but people are eager to dig out their past lives. But supposing, just supposing, you had been roasted like St Lawrence on a grid iron and so passed on one night, would you like to remember that particular bit of your life of the past brought up to the present? Because those memories come back, not as dead memories as you might remember what happened yesterday, but emotionally alive — you experience them — for the time being you are them, that you are what you think you are, you *are* St Lawrence being roasted on the grid iron, and believe me there are pleasanter things to do than that. So that people who try all kinds of odd experiments like hypnosis and retrogression and all the rest of it, to go back to the past, don't always realize what they're going at, and they may very often strike something which is much bigger than they expected to strike, especially if another personality which is connected with that radiant centre, which is their own true centre, has in the past been involved in what is commonly called black magic. They may get those old things coming up, and their predecessor in the experiments of the radiant centre in the past will be superimposed upon their experience of themselves. And I've had people come to me to ask me if I could clear them of those . . . and I've had people come to me to ask me if I could clear them of those memories which they have evoked, unintentionally. And that's part of the Greater Dweller on the Threshold. Before the personality gains contact with the radiant self, of which it is one of the expressions, they have to stand and face the full blast of those dark pasts. I couldn't do it now. I don't think I could do it. I should have to be very far advanced before I could stand like that. That is indeed the dark night of the soul, but everyone must pass through it to the extreme if they would become truly fixed with that greater radiant centre of which they are an expression. So, lead us not to the test, says the Lord's prayer. Bring us not to the test, before we're ready. It's a point that budding occultists and esoteric scientists might well remember when they go fooling about with odd experiments and with old recipes from the past.

The self, our personality, is very fond of itself. We are very fond of ourselves, we do like ourselves. And to be able to submerge that self, that personality, in another is very, very difficult. And yet we've got to learn to build up what is called a magical personality. We've got to build up a personality which is a representation of what we are aiming at, which will convey the forces and the energies which we're aiming to use. And building that personality is not so easy. In one of my books I described

something of it, but believe me that bald description bears very little relation to the hard work involved. Dion Fortune said somewhere, 'If you're called to work in a Lodge or a forge, choose the forge, its easier.' And it is, in many ways. Manual work is much easier than the hard, intense mental and spiritual work in magic. But if you want to build up that inner personality, which you must do if you're going to do really effective magical work, you've got to remember one thing about it: once you start, you must not leave off. In the same way if you ever start using thought forms and sending them out to various people for various ends, cut them off from yourself, don't leave them linked with yourself. When they've finished their work, disperse them. Don't leave odds and ends floating about. Kipling in a poem has something to say about that, 'Cleanse and call back thy spirit, let not a stain remain.' And there's so much pith about it. If your thoughts and energies go out in that way, they must be recalled, otherwise you'll go out from your magical circle, and all around you there are rag-tags and bobtails of magical forms which you willed and haven't discharged, you haven't properly finished with, and those inner forces which are not moral, the amoral forces of the astral light, will simply occupy them, and so the Succuba and Incuba come about, and they can be a very real trouble. They are what I call psychic lice, which infect the surface of the aura, and can be seen like little blobs of white cotton wool in the aura. And they represent these odds and ends of thoughts or desires, or emotions, which have not been brought back, which have not been controlled. So self-control is one of the first laws of the inner self.

Incidentally if you're working with a group, you'll find that the group will do one of two things. Either it'll keep you in or it'll kick you out. And it's most astonishing the way in which you start a nice group, which runs nicely and then it seems as though somehow or other, pressures are brought to bear against you. You say, 'There's something happening, there's somebody ill-wishing me . . .' But when you come back, what's happening? You look at yourself, you find your ideas have changed, you haven't got quite the same outlook as you had before. And the group consciousness, very conscious of that, is gently and quietly squeezing you out. And if you go peacefully, not hanging on to the staircase and the bannisters and the doorknob, just going out gently, you can depart in peace bearing malice to none. And everything's alright. But if you attempt to hold on in that group, when its beginning to push you out, you'll cause a veritable hell and purgatory there. Everybody will go hay-wire until such time as you are safely

kicked out. Then of course you are kicked out and you don't like it, and you go around saying what horrible things they are in that group. People come to me and say, 'Look, was it a black magic group I was into because . . .' You've overstayed your welcome that's all. And instead of going out like a courteous guest would, you were waiting until you were kicked out. So never get that personal peeve because you belong to a group and the group kicks you around or pushes you out. You feel that it doesn't want you. You can always be proud about it and say, 'I'm not going to stay if you don't want me', or you can say, 'I depart with malice to none, if it's for the good of the group I will go willingly.' And if you do that, your reward comes later. Now this is a matter I'm not talking about theoretically, I've been through all this, I've had these experiences, and I know just what I'm talking about.

What do we mean by contacts? You're contacted, linked up with a certain force or a certain beam in the same way that when you push a mains switch on in the power station, you contact that line of power. Now you've contacted a good many things. St Paul said, 'All things are possible, but all things are not expedient.' In other words you can do what you like, but be prepared for the backwash. You touch a thousand-volt line, you'll be certain of one thing. If you're still on this planet you'll be in hospital for a while. I bear some scars on my hand which remind me of when I did the equivalent. And in occultism when you touch the equivalent of a high-voltage line, then you will get the equivalent of a high-voltage shock. And whether your self can stand up to it or not is another matter. There used to be an experiment in Victorian days with the cardboard model of the side of a house and down it ran a wire from the chimney on top, right the way down the side. And the wire was broken at one point, to allow an inch of it to be twisted round so that it had a break in the wire. And the wire went down and was put on to a metal plate. You then took a Leyden jar, a 'condenser' in modern terms, it was charged up and you touched it to the top of the wire on the chimney, and forthwith the condenser discharged itself with a mighty flash right the way down the wire to the earth, the metal plate underneath. Very good. Now you turn the centrepiece so you broke the line. You took the condenser, charged it up, same thing, a mighty flash and the side of the house disintegrated into little bits. Because the charge had found no conductor down, it was at right angles instead, and had gone through the cardboard of the model and simply burnt and scattered it. Now if you ask the Divine forces, every one of them, you ask the inner forces to come



tearing down through your personality, and your personality doesn't give them free entrance and exit, then up goes your personality, and that's all about it, and the best thing you can think of then is the Tarot card of the Blasted Tower. And you're the Blasted Tower — and the lightning has struck you. That lightning flash, which is on the Tree of Life struck you, and you suffer for it. It's quite true — their personality can be blasted in that way. So, until you're used to low tension electricity, leave the high tension alone. Or to use Kipling's very apt bit of verse, I suppose in this permissive age I can use it. 'Oh, do not despise the advice of the wise, just listen to those who are older. And don't try for things that are out of your reach, that's what the girl told the soldier'. Yes, literally don't try for things that are out of your reach. Esoteric science is just as much a science with its laws as any exoteric science, and if you break the laws, then you receive the results. It's not a matter of divine wrath striking you down, the sinner, it's simply you being a damn fool trying to do things which are out of your reach.

But let's think of it in another aspect now. You make the contact. What happens then? Then this inner personality of yours begins to reshape you. Your self is reshaped and so many people are afraid of that, because they think it means that 'I shan't be able to have a bit of fun, I shan't be able to think as I do now, I'll have to go all pious'. You don't need to. It's not a matter of mores, of customs. As most sexual habits are a matter of customs. In one part of the world it's natural to have seven husbands. I've been up in that part of India where it's moral to have seven husbands, and if a woman didn't have several husbands there's something wrong with the works, she was regarded as queer. And in the West, under the influence of Christianity, it has become a question of mores, of customs, of one man having one wife. But now in Africa, in the emerging states there is a very great argument going on among the Christian missionaries and people concerned as to whether a man can be admitted into the Christian church with a plurality of his wives. Now fifty years ago that was absolutely wrong. A hundred years ago in the old Victorian morality that wouldn't be thought of. But it's now been discussed seriously by genuine Christian priests in a new context in a new way . . . mores are not universal, they vary. You must remember that. You won't worry about perhaps having to be all pious, you don't need to be if you don't want to be. And to tell you the honest truth, when I meet a pious person, if I see them coming I take a back route quickly. Because that's the wrong expression.

The divine forces of creation manifesting through the sex natures is just as holy unto the Lord as any other divine force. It's simply its expression. There are perversions, which are mainly silliness. Simply sheer daftness. And they grow into a rut because the person is psychologically perhaps a little aberrant, and the rut grows and deepens and they cannot get out. But they are not the criminals and villains and all the rest of it. Good Lord, no. They are often simply the victims of their own psychology. And remember it was Christ who rather favoured the woman out of who he'd cast seven devils, Magdalene, the prostitute, against the self-righteous Pharisee who had never broken the law. Don't forget that. The true morality stands high above the local moralities. And the true morality is that you shall not do harm to your brother. And your brother in this sense is everyone else. You shall not do harm. Ahissa, harmlessness, as the Hindus put it. But it's not a negative thing, it's a positive thing. And the result of your magical work should not be conjuration of spirits, you can play at that if you like, but when you've finished playing with these psychic toys, what have you done yourself? What have you produced? Nothing, except you've wasted a hell of a lot of energy which could have been used for other purposes, and you've made yourself in the eyes of those who are wise, a bit of a mut. Just that. But if you follow the Path of Light, if you endeavour to let that Inner Light shine within you, it begins to sort you out, and little by little you find your true morality, you find your true expression, that radiant behind you that will throw down its best into you. And in the end you begin to realize just what you are really doing, and what this terrific power that you have gained through your magical pursuits can be used for. Literally, it can move mountains. Literally, it can change the face of the earth. And will, if those who follow the esoteric sciences will only remember, shape circumstances by the will, and the circumstances they could change will be the circumstances which have been brought about by the aberrant wills and foolishness of moral men. And finally, behind all this, behind the science, stand those who administer the science whose names are degraded and bandied about, whose ideas are treated in a banal way, 'The White Lodge', 'The Lodge of Seven' all kinds of names are given to people whose only acquaintance with the White Lodge is at a million miles distant. The reality doesn't advertise. The true Lodge doesn't advertise. The great spiritual counsel which governs the world doesn't advertise. It doesn't tell you where it is. It doesn't tell you that you should announce its whereabouts or

speaking about it in great terms or anything like that. If you should say, 'I'm an Initiate', you mean 'initiate'. It means you've just started something, and that's all it means.

## 2.

### Mysticism and Occultism

*In the first of these two short articles W.E.B. managed to cram a great deal of information regarding the occult path and his own attitude towards the treading of that path. With regard to drugs his stand was totally uncompromising, a viewpoint maintained by the SOL today.*

*He speaks also of the 'lunatic fringe', something that is still with us and which still causes concern to those endeavouring to bring the occult into full recognition. His blunt Yorkshire common sense is seen here at its best. He was by no means a prude but he held certain standards and kept to them, on the other hand he never castigated those who held slightly different views. The paragraph on morals has hidden depths and needs to be read many times to be fully understood.*

*He was a great believer in the use of the occult novel as a teaching aid, and encouraged his students to read the best of them. For the rest he had some caustic remarks, relieved from harshness by the twinkle in his eye and the comment that '... they can't help it you know, no one can write successfully about something of which they know nothing at all'.*

D.A.N.

It has been stated that the Mystic is one who, seeking the External Unity turns away from all else, regarding all things as hindrances on his way. This, of course, is the extreme type of Mystic. The Occultist, on the other hand, is defined as one who, seeking the Divine Unity, does so *through* and not *in spite* of the appearances of the phenomenal world. Again, this is what may be described as the 'pure type' of Occultist. However, in actual practice, both Paths are found to be linked together, and many 'mystics' find the



disciplines of the occult path to be of help to them, just as all occultists must at one time or another transcend the 'forms' of occultism, in whatever substance they may be built, in order that they may to some degree at least, contact the Divine Reality face to face.

Here we would do well to avoid much of the asinine pronouncement and general oracular bombast which characterizes what a friend of mine recently termed 'Sick Occultism'. There is always what we may call a 'lunatic fringe' around esoteric groups, and this is a phenomenon which, like the poor, is likely to be with us for quite a considerable time to come. If this were all, there would not be the same cause for worry. What *is* serious, however, is the growth and proliferation of 'Groups', 'Orders' and 'Fraternalities' which, although they may lay claim to withdrawn sources of wisdom, seldom show in the products of their training any evidence of such hidden wisdom. It was wisely and authoritatively said by one Teacher, 'by their fruits ye shall know them', and if we make this the acid test, many of these organizations show up in a rather bad light. At the same time, we must be careful not to condemn without knowledge, and to bear in mind the old saying 'to every man his own Master, and who art thou to judge another's servant? To his own Master he stands or falls'. Are we then to stand aside and allow the unwary to be misled, made into the tools of the dominating personalities whose sole purpose is the fulfilment of their own selfish desires? Of course not, but there are more ways than one of combating such knavery. And the best — and in the end — the only way is to so train oneself that we may *at all times* be a channel of the Power of Light; that through us under all circumstances that Light may shine, and thus dispel the Darkness. All the forms and ceremonies of practical occultism lead, or should lead, to this end.

However, some may feel that this is something which is not yet within the range of practical politics, as far as they themselves are concerned, and may well turn away from what appears to them to be far too austere a path. With this we can sympathize, and, indeed, it is not necessary to dwell too strongly upon the austerity of the Path when speaking to those who are essaying it for the first time in this present life. There is companionship on the Path, many interesting things to learn and do, and it is both a High Adventure and a Joyous Journey. Show me the 'occultist' who is gloomy and irritable, one who turns away from normal human companionship, and I will tell you that this man is no true occultist.

On the other hand, though, there are those whose ideas of the Path are very superficial — they think of it as something which is easily attained, and which should not be in any way withheld from anyone. 'Let all come' is what they teach and demand. In one way, this is an ideal which must be held, but in a slightly different form. The Path of the Mysteries *is* open to all, without distinction of race, creed, cast or colour, but the discipline of the Path soon shows that *some* are ready for this intensive training, whilst others are not. The grading process is automatic — those who are not able to assimilate and benefit by the training and instruction given, automatically drop out, and this is constantly taking place. Again, of course, those who drop out in this way at any stage of the Path, can always start again even unto seventy times seven. We have all failed the tests in the Past, and in all probability we shall fail some of them in the future. However, it is in the Present that we work, and it is as well to remember that actually, the 'Present' is the line which has position in our minds, but no magnitude in reality. Even as we think the word, it has receded into the past, and our thinking is already bringing in that which a second ago was the 'Future'.

So on this imaginary line we live and move throughout our life-days, and at all times the influences of both Past and Future are affecting us. It follows then, that although this illusory moment is of the greatest value in our soul's progression, nevertheless the transient and ephemeral patterns of the day cannot really affect the timeless system of the Mysteries, for this is based not upon the illusory and 'mayavic' appearance of Time and Space, but upon the eternal Realities which underlie all manifestation.

For this reason, it is useless for those who regard themselves as the avant garde of the present to insist that the Mystery Schools yield to their clamour, and begin to work in terms of 'Instant Attainment'. (We are aware that there are some 'esoteric schools' which do actually speak of instant attainment, and profess to initiate their members into the methods of such instant realization.)

Assuming that they can bring about such a state of instant illumination, how will this help the one thus 'illumined'? Everything will depend upon his own inner condition. If he is already so far advanced along the Path that it only needs a small push to bring him to illumination, then it may well be that these particular schools of instant occultism may provide this. But in the majority of cases, this will not be so.

Some claim that by the use of the psychedelic drugs such

instant illumination may be gained. It is true that such drugs may 'unloose the girders of the mind' and introduce the experimenter to new states of consciousness. They have, therefore, a 'magical' action, if we define 'magic' as the production of definite changes of consciousness at will. But when the new state of consciousness is attained, what is the person concerned likely to see? He will see himself, as he is in his present personality — not as he would like to be seen by others, not even as he would like to be thought of by himself, but *just as he is*. And because of the lives in which we have, in the Past, wandered from the Path which leads to righteousness, that which he sees will have that fearsome appearance known to esoteric science as the Watcher on the Threshold. Many have written of this Dweller, and men have come into conscious contact with this legacy of the Past when working in the Mysteries. Indeed, everyone of us must, at one time or another, meet the Dweller, and no amount of popular slogans will enable us to come to terms with him. Then, it will depend not upon what we have said or shouted or shrieked, but upon what we are. To face the Dweller immature and unprepared, is to court disaster, and more than one person has found this out in the past.

It is true that an experience of the power of the psychedelic drugs to change consciousness may, *under certain very carefully defined conditions*, be helpful to some. However, all the advantages of such an approach can be gained without recourse to the use of drugs. Those who wish to learn more of this may read a book by Dr Israel Regardie *Roll Away the Stone*, and may also find Aldous Huxley's own description of his experiences helpful. We have spoken of this because the use of these drugs is part of that 'sick occultism' of which we wrote earlier, and also because the end results for the majority are so serious and so far removed from the ideals of true occultism.

Another aspect of this sick occultism is in the field of morality. Now 'morals' derive from the word 'more', and this word covers the idea of 'tribal customs'. So there are many who equate the whole of moral effort with the purely temporal and tribal aspects of certain 'moral codes'. In this context, it is the sex function which is usually linked with morality or immorality, but this is only a narrow and Victorian concept — there are many other acts of man against man which are just as 'immoral' as the sex excesses which are so regarded. *The true Mysteries inculcate as strict a morality as any religious body*, but this morality is based upon the eternal and underlying laws of life, not upon the fiat of any law-

giver or religious administrator.

If a man would be a Master of Life, and not its slave, then there are certain immutable laws of being which he must follow — it is as simple as that.

Now let us return to other matters. It has been said in past time, 'Of the writing of books there is no end'. This observation, made many centuries ago, is certainly true of today. It is true that owing to some mysterious trends in modern Western education, we are finding that many are leaving school unable to read, and dependent entirely upon the ubiquitous 'telly', but there is also an increasing number of people who are beginning to explore the pleasures of the written word.

But what kind of books are being written — and read? There is much that is simple pornography, fostered by purely commercial elements, and there is much which amounts to simple 'escapism' which is read in an attempt to get away from the frustration and boredom of modern life.

There are other books which touch upon many of the subjects which are classified under the terms 'psychic', 'occult' and 'mystical'. Here we should note that these three terms cover three quite different things, though in popular thought they are used interchangeably to cover an immense field. Nevertheless, if our reading is to be really helpful, it is imperative that we exercise some discrimination in our reading, else shall we fall victims to a condition of what we may term 'mental indigestion', and our reading, instead of helping us, will do just the reverse. Also, and this is a very real danger, we may so engross ourselves in reading that we make of it an escape mechanism from the real thing. Here we need to define the three terms we have mentioned above.

The word 'psyche' is the Greek word for the 'soul' and covers all the field of psychic investigation, spiritualism, mediumship and the psychic faculties generally, including certain aspects of abnormal psychology, such as 'split-personality' etc.

The 'occult' derives from the Latin 'occulta', meaning 'hidden', and covers what may be termed the 'Secret Science'. It is, in its purity, a true Science, but it deals not only with material substance but with the substance of the Inner Worlds. In line with its name, it observes, deduces, formulates laws, carries out work based on these experiments in both the outer and inner worlds, and is to a great extent an exercise of the rational faculty of man.

'Mystic' takes us back for its origin to the old Mystery



Religions and here we find it to mean an initiation into 'spiritual' things, and a definite spiritual progression towards a union with the Divine Ground of the soul. Whereas, in occultism, the emphasis is upon *knowledge, and power*, in mysticism the emphasis is upon Love in the truest sense of that much misused word. A burning love for the Eternal which is the desire of the soul for a return to its true home. As it was said of old, 'Thou has made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in Thee.' Even where impersonal terms such as 'It' are used for the Supreme and Eternal, the nature of the union which is envisaged between the personal soul and that Supreme and Eternal Source is always one of deep Love. Though the terms used in some mystical schools appear to suggest a super-egoistic pride 'Thou art That', for instance, yet in the end, self-abnegation of the true mystic is seen as a total self-surrender to the Eternal in a loving union with the Source of all love.

We have briefly noticed the general natures of the three paths of psychicism, occultism and mysticism, but it must always be remembered that all three mingle together — there are elements of each in the other. The real point is that the predominant aspect of each of them is of that particular type. Thus, it is not possible to go far in psychic investigation and development without coming within the field of the occult laws which govern such phenomena, and it is not possible for anyone to make a serious study of occultism without having to face up to the religious implications which arise in the course of his occult work. In the same way, the mystic, attempting to follow in the Path of Purgation, Illumination and Union, will find that he has to take note of certain occult laws which govern all life, and will also find that his mystical exercises will tend to arouse his innate psychic powers, and he will discover that not by our own personal outlook — as all such lists must be. So don't use it too rigidly, but now and again sample one or other of the more 'way out' books — you should be able to assess their value if you have read those which we have here suggested. Another point. You will notice that we have included some occult fiction. Some of this is pure 'escapism', but those which we have suggested for your reading, whilst telling a good story, *do* give you the basic teaching in an interesting way. As the song has it — 'A little bit of sugar makes the medicine go down.'

#### *Books on Psychism*

- Clairvoyance*, C.W. Leadbeater (Theosophical Pub. Ho., London).  
*The Astral Plane*, C.W. Leadbeater (Theosophical Pub. Ho., London).  
*This World and That*, Payne & Bendit.  
*The Betty Books*, Stewart Edward White.  
*Brief Darkness*, G. Osborne Leonard.  
*Mystery of the Human Double*, R. Shirley.  
*Projection of the Astral Body*, Muldoon & Carrington (Rider, 1968).  
*Psychical Research*, Raynor Johnson.  
*The Infinite Hive*, Rosalind Heyward.  
*Swan on a Black Sea*, Cummins.

#### *Books on Occultism*

- The Ancient Wisdom*, Annie Besant (Theosophical Pub. Ho., 1977).  
*The Inner Side of Things*, C.W. Leadbeater.  
*Exploring the Occult*, D. Hunt. A splendid introduction.  
*Magic & Mystery in Thibet*, Madame David-Neale.  
 All books by Dion Fortune. (Including the novels.)  
 All books by Dr F.I. Regardie.  
*Tomb of the Dark Ones*, J.M.A. Mills. }  
*Lords of the Earth*, J.M.A. Mills. } These three are a trilogy.  
*There Shall Your Heart Be*, J.M.A. Mills. }  
*Hammer on the Mountain*, Col. H.S. Olcott (Theosophical Pub. Ho., USA).  
 All the novels of Joan Grant.  
*Time Out of Mind*, Joan Grant.  
*Anthroposophy*, Rudolf Steiner (R. Steiner Press, 1983).  
*The Tarot*, Paul Foster Case.

#### *Books on Mysticism*

- Mysticism*, Evelyn Underhill (Methuen, 1904). A standard on Christian mysticism.  
*Rational Mysticism*, Kingsland. On non-Christian mysticism.  
*Graces of Interior Prayer*, The Abbé Poulaine.  
 The novels of Charles Williams.  
*Lamps of Western Mysticism*, A.E. Waite (Kegan Paul, 1923).  
*Voice of the Silence*, H.P. Blavatsky (Theosophical Pub. Ho., 1971).  
*Light on the Path*, Mabel Collins (Theosophical Pub. Ho., 1972).  
*Watcher on the Hills*, Raynor Johnson.

## 3.

## The Qualities Demanded of an Occultist

*W.E.B. laid great emphasis on the virtues of Discretion and Discrimination. In the first of these three articles he goes into more detail concerning the first of these qualities. With many students having of necessity to practice their art alone, this is an important essay. He maintained that one should be able to work alone and that all students should be trained to do so. Then he would go on to say that they should also be given the opportunity when possible to work with others. In this way they would be balanced and ready for any emergency.*

*The SOL is now beginning to offer seminars, workshops, residential weekends involving actual ritual work, and using dramatized pathworkings at their annual conferences. It is part of the way in which his work is being expanded by those he trained personally for the tasks he foresaw in the future.*

*On humour he was an expert, 'if you have no sense of humour don't become an occultist' he would say. He impressed upon us that in many cases, laughter was as good a psychic defence as a pentagram and much better than a clove of garlic! 'If you think you are being attacked psychically', he said once 'go and see a funny film, it can mean total exasperation to someone who has spent a lot of time, energy, and know-how on setting you up, to find out that you are roaring your head off at some comic.'*

*The article on Service speaks for itself, I recommend it to anyone thinking of entering the Mysteries.*

D.A.N.

### Discrimination

A student has written to ask these questions, which we will summarize from his letter. They are: 'Where does the lone aspirant to the Occult stand in regard to ritual working? We have all read the dire warnings of the dangers of practising rituals alone — or with equally inexperienced comrades (if we are lucky enough to have even these). Are we then doomed to be 'Lone Rangers' of the occult field for the rest of our days, or does fate, luck and perhaps something a little higher play a deciding hand?'

These are really fundamental questions, and they open up extensive vistas of thought. So much so that we can only indicate some of these in more or less general terms. There are two aspects of esoteric work, one concerned with the training and



At 'Old Domons' in Devon on a lecture weekend



development of the individual as a unit, and the other, the training of such an individual to work collectively in a Group with other persons. As a general rule, in the early days of training, the emphasis is upon the training and development of the individual as a separate unit, but gradually, as the training proceeds, group-working is introduced. The objective is to produce a person who can work efficiently as a single unit, and, whenever it is necessary, be able to work in a ritual team.

When, through meditation and individual training, the student has started his training, then he will find himself brought into contact with others who are following the esoteric Way, and sooner or later, depending upon several other factors, he will be brought into touch with the Group with which he has a natural affinity. But — and this is important — nearly always when this takes place he will also be brought into contact with a Group of an undesirable nature, and will have to exercise the 'first virtue of the Path' — DISCRIMINATION!

In connection with certain developments in our work, some very interesting questions have come up for consideration. Some of these are concerned with the whole subject of Groups and Lodges, and as they may be helpful to other students, we want to let you all have some idea of our thinking and teaching along these lines. First of all, let us point out that membership of a Group or Lodge *is not essential*, even though it may be desirable. As a matter of fact our Brethren during the Middle Ages were not able, because of the prevailing ecclesiastical animosity, to work in Groups, except in certain special circumstances. So tuition was carried out by the Craftsman training a single Apprentice, who, in turn when he had attained to the Craftsman level took an Apprentice, and so the tradition was carried on. Later, in the eighteenth century, when the power of the Church was less in evidence, all kinds of associations, fraternities and groups were formed, prominent amongst such groups being the Masonic Order. It is interesting to note that it was a group of Masons who formed a Masonic Rosicrucian Society from which sprang the famous 'Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn in the Outer'. A careful study of the semi-public history of this famous Order reveals a curious state of affairs in its workings, and one thing stands out very clearly — the serious weakness of the 'grade system', under the conditions in which it was worked in the Golden Dawn. In effect, the so-called 'grades' had no real connection with the state of spiritual consciousness which they were held to represent, and even where they were so linked, it was

often forgotten that 'now we see through a glass darkly', 'under the veil of earthly things', and the 'Kether state of consciousness' which was attributed to the highest of the Grades, is, for the great majority of mankind, the Kether of Malkuth in the World of Assiah. The saying 'A Tree in every Sephirah' is a key to much.

Such misalignment between the Grades and the states of spiritual consciousness which they were supposed to express, reduced the whole Grade system to a farce — a pointed illustration of which was when one of the 'High-Grade' members of the G.D. insisted on going to a fancy-dress ball clad in the robes and wearing the insignia of the High Grade of which she was an Officer. Today, with the dismemberment of the Golden Dawn, and the free-for-all proliferation of 'Orders' and 'Fraternities', most of whom attempt to work some form of the old Grade system, the claim to belong to such and such a Grade becomes meaningless. We often have would-be students who say naïvely, 'I want to make spiritual progress — to become Magister Templi and Ipsissimus!'

But the Grade system can be made to work, and here we touch upon another aspect of the working of a Group. When all the members of the Group have grown together in that group-unity which is the perfection of the Group Mind or Egregore, then there grows up a natural 'grading', where each member naturally gravitates to his or her rightful level in the unity of the Whole. But this natural grading must not come as the result of the successful passing of examinations *nor* as the reward for outstanding psychic activities; it must be brought about by the unseen forces and people who, working behind the Group, will, if they are allowed to work freely, bring each member to the place where they should be. Here we may point out that each Sephirah on the Tree has its characteristic virtue, and as the Grades are correlated with the Sephiroth, then the attainment of any one of the associated virtues will bring the aspirant into the 'grade' to which — at the moment — he belongs. Whether the entry into such a 'grade' is accompanied by any Ritual ceremony will depend upon the Leader of the Group, and upon his true spiritual assessment of his fellow aspirants. It will be seen that such a grading system demands almost superhuman abilities on the part of both aspirant and Leader, but anything less than this enters into the levels of illusion (though illusion has its uses, if it is seen to be illusion). Incidentally, if we speak of the entry into a new aspect of consciousness as 'Initiation', we must also remember that the word 'initiation' stems from the Latin 'ab initio' and

signifies the *start* of life and experience on the new level. Those on the Inner Planes, who constitute the Inner Group which always lies behind the Outer Group will keep the new brother of the Grade in a concentrated atmosphere of energy which will gradually develop his inner realization until it becomes possible for the true Initiator — his Higher Self — to bring to full awareness the consciousness of the personal self as far as this grade is concerned.

We are all prone to look back and glamorize the past. The 'good old days' is a saying often used when we look at all the troubles of the present, and many students of the occult look back to the Golden Age of Atlantis, or the golden age of the Golden Dawn in all its glory. Nevertheless, it is very true that this, too, is an illusion. Let us press forward, remembering the saying of the wise Teacher who wrote so many centuries ago: 'And say not thou that former years were better than those of the present time; for that is the talk of a foolish person.'

### Humour

The Esoteric Traditions of both East and West have always been coloured to a greater or lesser extent by the cultural outlook prevailing at the time when they were presented or re-presented to the public view. This has meant, in effect, that the balance of the teaching has been altered, and ultimately it has been necessary to correct this imbalance. In both East and West, certain 'mores' or tribal customs have been given religious sanctions, and because of this, they have tended to affect any teaching or philosophy which was put forward.

The trouble is mainly caused by an over-emphasis upon one particular point of view, and this again is affected by the emotional reactions of those concerned.

So, in one period of Eastern thought, the ideal of the ascetic life was held out as the highest good, and generations of teachers taught the ascetic Path to Liberation. Much of the strength of the appeal of the Lord Gautama Buddha lay in the balanced teaching he put forward, but the tradition of ascetism was so strong that it persists to the present day. In the same way, in early Christianity a similar tradition of ascetism was superimposed upon the early teachings, and some of the stories of the desert Hermits make strange reading. Here, in addition to the simple ascetic ideas, there was also the effect of the dualistic Manichean 'heresy'. This taught, amongst other things, that the natural order of things was absolutely corrupt — especially the physical body of man. In the

upheavals of the Dark Ages, this particular teaching diminished, but during the Middle Ages it came again into prominence, and, following upon the Reformation it reappeared as what is sometimes known as the 'Puritan strain'.

The Restoration period in England, and the Regency period which followed it, by a natural swing of the emotional pendulum emphasized the opposite attitude of 'license' but with the advent of Queen Victoria once again the puritanical outlook again held sway — in public, at least. Now with the onset of the 'permissive age', license under the guise of 'freedom' again appears. As any student of the Qabalah will see, both these ways of thinking are out of balance, and belong in some part at least, to the kingdoms of the Qliphoth.

The Esoteric Traditions of East and West have inevitably been coloured by the general mental, emotional and moral outlooks of the races of mankind, have, in effect, been twisted towards one or the other of the unbalanced outlooks we have been considering. So *some* occultists have developed a puritanical outlook on life, whilst others have gone in the reverse direction towards a policy of 'license'. Many others, distrusting both camps, are confused and pained by the apparent discrepancy between the various occult schools of thought.

It is here that the virtue which we spoke of comes into its own. What is this virtue? The answer is 'Humour'. It is necessary, however, for us to try to define what we mean by 'humour'. Firstly, we do *not* mean the unconsciously cruel enjoyment of *someone else* getting into a ludicrous or ridiculous situation. We are going down the street, and we see someone slip up on a piece of orange skin left by some litter-lout. We enjoy the victim's efforts to keep on his feet, and the ludicrous antics he displays. It is very funny — full of humour. Now let the roles be reversed. Let the victim be ourselves. The other man laughs at us, we indulge in those strange contortions, we hit the pavement with a bump. It is *not* funny, there is *no* humour about it at all. Everything here depends upon the point of view. There is another form of humour which is usually spoken of as 'Rabelaisan' humour — all the various 'blue' stories which are reputed, in some circles, to originate in Stock Exchange offices, and which revolve around various ludicrous incidents in the sex life of the hero or heroine of the tale. Here we come into the realms of literature and art. Rabelais himself, James Branch Cabell, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Congreve and Wycherley, to mention only a few, are in their various ways prominent in this kind of 'humour'.



Here the esoteric student of the Western Tradition, holding as he does the doctrine that the physical body and all its instincts and passions is *not* evil, but equally holy unto the Lord as any ascetic's ideal of 'spirituality', can view this form of humour with less pathological abhorrence than is possible to his puritan brother. But the instinct of the puritan is nevertheless true in some ways. Both these aspects of humour have implicit within them one of the worst vices — *cruelty*. For in the enjoyment of another's misfortune, lies hidden that desire to inflict pain and suffering upon another, even though we do it at secondhand, as it were.

'The Devil, that proude Spirit, hateth to be mocked' says an old book, and here we begin to get to the root of the matter. It lies in the egotism which is such a prominent part of us all. We have built up a personality *with which we identify ourselves*, and any ridicule or mockery inflicted upon our precious personality is resented by us as an attack upon ourselves. In our relations with our fellow man, there are two ways of dealing with such an apparent attack upon our precious selves. One is to become hurt and angry, the other to accept it without any angry reaction. This, I am well aware, is much more easily said than done! The real attitude is summed up in the advice given not to laugh *at* a person, but to laugh *with* him. We thus remove ourselves from the dominion of that 'Proude Spirit that hateth to be mocked' and by seeing how the particular thing at which our brother is laughing is really within us, we avoid angry reactions and gain valuable lessons. And often it is true that they who disputed our passage did us true service.

There is a story of St Theresa d'Avila, that once, when fording an icy torrent in the mountains, as she went on her religious travels, she fell in. When she got out, the voice of the Lord said to her, 'Thus do I treat My friends'. Upon which she said, 'That's why You have so few, then!' The inner attitude which enables us to laugh at ourselves is a tremendous help in occult work, and can prevent us being misled by pompous statements and ridiculous claims. By its aid, you may safely read the advertisements of some (not all) magazines and publications, and have a delightful time scanning the claims of various 'gurus', 'swamis', and other assorted teachers. Or you may find much to amuse you in the turgid contents of some of the magazines, written in pseudo King James' English, with a total disregard of the plural and singular forms, or you may delight in some of the far-out stories of some who claim to be in touch with advanced Beings from other

evolutions, but who don't appear to have gained much, spiritually speaking, from such contact.

By the use of the formula we have given you, having laughed at them, you will now laugh with them, and recognize *within yourself* the germs of that which you have been deriding in *them*. All of which is very good for you, even though it reduces the pedestal upon which you have mounted. It won't hurt you, or for that matter, any of us, to be a few inches or feet lower. There is something in what Bunyan said 'He that is down need fear no fall'.

A priggish occultist is an abomination before the Lord, he is a nuisance to all his fellow students, gives an entirely false image of occultism to the general public, and, which matters much more, he is always in danger of being 'let down' and broken by his own inner forces.

Blessed is the man that can laugh at himself, it will save him much trouble. There is a Rabbinical tradition that one of the Angels nearest to the Presence of the Holy One is the Angel of Mirth and Laughter.

### Service

Before we proceed with any further remarks, we have to make an apology. Those of you who have read the last number of *Round Merlin's Table* will have noticed several typing errors. We have no excuse to offer save, perhaps, that we were in a hurry! But this is no valid excuse for an occultist.

Vividly fixed in our memory is the way in which Dion Fortune dealt with such errors. In those early days the Fraternity of the Inner Light produced a monthly magazine, the 'Inner Light', and all the work in connection with it took place in the office at 3, Queensborough Terrace, and was done by some of the members of the Fraternity. Dion Fortune always insisted on checking the stencils before they were printed from on our Roneo machine. It sometimes happened that Dion Fortune would find some error in a particular stencil, and she forthwith insisted that a new stencil should be cut to replace the faulty one. As the error might have been in one or two words only, it was sometimes suggested to her that the readers would understand it, so that the stencil was 'good enough'. This brought forth from her the uncompromising reply that 'Only the best is good enough for the Masters.' The lesson was soon learned, and was never forgotten.

So we must apply this injunction to our own productions, since we, too, claim to be attempting to serve the Masters. Though it

may seem to be a counsel of perfection, we would suggest that our students try to follow it out — it is a really good discipline for the aspiring Apprentice! Also, the observation of this rule will help to preserve a good image to those who come into contact with us, and will therefore further the work in which we are engaged.

It is now Autumn, and in the esoteric year, this is the period of Reaping — as, indeed it is on both the physical and superphysical levels. With the increase of world inflation, and with increasing communication between all nations in the world, 'harvest', which to the urban dweller was something remote from his immediate mode of life — after all, the shops are always stocked with the same general articles of food — and the way in which those foods arrived in the shops was something with which he was not immediately concerned. Now, with rising costs and with more immediate knowledge of where food is obtained, and the whole question of the successful harvesting having been brought to his notice, even urban man has begun to take a greater interest in harvests throughout the world.

Equally, esoteric students have to consider harvests, but they have also to consider another kind of harvest. The Vernal Equinox is the time of the Sowing, and from the Summer Solstice begins the Tide of Reaping, when the results of our sowing are ready for reaping. So those plans which we sowed now begin to bear fruit. No longer can we alter the conditions of growth — the inner forces have brought them to the harvest, and we have to face the results of what we have sown.

Some of our most cherished schemes will have not turned out as we had hoped. Some have apparently been unsuccessful, and others have survived in a distorted form. For the next period, we must carefully consider these results and try to find the weaknesses in our plans which have caused such failures, and eliminate them from our future consideration. But we shall also have reaped good results, and these should help us to eliminate those things which have caused our other work to be a partial failure.

Although such good grain may be small in quantity, it is good in quality, and will help us in the days ahead in our chosen work. So on the Path, we are not looking for *quantity of members*, but for *quality of service*. The affirmation which all who enter the Lodges of the Light must give, in one form or another, is 'I desire to know, in order to serve.' That is the Pass-word, that is the Key to the Mysteries, and in those Mysteries we meet Those who, through the ages, have administered the ancient disciplines and

Who still receive those who are willing *and ready* to undergo such training. They receive them, They train them, They commission them. The Pillars of Their Lodge are Love and Wisdom. They are Masters of Life, and in our turbulent century they seek those who will offer themselves in the service of Life.

There are many things which are rapidly altering, and although these cyclic changes *must* come it is part of *our* work to bring into the turbulent conditions around us, the balancing forces of the Light. In England, one who knew and worked towards this ideal, spoke in the seventeenth century of 'A New Order of the Ages', and the same words are to be seen on the Great Seal of the United States of America.

In England, it was prophesied that 'The world to an end shall come, in eighteen hundred and eighty-one', and although in that century there was no world-wide catastrophe, nevertheless a new order of things began to enter into the life of the Western world, the first trickle of what has become a mighty flood which has swept away many things which were thought to be fixed and immovable, and has cleared the ground for that new order of things only now shaping itself in the midst of the turmoil.

Not only is our own planet being changed, but great forces are seeping through the whole of the planetary system to which we belong, and something entirely new is now coming to birth. For in the mighty path which the whole of our solar system traverses as our Sun swings around a great central Sun, it is entering into regions of space which are strange and new, and now energies are pouring in upon all the worlds — seen and unseen — of our solar system. A new Cosmic order of things is coming to birth.

In the midst of all this cosmic, planetary and earthly upheaval, as the new wine bursts the old bottles, it is easy for us to feel that we are weak and impotent, facing forces which are apparently far stronger than ourselves. This is an illusion. As Marcus Aurelius wrote in his meditations, 'We are never less alone than when we think we are alone.' Very often we feel that we are facing forces which are apparently far stronger than ourselves. But just as in the old Bible story, the eyes of the servant of the old prophet were opened, and he saw the Chariot of Fire and the Horsemen thereof protecting him and his master against the besieging forces, so it is ever true, as the same Book assures us, 'They that are with us are greater than they that are against us.'

The Darkness wars against the Light. But just as the light of one small candle cannot be put out by a million leagues of darkness, so the human spirit cannot be destroyed, nor the Light



of the Spirit extinguished. 'The Light shineth in the Darkness, and the Darkness cannot overcome It.'

'In His Will is our Peace', said the Souls in Paradise to the poet, and in that Will we, too, can find that Peace — a true peace which is not the mere abundance of strife, but the positive Power which makes all things new.

We who have taken upon ourselves the name of 'The Servants of the Light' are pledged to extend that Light, for this is the Great Work which forever goes on in the Universe — and in the souls of men. There are many things which we shall learn as we study and train together, there are many practices in which we may become proficient which will enable us to become better servants of that Light, and there are many exciting paths which will open before us, but behind all these things there must be our dedication to the Service of the Light, and our desire to co-operate with our Brethren of the 'College of the Holy Spirit', as our Rosicrucian brethren so entitled that august Assembly of the Spirits of Just men made Perfect, the Watchers, the Holy ones.

Darkness is not overcome by using its own weapons against it. If we attempt to use the weapons of the Darkness, then we place ourselves at a disadvantage, for we cannot use those weapons with the ruthlessness, the efficiency and the lack of scruple of the Lords of Unbalanced Force. In any case, one does not overcome the Darkness by sweeping it out, but simply by bringing in a Light. We do not have to persuade others to join us, but simply have to allow the Lords of Light to bring to us those who can best serve the Light.

For those, too, who in this transitory life are in trouble, need, sorrow or sickness, those who need help, the healing and restoring power of the Light should shine upon them from within ourselves, as we open our hearts to that Light. By *truly* helping them, we enable them to also release the Light that is within them, even though at present it shines but dimly and fitfully, and so we may help them to take their places in the Great Work. This Great Work — the regeneration of the Universe and the soul of Man, and it is this Great Work which the Eternal undertakes in our hearts.

That regeneration of the soul of Man, when the rough Ashlar of his crude and unregenerate self is fashioned by the blows of the mallet and the biting edge of the chisel into the perfect Ashlar, square and true and polished, means that he may then be built up onto the Spiritual Temple, the Temple of Salem, which is also the Temple of Peace.

This is, you may say, a long-term view. True, but we must act practically, with all the power at our command to realize this vision. At the same time we must also remember that a short term view is equally important, both points of view, both aims, are necessary. Our short term view must be built into our long term outlook. The Scriptures say, 'Now is the acceptable time, *now* is the day of salvation.' The present is giving way continually to the future — that 'present' in which I wrote this word has now become the 'past', and that which was 'future' has now become the 'present'. It is in this razor-sharp edge of consciousness that we call 'The Present' that we can work and only in that point of consciousness. Let this thought be for each one of us, our personal Salutation at the Dawn of each day.

Upon the Altar of the Mysteries stands the burning Light which symbolizes the Eternal Light that shines ever within the hearts of men, that Light that Lighteth every man coming into the world. In your daily uprising *inflame* that symbol within your hearts, and in your lying-down at night, *enshrine* it there.

To those who love and show forth the Light will come those who truly Serve the Light, and those who are our true Brethren in the spirit, and in that comradeship we may go confidently into the changing world around us.

Let the brethren dwell together in love and unity, thinking no evil of one another. Let compassion temper Justice, Justice balance Compassion; Let us be serene and diligent, wise and temperate and strong. There is a blessing on all who serve.

## 4.

## Inner Plane Contacts and Rays

*One of the things that made W.E.B. such a good teacher was the fact that he fully understood that those he had taught and trained would inevitably stamp their own personality, ideas, and interpretations on the future work of the SOL. Once, sitting by the fire in his little sitting room he said, '...when the time comes, and it will come, don't be afraid to throw out what I have written and write a new course. It will be hard for you to do I know, but you must not think of it as being disloyal, your loyalty is not to me, but to the Opener and to those who come for teaching. My work will have accomplished what it set out to do, you must bring in the new, mine will then become the core around which your work can be built'. It takes a great soul to say that.*

*He saw the beginnings of the new SOL and applauded the way it would go in the future, he has never really left us, but works from another level and encourages those trends he knows will be successful and tries to discourage those he sees as 'dicey'. Had he lived long enough and been in good health it would have delighted him (indeed it does delight him) to see the many working groups that have sprung up within the egregore of the SOL.*

D.A.N.

There is a saying that 'new brooms sweep clean', and this is usually taken to mean that many of the old, well-established things become the victims of the reforming zeal of the wielder of the new broom. However, this need not be the case, and in such an organization as ours, it should not happen at all — at least, it should not happen in such a drastic manner. It may, and usually is, a shift of emphases — some things are brought forward into a

more prominent position and others are, for a period, relegated to the background. There is, of course, an inner rhythm in these matters, and this we shall try to follow.

Our aim in this Course is to put the student onto his own 'contact' — to enable him to make *some* conscious link with the Group on the Inner Planes of which he is already a member. We would emphasize this latter point. We are all linked with groups of various kinds on the Inner Planes. Our membership of these Groups is determined by our emotional, mental and spiritual attitudes to life in its various aspects. Some of the contacts we make in this way are ephemeral, lasting only during the time in which we are interested in any one particular aspect of life. When we lose interest, or grow out of this particular attitude, then we lose the contact and fall out of the Group (unless we have formed a strong emotional link with a person or persons connected therewith).

It is also true that we have contacts with many such Groups on the Inner Planes, just as we may, in ordinary earth-life, be interested in and members of musical, literary or athletic or religious groups and organizations. However, we usually find that *one* group, *one* particular organization seems to hold a special fascination for us, and this is equally true of those Groups and organizations with which we may become contacted on the Inner Planes.

To use a convenient but very misused esoteric cliché, we are on one particular Ray — that is, we have an innate temperamental bias towards one particular Inner Plane Group, and life after life we find ourselves seeking its contact. The subject of the 'Rays' is a very complex one, and cannot be easily understood in a few short lessons — although many attempt this, and thereafter go about with an air of wisdom, sorting out their acquaintances and fellow-students into the categories of the Seven Rays.

It is not usually realized by the ordinary esoteric student that there is a good deal of coming and going between the various Inner Plane Groups, and a student who fondly believes himself to be on one particular Ray, and a member of one particular Inner Plane Group may well find, when he is able to make conscious contact with the Inner Planes, that he has for quite a time been loaned out, as it were, to another entirely different Group! This certainly happened in our own case, and we have no reason to think that we were unique in that respect. If we remember that all the Masters are Brethren, working in the same great Brotherhood, then whether we are in our own regiment of that Spiritual



Army or 'seconded' for duty with a different unit, it is all in the *one* organization.

However, it is necessary for us to make conscious contact if this is to be anything more than mere theory. Not that we decry theory, any more than we would decry the north seeking end of a magnet and uphold the merits of the south seeking end. Magnets being what they are, both aspects are always present and cannot be divided. Theory and practice should go hand in hand if we are to be anything more than rule-of-thumb occultists, but it so often happens, in this field of work, that theory becomes divorced from practice. This results in a sterile academic presentation of esoteric knowledge by those who would be frightened out of their wits if they were for a moment to experience genuine 'occult' phenomena. We should hate our students to become theoretical occultists, and for this reason we have always stressed the value of personal contact with and experience of the Inner Planes.

## 5.

### Tatvas

*This short article and the exercise that goes with it was part of the training given to his supervisors. It is so good and so useful it would have been selfish to keep it in the files benefiting no one. The Tatva Tides are not as well known, nor as widely used, as they should be in Western occult work. W.E.B. lived for some time in India and learned their use there, this knowledge was extended when he joined Dion Fortune and became part of the Inner Light Fraternity.*

D.A.N.

#### Part 1

You will find that there are numerous factors which affect the accuracy of the psychic sensing, and these you should note down in your Diary. This will enable you to choose the best periods for your psychic work, as well as the best psychic 'conditions'. The aim, of course, is that you can eventually use your faculty in all normal conditions, and even when conditions are somewhat difficult you will be able to perceive the inaccuracy which will creep into your results. This psychic development is a long business, unless you have the faculties very near the surface, but it will enable you to be better Servers of humanity and the Holy Ones.

Equally, of course, it will bring you new temptations, and at times a painful sensitivity. Leadbeater quotes the poet Schiller as saying 'Why has Thou cast me down amongst the living, to proclaim Thine Oracle with the ever-seeing eye. Take back Thy terrible gift of sight, and give me back my happy darkness'. But with control of the vision, it becomes a means by which we can

more efficiently help our brethren, and so advance upon the Path. Also, it has its humorous side!

Now to recapitulate. Each day practise the visualization of the basic symbols — The Lovers, the Squared Circle in colour and in white, the Symbol of Earth in its appropriate quadrant — all these, until you have established them firmly in your mind. Remember that The Lovers are the symbolic blueprint of what you are trying to establish within yourself. Meditate upon this card, so that its images may always be a background to your psychic work. Then the Squared Circle in colour and in white. Then the particular Elemental Symbol which forms the door to the psychic wave-length upon which you intend to work. In these first attempts, it is the Symbol of Earth, which is associated with the psychological function of 'sensation'. You are now tuned in and ready to receive when you complete the operation by switching on your psychic receiving set. You can use anything you like as a starting switch. I use a Hebrew letter, which I repeat three times with the intention that my psychic faculties will start working.

When finished, I close down by using the same Hebrew letter, but with the intention of closing down the faculties. I have found this a very useful method.

Having closed down, don't forget to log any particular points which may seem important to you, in your Diary.

### Exercise

Open up with intention, and take the object to be 'sensed' in your hand. If you wish, you may put it to your forehead. Keep your mind as detached as possible and wait for impressions to rise. As you have tuned in to Earth, it should be the vibrational aura of the object which you will contact. This may be perceived by you as a feeling of warmth, or cold, a prickly feeling or a curious smooth feeling. Record them aloud (this helps to impress them on your mind in a stronger fashion). When finished — a period of say ten minutes is usually sufficient — come back to normal with the 'intention' to terminate the sitting. Note down in the Diary what impressions you got. After a period of two or three minutes pick up another article and repeat the process. Don't do more than four experiments at this first session. The articles could be a piece of marble, a piece of chalk, a piece of metal, a piece of slate. Anything of this kind. We are after the *basic* vibration of the article, and for this it is not necessary that the object should be

large. In fact a small thing is much better, and gives less information to the conscious mind. Such information could be very misleading. Try this experiment at any convenient times during the next two weeks, always recording the results.

### Part 2

You were instructed in the Part 1 to begin to visualize the symbol of Malkuth — the Quartered Circle. Now the four quarters correspond, amongst other things, to the Four Elements, Earth, Air, Fire and Water. But you will remember that these Elements must not be thought of as being 'elements' like carbon, iron or oxygen. They are called the Earth of the Wise, the Air of the Wise, the Fire of the Wise and the Water of the Wise. They are not 'elements' as understood by the physical scientist. They are four types of activity. The Fire symbol represents free energy, unconditioned force, and is an upward pointing Triangle. Air represents conditioned force and is given the symbol of a Triangle pointing upward, but with a bar placed across it. Water is symbolized by a Triangle pointing downwards, and represents an *active type of form*, whilst the same downwards pointing Triangle but with a bar across it represents inert form, Earth.

On the Tree of Life, these Four Elements are shown coloured citrine, olive, russet and black (or indigo). In Malkuth on the Tree, the Queen Scale shows the Earth of the Wise as the bottom quadrant, the Air of the Wise at the top quadrant, the Fire of the Wise on the right-hand quadrant, and the Water of the Wise on the left-hand quadrant. Air is given the colour citrine, the Water is shown as olive, Fire is given the colour russet, and Earth is shown as black or indigo. These colours are the clear blue, the fiery red, the green and the dark blue of the Elements seen *through the veil of earthly things and dimmed thereby*.

As we are dealing in our first experiments with the psychological function of 'sensation' we shall use the Earth symbol, for all sensation is experienced through the material physical body. If we were working with 'intuition', then we would use the Fire triangle of the right-hand quadrant, and should we be working with the psychological function of 'feeling', we should use the olive left-hand quadrant.

So, for our first experiments we shall visualize a plain white circle, with the bottom quadrant coloured indigo. In this indigo quadrant we visualize a silver triangle pointing downwards and having a bar across it. Remember, the other three quadrants are



left white — with no symbols. A good way to visualize these colours is to make a circle, divide it into the quadrants and put in all the colours and triangles. Then quietly contemplate this and try, without any strain, to concentrate upon the particular colour and triangle you have chosen — in this case, indigo and the barred down-pointing triangle. I would like you now to try another little experiment. Take two clocks, put them in different spots in your room, and then try to pick up the tick of one clock without paying too much attention to the tick of the other clock. You will find that this demands a curious *detachment* — if you try too hard, you won't succeed. A similar detachment is necessary when using the visual symbols. What it really amounts to is the cultivation of an ability to ignore mentally those symbols you do *not* wish to work with, and to concentrate upon the symbol you are working with. You will see that this detachment is poles apart from the red-faced, jaw-clenching that is usually associated with the idea of 'concentration'. It is very effective however, and we suggest that you try this as a 'catch exercise' done at odd times when the opportunity offers.

Remember, by this visualization work you are building four 'doors of perception' through which you may gaze out upon the psychic scene. The effective visualization of the Tarot card, The Lovers, and the similar visualization of the symbol of Malkuth must be carried out as a regular exercise, even when you are not using the 'Symbol Gates'. Remember you are building your symbols in the Queen Scale, in the World of Assiah in the Sphere of Malkuth. This is important, and you must get it clearly fixed in your mind. In effect, you will be using a symbol code through which the information received by psychic sensing can be brought through the veil which screens off the subconscious levels from the waking mind. As I have already said, at first the results will not be without a great deal of error, but gradually, as you become expert, you will find that they become increasingly accurate.

## 6.

### Masters and Pupils

*These two articles are of great interest to anyone thinking of joining a mystery school, or simply wanting to know how one goes about finding a teacher. I know that in the modern world it seems as if every second must be filled and time must never be wasted, everything must be now... but as W.E.B. says here, 'the Teacher does not appear in a spectacular way...' A little patience can go a long way in such cases.*

*He was particularly concerned about the rush to join Eastern Schools when there were and are Western Schools far more suited to the Western student. This was not to say that he decried the Eastern Way, he revered it as much as his own, and to some extent had been trained in it whilst in India, but he looked upon the Western Tradition as the natural way for those born in that part of the world.*  
D.A.N.

#### **When the Pupil is Ready, the Master Appears**

The particular occult maxim which I have used as the title of this article is one which has been so much misused and misunderstood, that I thought it might be worthwhile considering it a little more closely. On the face of it, it seems simple enough, and there are various stories in esoteric circles which tell us how various occult teachers 'found their Master'.

Some of these stories are very convincing in their own right, such as, for instance, the meeting in the Black Forest of Rudolf Steiner and his Master. Or the more spectacular meeting of MacGregor Mathers with the Masters whom, he claimed, were the inspiring forces behind the Hermetic Order of the Golden

Dawn in the Outer. Again, the sudden appearance of a mysterious Oriental to Mrs A. A. Bailey when she was still a young girl. Others, too, have had similar experiences. In the East where the guru-chela relationship has been well developed, it would seem that the maxim we are considering is justified on its face value. In practice, however, we shall find that it has led to considerable confusion and misunderstanding.

In the early days of the Theosophical Society, when Madame Blavatsky and her Masters loomed very large in the affairs of the Society, many esoteric students became obsessed by the idea that by going to the mystic East, they would be able to make personal contact with one or other of these Masters. That such Masters existed, Madame Blavatsky consistently maintained was true, but that anyone who could go to the East would thereby be able to find and attach themselves to such gurus, that she flatly denied, and indeed in many writings she outlined the arduous task which lay ahead of such guru hunters. But the idea still persisted, and was fed by the fact that there has always been a steady supply of 'gurus' available on the Eastern scene. (Nowadays, they have realized that there are many advantages both socially and materially in coming to the West.) Some of these men are genuine teachers and can give their chelas real help and instruction. Others are simply confidence tricksters, intent on extracting as much money as possible from those who mistakenly follow them.

However, the Western home-grown variety of guru suffers from the same disabilities as his Eastern counterpart. Some leaders and teachers in Western occultism are true teachers, and in their hands the aspirant is safe. But others there are who are desirous of bolstering up their own personalities and powers in an attempt to *dominate* and exploit those who put their trust in them. There is nothing new in this, for as it has been said 'humanity dearly loves a Lord', and if it can't find one, it will make one. The psychology behind such endeavours to build up such a 'super-figure' is simply that those who indulge in such personality worship are generally those who suffer from a profound fear of life and its responsibilities. They are unsure of themselves, and the powerful magnetic personality of the guru is something against which they can lean without having to exert themselves against the evil and powerful world around them. By identifying with the worshipped personality, they feel that they have solved their problems. Such identification with the guru does not enhance the spiritual status of the chela, but it does mean that he builds up his own personality in a negative fashion, and away

from his guru he possesses neither wisdom or power. Such negative personalities form quite a large part of the esoteric groups of the present day in both East and West. But such groups are not likely to attract the notice of the true Teachers, who seek for those who will work upon themselves in a positive, active way, and so reintegrate their personalities. But even with the negative personality-worshipping people, there are times when, under the unseen influence of the astral light, they make a living contact with a Teacher. But the Teacher does not appear in a spectacular way. It may be that someone says something which 'rings a bell' as we say, in the aspirant's mind.

He tries to get the one who has put forward this new point of view to expand his statement, and finds that the new angle has caused him to see things from an entirely new point of view, and this may lead to some differences within the Lodge or Group sufficient to determine for him the way he should go. Perhaps he remains with his brethren and tries to work out his new enlightenment with them. Perhaps he feels that he must leave them and work at his new ideas alone. *The pupil was ready, and the Master, working through the member whose casual statement sparked off the aspirant on his new line of thought and work, has appeared.* But because the Master did not appear to specification he was not recognized. No matter as long as the aspirant was aroused to take advantage of the new idea. In this way, much of the work of the Inner Plane Masters and Their co-workers on the physical levels is carried out, without the question of personalities coming into the matter at all. Now, I am not suggesting that the friend whose remark started our aspirant along another line of thought and work was himself a more or less advanced student or chela of a Master. Simply he was in telepathic rapport with the Master (although he probably had no idea whatsoever that he was being used in this way).

All humanity is *already* formed into a unity by reason of the common sonship each has with the Divine Being. We do not need to *form* a unity — the unity already exists. Our work is to *realize* that essential unity of all life and having realized it, to work it out in the conditions of the material world around us. We cannot hoard this realization to ourselves. Like the manna which fed the Israelites in the Wilderness, it becomes dead and poisonous if we try to keep it to our own little ego. The very realization of the unity of all life can well become an illusion of unlimited power which may be exerted over others. Again and again it happens that aspirants, far along the Path, are dazzled and misled by the



vision of the unity and, misunderstanding its true nature, fall away from the Path and wander in aeonian darkness. In one of the Eastern teachings it is said 'The *mind* is the Slayer of the Real', and if we put it in another form it may be more intelligible to the aspirant. For of course, nothing can 'slay' the Real. But the mind of man can obscure and veil the Real for a time, at least. In the concluding part of the saying — only part of which we have quoted — we are told to 'slay the Slayer' and again the mind, in any part of its nature cannot be 'slain' or destroyed. But it can be trained and controlled, until it becomes a means whereby the Eternal Realities may be apprehended by the consciousness of the aspirant, becoming in truth a mirror of the Everlasting Light, and a true Image of its Goodness.

But always, through the fullness of the essential unity, life speaks to life, and consciousness to consciousness, and whenever we aspire to the Light, we are linked with the aspirations and thoughts of all others who also seek the Light, and that telepathic link between ourselves and our fellow aspirants is strengthened and operates through what seem to be casual remarks or offered guidance. We must remember also, that the deeper aspects of our selves — that Self which is the True background to our lives is also always sending to us intimations of Its existence and reality. This is that Teacher to whom Abramelin the Mage consigned his son after he had taught him the Mysteries, and it is this Higher Self which in the end must be our only Teacher. All other teachers but point the way to Him.

So, when the new opening was given to our aspirant, the Master through the one who was in tune with him, appeared, but veiled, and in increasing degree through all who are attuned to the nature of the Supreme Self, the aspirant is led until within himself, the Mystic Christ is born. But this is only the beginning. The Divine Child has to attain manhood, to be tempted, tested and tried, must suffer and go down into darkness, must Rise and ascend before He can say, as the Lord of the Mystery, 'I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore and have the keys of Death and the Unseen Worlds'. There is a rule which applies to 'Masters' and aspirants alike. They are incorporated into the Life of the World not because of what they know, or what they can do, but because of *what they are*.

### The Search for the Guru

On every side we see what appears to be a total upheaval of values

which were once part of the established order. On the one hand there is a worldwide assertion of the values included in what are usually termed 'human rights'. In every direction we see open revolt against the established order of things, and this upheaval is to be found in every part of human society. In religion, in philosophy, in politics, this truly Geburic quality of destruction is to be seen actively at work. 'The old order changeth, yielding place to new...' wrote the poet Tennyson. However, he continued by saying 'and God fulfils Himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world.' In these words Tennyson proves himself to be, consciously or unconsciously, a true Qabalist. If the breaking down of forms is the power of Geburah in action, then that activity is necessary to clear the ground of effete and fossilized forms and customs which must be removed before the new order of things may be built by the complementary power of Gedulah. Of course, where there is invoked an overplus of the Geburic power, then we get the senseless destruction of forms for sheer wantonness, and this, of course, is the action of the unbalanced forces of the Qliphoth. All this, of course, is elementary Qabalism, but the world situation wherein these energies are in active manifestation is the background of the lives of the myriad mortals who dwell on this planet. It is, therefore, a strong conditioning factor in all human activity. Now, human beings react both consciously and subconsciously to the background forces, and this reaction varies with the individual. With only two of these variations am I concerned here. These are, the reaction which impels the individual to search for someone, or something, which will enable him to opt out from the difficult discipline of daily life, in which *he* has to continually be making decisions which he feels involve him in unpleasant situations. He reacts by seeking out and adopting a teacher, a philosophy which will enable him to rest in the comfortable feeling that the guru will provide all the answers, will impose all the tasks which are necessary, and all *he* has to do is surrender himself to the guidance of the guru and the philosophy the guru proclaims. If, by some mischance (as he would think it) he should have actually chosen a *true* teacher, then he will be in for some unpleasant surprises as his training proceeds and he finds that so far from the teacher sheltering him against the storms of life, he actually pushes him out into them! If he survives the treatment, he begins to revise his whole philosophy, and starts upon the Path.

If, unfortunately, he has found a teacher of the kind for which

he has been looking — one who will lead him along a path of weak negative 'spirituality' so-called, then he becomes a parasite of life, claiming from life that which will help him in his own personal self, but refusing to contribute actively to the true spiritual work of the world. Such a 'spiritual' aspirant can very effectively increase the power of negative Evil in the world, and widen the quagmire of spiritual sloth and ultimate despair, even though by his words he apparently intends to 'help the world'.

However, the 'teacher' who will deliberately attract and hold such aspirants is one in whom, as a general rule, a particular aspect of Unbalanced Force is to be found. I have said, 'as a general rule' since some of these teachers share the passive negative outlook of those who come to them in the same spirit, and here we have the blind leaders of the blind, both in the end, coming to disaster. But the positive teacher who allows such passivity and such a negative outlook in his chosen pupils is, as I have said, a victim of Unbalanced Force. He is obsessed by a 'power-complex' and in order that this complex may be fed, he will draw together a Group of pupils who will minister to it. Many and many a time have I observed the activities of such 'Gurus', in both East and West. In the East, I have seen the 'chelas' of a guru cleaning out the latrine used by him — using their own long hair as mops. This is against all the teachings of the *true* Eastern teachers. However, I have seen similar things in the West, though not carried out quite so openly. In both cases, the chelas were being used by the so-called guru to satisfy the power-complex which possessed him.

In all teaching there must always be an element of control and discipline exerted by the teacher, but it is exercised as a 'leading' influence, not a compelling command. Where this last is the pattern of training, then sooner or later that Group or School is going to split up and founder.

For that reason, we of the Qabalistic Schools of the West strongly deprecate the popular search for a Master. It is very true that when the pupil is ready, then the Master appears. But much preliminary work must be done before that happens, though long before there is any conscious meeting with the Teacher, there has been an unconscious meeting with him through various indirect sources. In increasing degree the influence of the Teacher is mediated through those who are in psychic relationship with him, and by this indirect contact the soul is at length brought into conscious awareness of the Teacher.

But such a contact may be mediated through the means of

books or by membership of a Group, and a Group such as that of those who are students of the Correspondence Course which we conduct may well mediate the power and love of the Teacher to the aspirant. However, any claim to superiority because the aspirant has made such a contact is not recognized by us. It is not the meeting with the Teacher — whether such a meeting occurs either objectively or subjectively — but the reaction of the aspirant to that meeting which is recognized and considered by us. Contact with a Teacher should result in certain mental, moral and spiritual changes taking place in the aspirant, and it is for these that we look.

In any case, this seeking for a Master, good in itself, can become a vice. My friend and frater Dr Regardie points out in one of his books that one of the things which hastened the downfall of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn in the Outer was just this unbalanced search for Masters. It has been the downfall of several other Groups I have encountered in a somewhat long life. The hunt for the Masters deflected these aspirants from the true line of occult development. The Golden Dawn initiates laid great stress upon that very fine system of training which is to be found in the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage, and apparently forgot the end to which all the training advocated by its author led. Yet it was spelt out in simple language in that book, and some did succeed in achieving the 'Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel'. For this was the real goal of the instructions of the Mage. He asserts quite definitely, 'And now my son, having delivered you into the charge of a greater Teacher...' and that Teacher was the radiant Augoides, the Shining Superself within each man.

However, even when this contact with the Superself has been gained, the same objections apply as in the case of contact with a Master or Teacher. It is how the aspirant uses the power which comes to him as a result of that contact which determines his future. Here again, it is perfectly possible for such a one to develop the fatal vice which is characteristic of the unbalanced occultist, that pride which the Greeks called 'hubris' — an overweening pride which will assert itself in the very face of the spiritual forces, and which in the end will bring the unfortunate one into that situation which is vividly portrayed in the Tarot Trump 'The Blasted Tower'.

So, if any of our students inform us that they have come into conscious contact with a Master or great Teacher, we will not take the assertion as being the truth, the whole truth and nothing



but the truth, but we shall watch to see if this contact which is claimed has affected the aspirant so that he manifests 'the signs following' which should show themselves in his personality if that contact has been truly made *and acted upon*.

I hope I have the situation quite clear. We don't want to keep our students on any leading-strings — we are quite content for them to make whatever contacts they can with the Inner forces — but we do ask that they produce the 'signs following' such a contact. We also warn that any 'messages' presuming to have come from such a contact will be accepted by us in the same way that we would accept any other advice, and we shall continue to use our discrimination upon it. In particular, any messages which in any way attempt to dictate to us how we should run this organization will be received in the same way as any other advice, and considered on its own merits, irrespective of its alleged origin.

If what I have said seems somewhat unsympathetic and cynical, I can only say that we are endeavouring to administer and direct a system of spiritual training, and not running a mutual admiration Group. The Teacher does not ask us to abjure our reasoning ability; he does not ask us to accept all and every piece of advice just because it is received in an apparently supernormal fashion, nor does he ask for the foolish adulation and semi-idolatrous regard which so many would give to him. He is a realist and he asks each one of us to look where he is pointing, to enter into ourselves and realize that the true message of this School is that which was inscribed on the Temples of old. 'GNOTHI SE AUTON' — 'KNOW THYSELF'.

## 7.

### Esoteric Secrecy

*Secrecy for its own sake was a pet hate of W.E.B. He was of the opinion that some people indulged in secrecy in the way they indulged in eating or drinking. He particularly abhorred those who hover on the edge, who like to speak in tones just loud enough to let others know there is a secret. The old days of oath taking are over with a few exceptions, most schools ask students to exercise the virtues of Discretion and Discrimination in their conversations with those outside the school. Where the Inner Court is concerned a candidate for initiation is 'requested' not to divulge the names of the Brethren and to keep silence concerning rites, but very seldom is an 'oath of secrecy' demanded. For if you cannot trust the discretion of an initiate then the initiation has not been a success, the seed of light has not found its place in the heart of the candidate.*

*Some secrecy in occult work is needful, the exercises and training can produce a power best left to those trained to use it. But more and more is being brought into the open. Just a few years ago the practice of pathworking was a closely guarded secret now it has become part of many different ways of teachings, not all of them occult.*

D.A.N.

The late Dr C.G. Jung pointed out in his writings that secrecy, if made into a permanent habit, could be highly detrimental to the individual, and we are constantly enjoined in these permissive days to let nothing be secret in our lives and work.

There is, of course an element of truth in this approach to the idea of secrecy, but the principle still remains that under certain circumstances, some form of secrecy is very necessary. This

occurs in normal life where it is bitterly attacked by various political fanatics, and it is certainly a principle which must be taken into account in the working of any esoteric fraternity, if trouble is to be avoided. However, there is a false secrecy which has no part in any true esoteric work. This is to take teachings which, though possibly only to be found by industrious research, are still what is known as 'public domain'. Such teachings are actually open to all, even though they may be difficult to get at. To make these teachings into a private preserve is morally wrong. The occult schools are sometimes known as the 'arcane schools' and this word 'arcane' has the significance of 'something placed in a chest' — deliberately taken out of circulation and reserved for certain people only. Now it may well be that some teachings which are 'public domain' may have certain undesirable effects, and for that reason the Heads of some esoteric schools may well try to keep such teachings under cover. This is legitimate up to a point on the same principle that we don't teach schoolchildren how to make dynamite — though some so-called teachers do try to do this, quite apart from legitimate teaching in chemistry. As a general rule, however, the principle of 'reserve' as far as certain subjects are concerned, is honourably carried out by most teachers.

But secrecy for the sake of secrecy is not part of the Mystery teaching, and it is to be noted in this connection that Aleister Crowley bitterly complained that at his initiation, his Superiors swore him to secrecy by terrible oaths, and then disclosed to him the Hebrew alphabet and the names of the seven planets.

Where, then, does the principle of secrecy apply in the Mysteries? The true secrets of occultism can never be divulged to all and sundry for the very simple and sufficient reason that they are of such a nature that they may be shouted from the housetops to all and sundry, but only those who have the necessary ability — which is not merely intellectual ability — could understand anything of what was being 'divulged'. So the real secrets of the Mysteries can never be divulged to the world in general.

The true place of esoteric secrecy is within the workings of the individual Lodges or Fraternities. Practically all the work which takes place in an esoteric Lodge consists in the formulating of thought-forms which can be used as the channels of certain forces with which they are linked. What the mind has built, the mind can destroy, and leakage of information regarding the particular forms and forces which are being used will enable an enemy to disrupt the work by breaking up the carefully built forms and

substituting other alien forms which are built to carry a quite different force. Here it is necessary that the Heads of the Lodge or Group should attempt to administer some form of secrecy. This is usually done in two ways. One, and really the most important, is to so arrange the grades through which the members pass, that the elucidation of the teachings of one grade is only to be found in the grade above it. The other way is to administer an Oath of Secrecy. Some of these Oaths are exceedingly terrifying, promising most dire and deadly things should the aspirant ever reveal anything of Lodge procedure. The Oath of the Freemasons is one such horrific oath, and, of course, the terrible penalties therein invoked upon the Candidate, should he break the oath are so far removed from present-day thought that they have little real power over the modern candidate. Nevertheless, on the average, the secrecy of the Masonic Lodges is fairly well kept, even by those who constitute a sizable proportion of Masonic membership — and who are known more generally as 'Knife-and-Fork Masons'!

However, in most modern Lodges, the old Oath has been superseded by a definite promise not to divulge the Lodge secrets. It is said that if a person has it in him to be liable to 'spill the beans', the administration of fearful oaths will not prevent him doing so. However, this is not necessarily always true, for if the Oath incorporates in itself some really striking imagery, it will bite into the subconscious levels, and will always tend to prevent the person concerned from divulging any secrets.

At least that is how the Oath affected the present writer. Many times since his initiation into Lodge, so many years ago — over forty years or so — there have arisen circumstances where the Oath of the Mysteries, administered in all the ceremonial setting of the Initiation ceremony, has prevented him consciously or unconsciously from giving out to the world that which he knew of the hidden working of the Lodge.

In an efficient working Lodge, there is also the check of the clairvoyant faculty of some of the Brethren. Well do I remember, shortly after my first Initiation, talking with a small group about occultism and, in the flush of enthusiasm, proudly displaying to its members the robes which I wore in Lodge. On my next attendance at Lodge, the Officer under whom I was being trained called me aside, and quietly said 'Robes are meant to be worn in Lodge, not exhibited to outsiders!' As my little peccadillo took place at the opposite side of London from where the Lodge was situated, and the people concerned were not in any way linked



with the Lodge, this supernormal knowledge so exhibited brought me up with a jerk. I never attempted anything like that again.

## 8.

### The Manichean Heresy

*This was a 'pet hate' of W.E.B's. He looked upon the physical body as a superbly created vehicle that requires its just dues from the spirit that indwells it during incarnation. He once remarked on the extreme asceticism of some saints, and their seeming preoccupation with masochism that '...today most of them would be locked away as insane'. Coming from an ordained priest of the Liberal Catholic Church this remark would have jolted anyone who didn't know him. But he disliked the idea that the body was to be punished, reviled, or mutilated in any way. He would go on at length about the subject of this article and get quite heated about it at times.*

*He himself was not a vegetarian, though he understood the feelings of those who were, he simply did not see it as a necessary requirement of occult training. He abhorred extremes in all things, even so-called saintliness. A lively discussion on the temptations of St Antony drew the comment that, 'he would have been a much better saint if he had lived it up in town once a week!' There is no answer to that!*

D.A.N.

In this issue of *Round Merlin's Table*, we want to consider two points. It may seem to you that there is little in common between them, but they *are* related to each other. We will, however, leave our readers to discover the subtle connection between them. The first point concerns the position of the physical body in the scheme of esoteric training. In the Lessons we have again and again spoken of the importance of the physical plane of existence, and this, of course, includes that aspect of the physical which we

use as a 'vehicle' or instrument by means of which we make effective contact with the physical levels. This human body is something the potentialities of which are not fully realized by any of us. Sufficient, however, for us to become aware that within this physical frame of ours, there are concealed many wonderful powers and faculties.

You may have heard of what is termed the 'Manichean heresy' which teaches that matter is evil. The Christian Church has always fought against this teaching, both in the outer world *and* within its own ranks. Many times this hidden heresy has influenced the Church and many times it has affected the non-Christian world also. Those who have in recent years gone to the East for a philosophy of life, have also brought back with them some aspects of this doctrine, and have acted thereon. So we find in modern ideas which are current at this time in the West, this idea of the total depravity of Matter — an idea which is totally contrary to the teaching of the Western Tradition. The results of this idea are to be found in the way so many people in the West approach the practical esoteric training offered to them. We have found this approach to be more widespread than we had realized, and particularly have we observed its presence in the thinking of quite a number of our Helios students.

You may feel that, after all, we are making a fuss about nothing, but we feel otherwise. If anyone really believes in this heresy of the total depravity of the physical body they tend to act according to their beliefs, and to neglect the elementary precautions which should be observed when one commences to work with the potent tools of concentration, meditation and contemplation. They start the exercises which are given in our Course, and very often record remarkable results of those exercises. Later, however, they record various bodily and mental disturbances which seem to increase as they continue the exercises. As a general rule, when we have checked their work, we find that some of them *do* have an idea that everything connected with the physical body is more or less tainted with evil. We have noticed also, that it is these students who appear to have the worst disturbances. The reason for this is really very simple. Regardless of what we think about it, the physical is a very wonderful structure, and is the sole means whereby we make contact with the physical plane. In it are very many wonderful energies at work, and a little study of the body from the biological point of view shows how very true is the saying 'we are fearfully and wonderfully made.'

Now when the average person begins to work along esoteric

lines, he usually regards the physical body as a kind of hindrance to progress, and never seems to realize that *true development includes the fleshly body*. So many students either apply ascetic ideas and try to bludgeon the physical into submissiveness or, on the other hand, don't worry about altering whatever bodily habits and customs they may have adopted in the past. Now both of these attitudes are wrong, from the standpoint of true esoteric science, but perhaps the second attitude is the more detrimental to progress. Ascetic procedures as a general rule, are not kept up, but the bland assumption that there is no need to worry about the physical body is much harder to eradicate.

Yet this seems preposterous, for everyone knows that if anyone is going all-out to break some sporting record, the first thing he does is to discipline himself and get his physical body fit and under control. In the Mysteries it was said that the rule of life should be 'If *this*, then not *that*'. This, it will be noticed, makes no ethical judgment on any procedure which may be carried out. It simply points out that discrimination should be exercised. This, of course, should be perfectly evident in the general field of esoteric training, but we want to give a little deeper instruction. Each part of the human organism is energized by certain 'etheric' energies — sometimes referred to as the 'fires' of the body. Failure to purify the physical body means that these 'fires' are, to use a technical term, 'smoky' — and for the same reason that a physical flame may be smoky — the 'fire', physical or super-physical, cannot properly consume all the fuel which is being supplied to it.

In Kundalini Yoga, it is stated that as the Fire rises, it absorbs the lesser fires as it moves upwards through the organism, and should those fires be smoky, then the ascent of the Serpent Power causes suffering, because it is being made to deal with the smoky impurities which they are sending out. Although we are not using the techniques of the Tantras, it is true that certain energies do ascend through the physical body of the student, and these energies can cause distress and pain if they are obstructed by the 'smoky' bodily fires.

Such distress can show itself on any level, physical, emotional or mental, and because increasingly the student is beginning to affect his surroundings through his development, it often happens that seemingly strange coincidences, adverse physical influences or sheer 'bad luck' seem to strike at the student. This is because the inner conditions are mirrored outwards into his outer conditions, and are then reflected back upon himself.



What, then, should he do? If ascetic practices are not helpful, and undue repression is not the answer, how should the student commence to deal with 'Brother Ass' as a very great Saint once described his physical body? Here is the answer we give — the counsel which we pass on to our students.

It really comes in the end to the old Greek saying 'Medan edan' — which may be translated 'Nothing in excess'. The physical body should be given good food, but not too much of it. A good dietary scheme, based upon the modern knowledge of food values and vitamins is the first thing required. It is not necessary for the student to become a vegetarian, but if he does, then he should proceed carefully, since his body has to be accustomed to the new diet. Above all things he must valiantly refrain from becoming obsessed by vegetarianism and becoming a 'faddist'. If he feels that the vegetarianism regime is not for him, then he should continue with his present diet, but cutting it down slightly until he finds the amount which is best *for him*. We have italicized those last two words. No two people are exactly alike, and their needs are correspondingly different. We say their *needs*, not their 'wants', for we all of us want a good many things which we really don't need. Having set our physical house in order, and by judicious elimination got rid of some of the intestinal load with which we have afflicted our long-suffering body, the same discipline should be extended to the emotional clutter of the astral, and then the same process should be directed to the mental levels. We are all like magpies — we steal and hoard away much that simply weighs us down and binds us to our present conditions. If we would move forward on the Path, then we must have a good spring-cleaning, and take with us only those things which will be of use as we advance. This, of course, means that at certain times we should take a long cool look at all the possessions we possess — or which possess us! There are certain times of the year when the tides of the Inner Worlds help us to do this, and such a time is coming now. From the Winter Solstice until the Spring Equinox, the tide which is running will help us to not only do this stock-taking on all planes, but will assist us in the throwing away of much that at present holds us back. There is much implicit in these apparently simple instructions — why not try them out for yourselves? We have found them to work.

\* \* \*

Now we come to quite a different aspect of our work, and here we

are to some extent going ahead into those conditions which the student will not reach for quite a time after he has commenced this Course. However, there are those students who have reached that point where this instruction will be what they are needing for their next step, and this record will also be helpful to those others who are approaching that point in the Course where it will be helpful to them also.

The cryptic form of this instruction says '*Between the Question and the Answer lies the Silence*'. We will give the essence of this as far as possible, and it must then be left to the ingenuity of each student. 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear'.

There is one of the Tarot Trumps — The Lovers — which shows a man and woman with an Angel hovering above them. If we take the woman as a symbol of the subconsciousness, the man as a symbol of the conscious mind and the Angel as a symbol of the superconsciousness, we may interpret it as meaning that the woman, who looks up at the Angel, reflects Him in her face to the man who gazes directly at her.

Look now at the Tarot Trump — Judgement. Here the *man* looks directly at the Angel, and the woman raises her arms to bring down Power. But the child stands between them, symbolizing equilibrium between the conscious and subconscious levels of the mind. Now see that in the 'Lovers' there is a side missing from a Triangle, but in the card 'Judgement' all three sides are present.

Now return to the statement 'Between the Question and the Answer is the Silence.' You ask the question and the Teacher gives the answer; what is the 'Silence' which is said to be between the question and the answer, and what is its nature? Remember that any answer which you may receive by normal or paranormal methods cannot, by its very nature be either fully satisfactory or final, but, *for the aspect of life in and on behalf of which you asked your question*, the 'Silence' will provide a true and satisfactory answer. We will leave this with you for your study.

The soul must always 'make good' on that which lies to its hand before it enters upon the Path. If that soul finds itself a clerk or a cook, it must become an efficient clerk or a good cook; the Masters have as little use for incompetence as they have for sin, and if we are incompetent in the discharge of any section of our undertakings, a substratum of weakness will underlie the whole nature, and the tests of the Path will find out (Dion Fortune — *The Esoteric Orders and their Work*).

## 9.

## Symbols

*The following three articles, Symbols, Telesmatic Images and Words of Power, are again part of the training papers W.E.B. gave out to his personal pupils. They will be found to be among the best teaching of their kind. As always they are clear, concise and the result of his own work, experience, and observation over sixty odd years of occult practice. Much of what he gives here is the result of his own training with Colonel Seymour\*, Magus to Dion Fortune in the 1930s and 40s. He was greatly influenced by Seymour and spoke of him with both affection and reverence for his scholarship. They form a trio of auxillary lessons that can be applied by any student no matter what school he or she is working with at the time. It was and is part of Ernest Butler's great teaching talents that almost any school concerned with the Western Tradition will approve of their students reading his books and practising the exercises therein. These three articles will prove no exception.*

D.A.N.

From time out of mind, this season of Easter has been regarded in the Northern Hemispheres of the world as a season of rejoicing. Quite apart from the Christian significance, it was thought of as the time when a new departure was made manifest in all Nature — life began to surge up in all living things, the period of growth has begun. In esoteric terms this Festival of the Vernal Equinox is said to be the time of the 'Tide of Sowing'. Just as the period from the Autumnal Equinox until the Winter Solstice had been the

time of the preparation of plans for the future, and the period from the Winter Solstice to the Vernal Equinox was the 'Tide of Testing', when the plans were tested by the forces of Life itself, so, from the Vernal Equinox until the Summer Solstice the plans which had been worked out and tested in those two previous Tides were now to be carried out in their fullness on all planes of manifestation.

In the great Christian story, we see the same pattern caught up to and embodied in the life of its Founder, and after the testing and destruction of many of the hopes and aspirations of His followers came that fulfilment of their *true* hopes and desires which turned them from a crowd of demoralized and despairing men and women into a band of people who, in the words written about them 'turned the world upside-down'. This same pattern is repeated in the lives of all who earnestly seek the light, and indeed this is the significance of the traditional Rosicrucian greeting: 'May the Roses bloom upon your Cross'.

Mention of the great symbol of the Rose of Ruby and the Cross of Gold brings us to the subject of 'symbolism' and it has been suggested to us by our Teacher, that some words on this subject, with special reference to one particular group of symbols, would perhaps be helpful to our students.

The word 'symbol' is derived from the Greek 'sum' and 'bolon', and has the significance of 'some things *thrown together*'. This doesn't mean that the 'things' were 'thrown together' in any haphazard way, but rather that the things were definitely linked together, so that the power of the one flowed also through the other. Today the meaning of the word has been narrowed down to such an extent that the visible aspect of the symbol is taken to be what the medieval theologians used to call 'an empty sign'. Thus the meaning of the word has been reversed. However, the esoteric teaching still retains the true and original idea of the word. But if there is another 'thing' apart from the physical aspect of the symbol, what *is* this 'other' which is definitely linked with that outer aspect? How were the two aspects linked together originally, and by whom? What is this inner or hidden aspect of the symbol and how may it use us or be used by us?

If we go back in time to the beginnings of intelligent human life on this planet, we find that it was very largely a pictorial intelligence, for the *spoken* word came after the observed picture. Thus the pictographic art of the early man might well draw in the sand a rough circle, and, pointing first to the sun and then to his crude representation of it on the sand, contrive to make his

\* See *Dancers to the Gods* A. Richardson and *The Forgotten Mage* D. Ashcroft-Nowicki. Both Aquarian Press.



friends understand that the scrawl represented the sun. However, the concept of 'roundness' or 'redness' could not be so easily portrayed, and all these secondary qualities of observed objects would have to await the slow growth of *word-forms* before they could be attached to the *picture-forms* which had been built.

However, in the subconscious mind of evolving man, the picture-forms were registered, and so the Collective Unconscious of humanity became charged with images of all kinds. These images were, as we have suggested, mainly visual ones, but, gathered around them there also grew up an associated group of images derived from the activities of all the five senses, together with certain impressions which came in through the passive and involuntary use of the supernormal senses.

Now, it is the esoteric Tradition that at certain times in the history of an evolution, help is given to the evolving members thereof by advanced intelligences of other evolutions, and the tradition tells of the coming among men of the mighty 'Lords from Venus', who visited infant mankind and stimulated within him the growth of the intellectual aspect of his nature. It is tempting — especially if one has the 'romantic-Gothic' type of mind — to visualize great centres where Beings robed in Light magically worked upon chosen men and women and induced within them the capacity of reasoned thought. Indeed, in all probability, if one accepts the traditions, such centres did exist, and in them the primal Initiations were given to men. But this work was but the 'earthing of the symbol' — a pictorial and spectacular method of establishing the 'form-aspect' of the symbols of the Cosmic Mysteries within the prepared physical-plane consciousnesses of those chosen ones.

The Cosmic symbols were impressed upon the minds of the initiates under conditions in which tremendous emotional pressures were brought to bear, and the corresponding Archetypes in the Collective Consciousness of the race were thus strongly charged with the basic energies of the creative 'drive' of which the whole of the evolving universe is an expression. Thus, these primordial symbols have a tremendous power over the minds of men, even though their expression in these modern days may seem far removed from their august expression in the Temples of a Time long passed, and a Land now lost.

Even now, however, in this sophisticated twentieth century, the aeonian symbols have the power, if meditated upon, to put us in touch with the forces with which they were linked in the ancient days. Especially is this the case with those of us who, in past

incarnations have come into living contact with the Stewards of the Mysteries, we who 'have seen the Sun at midnight', as the old initiate phrased it, since the memories of those august rites tend to form an easy pathway for the energies which were brought to bear upon us through the efficacious application of the Divine Symbols to our consciousness. In ceremonial magic the symbols are again presented to our consciousness, again acted out in carefully constructed rites, and in this powerful form of meditation (which ceremonial really is) we are once again exposed to the age-old power which lies behind the symbols.

It was because of their knowledge of the peculiar efficacy of the old symbols that the founders of Helios Book Services chose the name of Helios the Titan as their symbol. Not, be it noticed, the more polished and urbane Apollo, Lord of Light, but rather the earlier, cruder, but more magically potent Symbol.

Incidentally, it may be noted, in passing, that quite a lot of 'magical' work is done in this way, by applying the principles of esoteric psychology to the everyday activities of life.

After this general consideration of the nature of symbols, we may now turn to those particular symbols which my Teacher has suggested may be helpful to us in our work. They are three in number and are the **square**, the **triangle** and the **circle**, respectively, and they are all connected with that particular expression of the Western Mysteries which we know of as the 'Egyptian School'.

The square, projected into three-dimensional space becomes the cube, and this cube, when unfolded becomes the Latin cross. When simply extended in its own two-dimensional plane, it becomes the equal-armed Cross or 'Cross of the Elements'.

The triangle, when projected in three dimensions becomes the three-sided pyramid, and when extended on its own plane forms a triune star. When the triangle is projected from each side of the square, it forms the four-sided pyramid, and when extended from each side of the square there is formed a four-pointed star.

The circle when projected into three dimensions becomes the sphere, and, like the other two symbols may represent and express both the positive and negative aspects of the power behind it.

In the Egyptian School these three symbols were used to represent quite a number of things. Applied to the human personality, the square symbolized the physical body and the physical plane. Applied to the universe it became the 'Cube of Space' and the Latin Cross of Limitation.

The triangle, when applied to human beings symbolized the

emotional-mental aspect of the personality — that which was often termed the 'Ba'. In Eastern thought it is known as 'the kama-manasic' principle.

The circle symbolized the Spiritual Self of man, and in the universe both the limitation of Creation and the eventual triumph of that Creative Fiat. So the blood-red Ruby expressing the pain and suffering, the passions and desires of the unregenerated man opens and blooms upon the Cross, until, as the 'dew and distillation of the Cross', it becomes the sphere of golden Light which absorbs and transforms that of which it is both the Cause and the Perfector. Then, in the 'Day-Come-Unto-Us', the man becomes perfected, and is truly the 'Golden Rosicrucian' of which the tradition speaks. (Though how many of those who arrogated that claim to themselves ever came to that perfection is best left a mystery!)

There are, of course, other ways in which these three great symbols may be arranged, but what we have been trying to do is to give our students some idea of what 'occult symbols' really are. It may be that at a later date, we shall return to the consideration of these three, but for the time we would like those who are working on the Course to apply the principles we have here suggested, and see how their meditative work is clarified thereby.

## 10.

### Telesmatic Images

*A short article on the construction and use of telesmatic images.*

Table talk the other evening centred around the subject of what are termed 'telesmatic images', and the suggestion was made that we might all do well to consider in greater detail the usual ideas concerning these magical images. What I shall try to give here are my own thoughts on the subject, backed up by my own psychic experiences in connection with the manufacture and use of these images.

In the tradition in which we were trained, the different levels of the Inner Worlds were divided into (1) the 'etheric level', (2) the 'astral level', (3) the 'mental level', (4) the 'spiritual level'. All these levels were thought of as being modifications of the one underlying 'substance' of what was termed the 'Astral Light'. Each level, though linked with all the others, was nevertheless an independent expression of the Astral Light. In the phraseology of the Swedenborgians, each level was 'discrete'. However, by the 'thread of consciousness' which links all the levels of man's self, all levels are in basic communication with each other. The 'spiritual' level acts by induction upon the purely physical world, the 'mental' level acts upon the 'etheric' level, and the 'astral' level acts upon the 'etheric'; all the etheric itself constituting what may be termed the 'higher physical' aspect of the Astral Light, and also, the higher-physical aspect of each individual.

Also, and this is very important, these levels are in polarity in both the Astral Light and in the individual self. Thus, the astral level is positive to the physical-etheric, but negative to the mental level, and this, in its turn is positive to the astral but negative to the spiritual levels. Thus we have an alternating polarity of Force



and Form. The astral is a level of force, and the mental a level of form, whilst the spiritual and the material constitute ultimate polarity of Manifestation in the universe and in Man.

Whilst there is no *direct* contact between the planes or levels of the Astral Light, there is a contact *through the activities of those intelligences which exist in the various levels*. Now these intelligences are of various degrees, and man stands midway between them. On the one hand are the subhuman elemental beings, and on the other the superhuman and non-human Devic intelligences. Each level of the Light has its own class of beings, but is also the field of activity of all the others. But all such activity takes place *under the laws of that particular level*.

Now, upon the etheric or higher physical level, there are great tides of energy constantly ebbing and flowing. These are what are known in the East as the 'Tatvic Tides'. It is with these Tides, modified as they are by the polarizing and inductive action upon them of all the other levels of both the macrocosm and the microcosm, that we are working when we begin to use the Telesmatic Images. If we merely build up and concentrate upon a purely mental image, the results will be slight. If we also build up that image on the emotional levels at the same time, then our image is far more potent, and if we build up the image in the etheric levels also, then we shall attain the maximum potential possible to us at the time when we are operating. For, as the Bible says, there is a time for all things, and certain projects are better attempted at certain times. This is not to be read as suggesting that we become slavishly addicted to waiting for the auspicious hour, like the pagan priests of old, or, for that matter the Hindu astrologers who kept the new king of Nepal waiting for three years for an auspicious day for his state coronation. To consider times and seasons is a most useful activity in practical occult work. We do not waste time and energy in swimming against the prevailing tide; but when we really need to, we must be able to swim against the tides if necessary. At the same time, discretion is very often the better part of valour, it often proves, in the long run, to cultivate patience and, in the scriptural injunction, 'tarry in Jerusalem until your beards are grown!'

Assuming we are about to build a telesmatic image. It would be advisable to consider carefully what image we are desirous of building. It may, roughly speaking, be brand new, or it may be a copy of telesmatic images which have been built before by others. Indeed, such images may have been built by generations of magical practitioners through the centuries. Because of this

constant repetition, they may have become very strongly constructed, and well built in the Astral Light. It will be found that such images are fairly easily built up and, under certain conditions projected into purely physical manifestation. But, because of the 'charge' of energy which has been locked up in them by their repeated use, they can be a real source of trouble to the Apprentice Magician, as we found out for ourselves on one occasion.

For this reason we would advise our budding occultists to fly for more lowly game, and endeavour to build up simple telesmatic images for themselves, rather than to adopt those of the 'Golden Dawn' or any other magical fraternity. At a later date, they may essay to use the G.D. images, and may well succeed in building and using such images for the true work of the Spirit.

How, then, should the apprentice commence to construct a telesmatic image? *Not* by first building up the form in mental vision. This is to put the cart before the horse. The first thing to be done is to meditate upon the spiritual principle of which the telesmatic image is to be the channel and expression. Having meditated upon the principle involved, the next thing to do is to consider what form will best express this principle. This will possibly involve a good deal of research into the literature of the subject, until finally an image is found which the apprentice considers will more or less express the principle concerned. In one of her books, *The Winged Bull*, Dion Fortune describes how the occultist Brangwyn says that he has been brooding over books in the British Museum, attempting to formulate the type of person whom he wants to work with him in a certain magical experiment, and how he does link with such a one. Dion Fortune gave much really effective teaching in her novels, and they are well worth reading as sources of practical information given by an occultist who could, when necessary, produce practical results in the magical field, as we well know.

When, from a bit here and a bit there, the desired image has been formulated, it should be carefully studied to see that there are no incongruous elements in it — every part must in some way express the principle we are trying to express. Now, in the very substance of our physical body there will have been impressed the faint image of the principle, for, to use an occult saying, Spirit is reflected in Matter. To put it in Qabalist form, Malkuth causes an influence to flow from the Prince of Countenances which is in Kether. We are stressing this point because we want the beginner to realize that there is no hard and fast line of demarcation

between Kether and Malkuth, — Matter and Spirit, and as the principles of Kether are meditated upon, they are also drawn into the sphere of manifestation by the attraction of Matter.

The eidolon has now been imprinted in the depths of the densest levels of the body, and is now linked with the macrocosmic etheric levels of the corresponding degree. But still it is but a shadowy contact, though it is a very necessary one, and it is now necessary to charge the form with the necessary energies. This is done by bringing the emotional forces to bear, by *brooding over* the principle and the form together. It is this concentrated brooding-over which gives an effective charge of power to the telematic image. What follows is a most important part of the construction of the form, for it is the elemental contact between the mental image, now charged with emotional energy and the higher etheric levels of the body which, as it were, closes the main switch on the lower levels. The eidolon is now ready to act at the will of the magician, and through the vivified and directed Image, the macrocosmic energies are directed towards the goal set by the magician.

It is possible for the Image to be projected 'to bodily appearance' but to achieve this it is necessary that a certain level of the etheric body should have been developed in a certain fashion. When this occurs, we have what the Spiritualists term a 'materialization'. But the Image may also radiate its influence spatially without such materialization, and in this case its influence will be upon the consciousnesses of those in its vicinity, lifting up the level of consciousness in them, and effecting changes in the substance of their bodies and souls. Though the materialization is by far the most spectacular — and is capable of affording instruction and help, the other subjective 'raising of consciousness' is of greater importance in the spiritual development of the magician. But we must not set one against the other, both have their legitimate place, and both can help. We have experienced both aspects of the telematic image, and can therefore speak from experience.

## 11.

### Words of Power

*Short article on the theory and usage of Words of Power with an explanation of their link, through the personal subconscious, with the Collective Unconscious.*

#### **The Tongue of Good Report**

In the ritual of one of the Brotherhoods of the West, the neophyte approaches the door of the Lodge having, as the ritual words declare 'the tongue of good report' and although this may, and in many cases is construed to mean that the candidate has a good reputation and is recommended as a worthwhile member, it has deeper meanings which, although not usually brought out in this particular fraternity *are* more fully considered in the Esoteric Orders themselves.

First of all, the meaning of the phrase as our school sees it is somewhat different to that considered above. Particularly, from the rituals of our most ancient Brethren of Egypt, we have inherited a meaning which gives another idea of things. One who, in the Egyptian Mysteries, passed into the Lodge, was one who, by virtue of his interior spiritual development, could be said to be 'true of voice'. What exactly does this phrase mean? To answer this question we must go into a very fascinating and interesting subject known in the East as 'Mantra Yoga'. The use of Mantra is not restricted to the Eastern Schools — there has also existed the same 'Science of Sound' from 'time immemorial' in the Western Esoteric Schools, and it is not necessary to rush to Eastern 'gurus' or Eastern Scriptures in order to be initiated into this Science of Sound. From a training in this science comes the power to make and use the magical Words of Power. Here we must remember that there are two kinds of words of Power. The less esoteric and



more commonly operated by the average man, depends upon certain mental and emotional links which may have been made, voluntarily or unconsciously between certain objects or ideas which have entered the mind under definite conditions. Thus, the name of his victim will be a word of power for the murderer, and any sudden and unexpected utterance of that name will cause certain alterations to take place in the subconscious mind, and this, affecting the physical body will produce alterations in the blood pressure, heart beat and certain nervous impulses in the brain. These changes can be measured by the appropriate instruments.

This same principle is also employed in the work of the psychoanalyst, who uses what are termed 'word association tests'. Here the analyst recites a list of words to the patient, and observes the time which elapses between the word being spoken and the response which is made by the patient. (The patient has been asked to reply to the word by the first word which springs up in his mind in response to the word given him.) If the time taken before the response is fairly long, then the analyst deduces that whatever word is reacted to in this way is linked with some hidden emotion or complex of emotions, and repeats this word in order to provoke other reactions. This method of psychoanalysis was first devised in modern times by the psychologist Freud, and later by his great pupil, Dr C.G. Jung.

These two great psychologists used this word reaction in different ways, but this difference, though very interesting and suggestive is outside the scope of this article. The principle involved is the basis of what we may term the *artificial* 'words of power'. In Qabalistic work great use is made of this particular method of constructing words of power, and indeed the whole area of magical work along the Qabalistic line is largely governed by the definite and controlled use of such artificial words of power. However, there is an injunction found in the Chaldean Oracles which warns the magician against changing in any way the 'barbarous Names of Power' and this brings us to a still deeper level of mental working, for some of these barbarous Words link, through the personal subconscious, with the still deeper Collective Unconscious of the Race, and more particularly with the very primitive and archaic levels of the universal memory.

Such primordial words carry with them not only a tremendous 'charge' of strong primitive energy, but also link up with Intelligences of various degrees in the Inner Worlds. Such Words

of Power as those were known as 'hekau' to our Egyptian brethren.

There are other words of power which are continually being spoken by all living things. I remember, when I was a small child, being full of admiration for Adam, for, I read in the Bible, 'the Lord God caused all the animals to pass before Adam, and Adam called them all by their name.' However, it was not until long after that it was pointed out to me that the animals, as well as all living things, already possessed their 'names' — it was Adam who was exercising his power to realize those names, and that those 'names' were, in fact, the sum total of the forces of which they were built up. So there is a 'name' of the physical structure of all forms of life — a 'vibration' of a certain order, the 'note' of that physical body. Then there is a similar note which is sounded out by the emotional aspects of all forms of life which are capable of experiencing emotion; again, there is an individual note which is sounded by all forms of life which possess mental capabilities. Finally, there is a note which is sounded through all the world by those in whom the spiritual nature has been developed. As the scripture saith, 'Their sound has gone forth through all the earth.'

The composite of all these 'notes' constitutes the *true Name* of all forms of life — including the life of the mighty planet upon which we live, for it, too, sounds forth its own Name. So we return to the tongue of good report, for this tongue sounds forth for each one of us our individual 'name', and it is only when that note approximates to the note of the spiritual self, that we can say the tongue of good report has been exercised in our favour. We are then worthy of the title 'true of voice', and indeed, once we have reached that level of development falsehood becomes an increasingly impossible form of speech.

Once again, let the Scripture speak — this time from the New Testament of the Christian Bible. St James, who would appear, from his letter, to have been Socialist in his outlook — he writes scathingly about 'paying regard to the one who comes into the Christian assembly wearing fine clothes and offering him the best seat, while despising the poor man and telling him to stand'. One suspects that he must have caused a good deal of controversy in the assembly!

However, let us hear him on this subject of speech. The quotation is a trifle lengthy, but is well worth studying — especially by many of our modern occultists and pseudo-occultists. So here it is.

The tongue is an insignificant part of the body, but utters great boasts. Remember how a mere spark may set a vast forest in flames. And the tongue is a fire — it sets the whole course of lives on fire, being itself set on fire by Hell. All kinds of beasts and birds, reptiles and fishes can be and have been tamed by human nature. But the tongue can no man tame — a restless mischief, full of deadly poison. With it we bless the Lord and Father and with it we curse men who are made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth there proceeds blessing and cursing. These things, my brethren, ought not to be.

Indeed not, even on the material plane alone. But we are continually sounding our own 'name' and how much dissonance are we sounding out in the harmonies of the world? Though we may exercise strong control on what we say, *yet it is within the whole nature* that such control must be gained and maintained. Then, when the True Will of the Indweller of Light has brought under his control all the nature of the man; when in an older Scripture it has been written that the limbs of Osiris have been brought together, then shall it be for that one, that he is the Victor, and to him will be given the privilege of eating the fruit of the Tree of Life, which is in the Paradise of God, And to him shall also be given the hidden manna and a white stone with a new NAME written upon it, known only to him who receives it.

## 12.

### Exegesis

*Short article on exegesis, or non-literal translation of ancient teachings.*

#### **The Christmas Story**

There are several ways in which one may study the Bible, or other sacred books. One, which usually comes into play when once a religion has grown out of its earlier stages, is that in which the laws and regulations which have been built into the teachings are carefully examined by acute minds in order to be able to find ways to avoid the apparently plain and fool-proof injunctions which the Founders of the particular religion concerned laid down in the beginning. This class of minds is to be found in all the great religions, and those who see how such casuistry undermines the spirit of the teaching whilst obeying the letter are stern in their denunciation of it.

Then there is also another form of 'exegesis' where the intellect is turned upon the teaching in order to *interpret it*. This is good, but it is very often forgotten that the mind which is endeavouring to interpret the Scripture is already conditioned by the forms of intellectual activity which the exegete has been subjected to in his education. So he not only elucidates the meaning of the scripture, but also unconsciously builds into his interpretation the thought forms of his present mental outlook.

Another type of exegesis is that which seeks to discover the hidden meanings within the Scripture story. Here we come to search for an inner esoteric teaching which, it is held, was deliberately 'written into the outer story'. This, of course, is one aspect of Qabalistic work. The Qabalist believes that this inner teaching was deliberately hidden within the sacred text.



Finally, there is something which cannot be called exegesis, for it is not a question of extracting knowledge from within the Scripture, but a calculated interpretation which is *superimposed upon the scripture story*. This sometimes gives new light on the scripture, and helps others to come nearer to a true understanding thereof. So let us briefly consider the Christian story of the birth in Bethlehem. We have the Scripture story of the stable, the birth, the worshipping shepherds, the Angelic hosts, the Wise men and the slaughter of the Innocents. Added are recollections of similar happenings which remain in the race mind.

In this form of allegory, Mary, Joseph and the Shepherds and the Wise men become 'types' all, in their way, representing the human Soul. Let us first consider the figure of the Mother of Christ, the holy lady Mary. In this particular tradition, there is another Mary — who appears in the ministry of the Lord as the traditional Mary of Magdala, who has throughout the history of Christianity been identified with the prostitute who was freed from demoniacal possession by Jesus. Here she represents the impure and unregenerate soul of man. The fact that she appears in the account of the ministry of Jesus, does not matter in this allegory, for it is a timeless process which is here set forth — the destiny of the Soul of man.

The holy Lady Mary is the type of the purified and regenerate human soul, and St Joseph who is the guardian of Our Lady, is the purified and steadfast mind of man, even as the shepherds are the types of the watchful and disciplined emotions.

The tradition animals which share the cave with the Babe, typify the passions and instincts, and because they are domesticated animals, they typify those instincts and passions in a purified and controlled form.

And the Babe? This is the Christ in us, the Light that lighteth every man coming into the world. Now we come to the Wise Men. Traditionally three in number — though there is nothing in the Bible to say that they *were* three. In this allegory, who are they? They typify the higher intuitional aspect of the mind which is guided by the Blazing Star of Divinity within. Now let us read the complete Allegory.

In the cave of material existence, the purified Soul brings forth the Christ Child, watched over by the purified and controlled passions and instincts, worshipped by the disciplined emotions and by the deeper intuitions of the Self, whilst the humble and obedient mind guards and protects the Divine Child.

In the spirit of this allegory, we wish you all guidance and

protection, and the intuitional Fire of the Eternal Love, until you, too, stand before the One Initiator, till you see His Star shine forth, and in your hearts and minds and bodies the Eternal Christ is born again in you.

## 13.

**Ritual Training**

*This article together with the Keys to Practical Magic almost form a small manual on the subject. Anyone aiming to go into magical work in a practical way should read both of them over and over again until the lessons contained in them are fully understood. Then we might have fewer people going off the 'magical rails'!*

*They would also provide a useful lead in to The Ritual Magic Workbook to be published by Aquarian Press in 1986.*

D.A.N.

There are certain basic laws which underlie the whole art of ritual and I want to give you some idea of those laws, for ritual performed without any knowledge of them tends to be a hit-and-miss business at the best.

First of all, let us see what the word 'ritual' means. According to the dictionary, it is 'a formal practice or custom'. This tells us very little, so we must supplement it by a further definition. A 'rite' is a certain sequence of operations linked together by a common object or idea. So, in theological matters we speak of the 'Roman Rite' or the 'Anglican Rite' when we are referring to the Holy Communion Services of these Churches.

But the 'rite' may be very simple and austere, or it may be very ornate and colourful, depending upon how the various operations of the rite are carried out. These various operations are the 'ceremonial' employed — lights, incense, vestments, processions, invocations, etc., used in performing the rite. So the Roman Rite (as it used to be) is an example of a rite using very ornate ceremonial, whilst the Communion Service of the Baptists is an example of the same rite performed with the minimum of ceremonial.

Now, both ritual (the acting out of a common idea) and ceremonial (the way in which the idea is acted out) are arts which have to be learnt, if they are to be really effective, and it is here that so many modern amateur magicians fall down. They have very little idea as to how to approach the working of a rite, and even less knowledge of the ceremonial to be used. Usually, they copy the ceremonial given in one or other of the various magical grimoires and blindly repeat the many mistakes and blunders to be found in such instructions. Sometimes it so happens that the experimenter possesses certain potentialities which may unexpectedly show themselves during the performance of such ceremonies, but because they are not understood by their possessor, the result is sometimes drastic. Another person, performing the same ceremony — again, without knowledge — may experience nothing, being protected by their own lack of magical potentiality.

This being the case, it is easy to see why the custodians of the Mysteries are not keen to instruct ignorant and foolish 'dabblers' in the magical Art. Do you blame them? Remember, the consequences of such unwise instruction would fall upon those who thus allowed the 'fools to rush in'. I have seen a good deal of magical ceremonial in my time, and have taken part in it — in both the East and the West, and because of this, I am very wary of the majority of our modern magicians, 'whose name is legion, for they are many'. The trouble is that when, through foolish dabbling, they burn their fingers, I am usually the one to whom they come running for help, and although I usually try to do what I can to help them, this occult First Aid is not my work in this incarnation.

Now I have said all this just to prepare the ground for our serious study of ritual working. In this paper, I want to deal with what I believe to be the most important aspect of any ritual working, but one which is very often entirely overlooked. This is what is known as the *Magical Intention*, and upon this one factor, the whole of the magical ceremony usually depends.

Again, what do we mean by the word 'intention'. The definition given is 'design, purpose or deliberate aim'. Here the word 'deliberation' helps us. It indicates that the 'intention' must be clear, definite and purposeful mental action. 'Woolly' vague thoughts are of no value here. The intention must be clearly clothed in the right mental forms, and the form thus produced must be *energized by the will*. It is this use of the *will* which transfers a vague wish to do something into a *strong intention* to do it.



So we have those two aspects of our Magical Intention, and as you will see, they conform to the Qabalistic idea of the Complementaries — *Form and Force*. But there is another aspect of our intention, and that is our *magical involvement* in it. For we must always remember that although we employ words, objects, gestures and other outward things, yet the true magical rite takes place within our own personalities.

It is for this reason that we assert in a definitive form of words that *we* invoke or evoke in accordance with *our* intention, and that we are ready to take upon ourselves the responsibility for so temporarily disturbing the balance of forces of the universe. Always, we must acknowledge such responsibility and show ourselves willing to bear the consequences of our use of the magical Art.

Note the balanced construction of the Banishing Ritual of the Lesser Pentagram. If we intelligently use this ritual, then we shall have dealt with all three aspects of our magical intention in one of its forms at least. Or the Rosicrucian Banishing Rite may be used and here again all three aspects of intention will be dealt with.

This preliminary intention to perform our magical work in accordance with the Divine Will is, of course, of the greatest value. There are those who say that such a ritual is unnecessary, and a vague and sentimental aspiration to the source of all is sufficient. For them it may be — though my experience of these people suggests otherwise.

There is an esoteric teaching that the highest is mirrored in the lowest, and the Supreme Will is mirrored in the dense physical body of Malkuth in Assiah. So, therefore, we will not consider this physical body and consider what can be done to make of it a more perfect channel for the expression of the Will aspect of the Eternal. For, as we have been speaking of the Will behind our intention, it will be helpful to our ritual work if we try to *make our physical body reinforce our will*. Here we are not talking about any ascetic practices, neither, at the moment, of any yoga-like exercises. Instead we are going to consider body poise and the ancient language of mime. We will also study some of the psychological implications of mime for this ancient language speaks from our inner selves to bring us to a knowledge of ourselves. Also, and this is very important, it reveals, to others through their own inner understanding of it, what we are ourselves, even though we have tried to project another image.

Have you ever taken time off to listen to your body talking? It *does* talk, in several ways, and one of those is the language of

mime. Not just the *conscious* assumption of certain attitudes and movements, but the subconscious presentation of these. So before we proceed to the exercises of *conscious mime* we will consider the expressions of subconscious mime. And first of all let us consider the physical body as a whole.

Sit in a comfortable chair, or lie flat on a comfortable bed, and just regard your body. If your mind wanders away, gently bring it back. Your intention at the moment is to observe your body and its sensations. Having got into a comfortable position, *do not make any voluntary move*. Have a watch or clock where you can see it without having to move in any way. You are going to perform this 'exercise of self-regard' for, say, ten minutes. You will find that you may begin to itch in some place or other. Do not scratch or move, but simply regard this itch as dispassionately as you are doing your whole body. Then you may feel the body muscles slackening off at some place in the body. Don't take any action — just rest and continue to observe the rise and fall of nervous tension. You will find that as you do this exercise every day, there becomes evident a definite relaxation and lowering of nervous tension. You can start it as soon as you have finished reading this paper, and the exercise may be done wherever you may be and at any time. Nor is it necessary to do it only once each day. You can do it any any time whenever you have a chance. As your proficiency increases, you may start to watch your sensations when doing such things as bathing, washing, drinking, etc. Here the exercise which I have described in one of my books as 'thinking boot-lace' can be very useful.

Now let us deal with the rationale of this exercise, for simply to do it, though helpful, would not be as helpful as if you did it with a knowledge of *how* it works. What is our definition of 'Magic'? 'Magic is the Art of affecting changes in consciousness at will.'

If you will draw a small circle on a sheet of paper with a pair of compasses, you can consider this a symbol of your waking conscious mind. Now, around that small circle draw a much larger circle. (If the small circle is one inch across, let the larger circle be three inches across.) Make this larger circle a *dotted one*, not a single line. This larger circle represents your personal unconscious and it is shown dotted to indicate that it is not impervious, but that influences from the Collective Unconscious can pass through it and affect it.

As soon as you commence any definite occult training, as you have done, you have begun to enlarge the area of your conscious mind — to make that little circle bigger. Sensations of which you

were ignorant will begin to infill your consciousness, and so enlarge it. And this exercise of listening to the body talking will enable these inner sensations to rise up and express themselves in the sensations which you are observing as you do your exercise. To this extent, therefore, you are, in this exercise, affecting changes in consciousness at will. And this, as you will remember, is our definition of Magic. So this is a truly magical exercise, and, as I personally can vouch, it does produce results.

At the moment, however, you cannot understand the language — you cannot know *what* the Unconscious is trying to tell you, but as you go on with the exercise, there will slowly develop an intuitive knowledge of what you are being told. For the personal Unconscious (or subconscious, if you prefer the term) will build up for you a workable alphabet through which the meaning of these sensations will be understood by your conscious mind.

One final warning before we close this instruction. *It is most important that there should always be a definite beginning and a definite ending* to any psychic or occult work. This is to prevent any tendency to personality-splitting — a tendency which may be intent with anyone. So a 'key-word' or 'opening symbol' should be used.

You must make a solemn undertaking with your inner self that unless you use the opening symbol, you will always remain in your ordinary waking state of mind. Only when you use the symbol *with intention* will you become open on the Inner Planes. (You will notice that the question of 'intention' again arises.) You must keep your agreement with your inner self scrupulously, and *never* break it. Which means that you must not *under any circumstances* do any esoteric work — even of a minor kind, without using the opening symbol or key-word. You can use any symbol or word which seems best to you, but once you have chosen it, you must not alter it until you are ready to take another major step in your work. It helps if the opening symbol is visual, but also contains the word. You can, of course, whisper the word to yourself, or even repeat it mentally. The key-word can, of course, be a sentence of several words — or a *built in* word from the initial letters of a sentence. Here is a keyword. The sentence from which it is built is '*lovavi oculos meus*' which means 'I will lift up my eyes', and the Word is *LOM*. The opening symbol in this case could be a chalice of silver which you would hold up above your head as though filling it from a downpouring stream. This is only a suggestion, but I found it very useful when I was working as Officer of the West in the Lodge of the Mysteries.

## 14.

### Recording Psychic Experiences

*A short article on the proper evaluation and recording of psychic experiences, with a personal account.*

When one describes a psychic, occult or mystical experience, it is very necessary that the machinery of such experiences should also be considered in order that the real value of the experience may be gained. One of the difficulties we face when we try to do this is that the human nature of the percipient usually shows itself very plainly indeed in a determined attempt to put the highest valuation upon such personal experiences. Really, the percipient is not always the best person to evaluate such exceptional happenings — unless he has been trained to use his mind in the correct way. Even then, he will lose much of the reality of the experience because all such happenings have to pass through the channels of the mind, and this mind both can and does distort whatever comes through it. (Even in what are *objective* physical-plane experiences, there is always a subjective element to be reckoned with.)

So, in recording this particular experience which was mine, some years ago, I must simply record the facts, and although I might be able to make some evaluation of the facts, I would prefer to put the straight facts of the experience before my readers, without any further comment. What value such an experience may have is very largely personal to the percipient. One thing about such experiences is that, if they are true contacts with the inner side of things, they will affect the personal outlook of those to whom they come. Did this experience affect me in any permanent way? Yes, I think I can say that it did. In one of the stories in the Old Testament of the Bible it is recorded that its



hero suffered great calamities. So severe were they that his wife said to him, 'Curse God, and die!' His reply was simple, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him'. I think my own experience whatever may be thought of it, has enabled me to affirm in a very real way, my absolute trust in the Eternal Love. In the somewhat chaotic and easily influenced of my surface consciousness, I often have doubts not only concerning such things, but even doubts of the whole of life. I think we all tend to have such times of doubt, but at any rate I know *I* do. Such mystical experiences as I have had, were summed up and completed for me in this one, and as I have said, now — under the wavering images of my mind, there resides an absolute conviction of the Love of the Eternal. I can say of Him what was said by that Old Testament hero, 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!'

Here, then is the record of this experience. It came to me quite a few years ago, but it is still as vivid in my mind as it was when it happened, though, of course, much of the 'numinous' feeling which accompanied it at the time has now become dim to me. Nevertheless the results remain. I was very sad at heart, for a little friend of mine\* — with whom I had a special link of affection, had recently died, and although I knew of the survival of the soul beyond Death a knowledge based upon many years of psychical experience, it seemed to me just then that such knowledge had no balm for my heart. Neither could the doctrine of Karma reconcile me to the loss which we had all sustained. I was working then at an engineering works in Southampton and on this particular day I was walking home for lunch, when it happened. Between two successive steps along the pavement, I was caught up into the embrace of Someone who seemed to be the very quintessence of love. I was out of Time and stood in Eternity, for that eternal moment Time was not. All around me pulsed an atmosphere of brooding Love, strong and tender, uplifting and supporting, showing in streams of living splendour and iridescence. The faintly perceived outlines of a face. Eyes which seemed to draw one closer and still closer to the One who stood there, supporting me with His Power and comforting me by His Love. And the one for whom I had been sorrowing — she was there too, safe in the arms of that embodied Love. A feeling of peace and happiness profound, and then the sights and sounds of the mundane world. I had walked two steps in Time, but had been in Eternity. I too, like others had 'met Him in the Way'.

\* A close relative.

## 15.

### An Explanation of Some Phenomena

*W.E. Butler was a qualified, if that is the word one uses, exorcist. A mutual friend once told me he had been with Ernest when he had performed an exorcism and the difference in the room concerned after the ritual was amazing, '...as if it has been scrubbed down with Dettol!' That was typical of the man, he did such things with competence and finality, if he exorcized something, it stayed exorcized! However, he would also tell you that in many cases it was simply that 'something' had got trapped in a world not its own and was as frightened of us as we were of it, and it just wanted to get home.*

*When asked what was the best way to exorcize something, he said ... 'love it'. Many times he exorcized by the process of absorption, not something for would-be occultists to copy I hastily add. It is possibly the most demanding and certainly the most dangerous way to exorcize there is.*

*When faced with the common or garden ghost he would simply bless it and walk through it. He certainly didn't worry about it. He worked with Spiritualist friends to free any soul that was bound to earth and did much good along these lines. He lectured often to the Spiritualist Society and there are many who remember him with great affection and not a little awe.*

D.A.N.

#### One Kind of Ghost

The ghost story of modern days seems to bear little resemblance to those blood-curdling stories of headless horsemen, grey ladies, phantom hounds and chain-cranking revenants of Victorian

times. Indeed the modern ghost is a highly respectable but unfortunate member of super-mundane society, and the only writer who seems to cater for the older type of ghost at the present time is M. Elliott O'Donnell.

Nevertheless, the old-fashioned ghost still persists in occasionally showing himself, and thereby raising points of interest to the psychic student. Must we conclude that the fair maiden who was so tragically put to death by the villain is indeed compelled to appear in *propria persona* and re-enact the tragedy of her passing?

The rather naïve theory of many earnest spiritualists (not all let it be remembered) is one which, although it accounts for many so-called ghosts, fails to account for others, and therefore, though a partial explanation, fails to account for all the facts. The esoteric explanation provides a 'reference frame' into which we can fit any ghost with which we may have to deal in the course of our investigations.

All esoteric schools posit the existence of an ethereal medium or underlying substance, and this universal medium is held to be the vehicle for all manifestations of supra-physical energies, as well as being in one of its aspects the matrix of all material manifestation.

Modern science in the persons of its great exponents, Lodge, Jeans, Eddington, seems to be rapidly approaching the view-point of occult science, and it will soon be respectable for science to speak of the 'Astral Light' in the same breath as we speak of radio-activity or Mendelief's Law. This universal medium has been termed 'Astral Ether' in its extra-planetary form, and 'Astral Light' in its restricted mundane form. For the moment let us leave the Astral Ether in its undifferentiated aspect, and confine ourselves to the mundane Astral Light. It is an occult axiom, supported by research and experiment, that every action, and every intense thought is indelibly imprinted upon the Astral Light.

In the course of ages the Astral Light is increased as the raw Astral Ether is brought into the service of organized consciousness. The Astral Light is that which has been termed the 'Treasure House of Images', and it is from this storehouse of images in its lower astro-etheric aspect that many 'ghosts' are drawn.

What are the causes which present one out of many millions of the astral pictures to the bewildered ghost-seer?

The late Monseigneur Robert Hugh Benson used a very significant illustration of this point — 'If we were to suddenly

draw up the blind of our window and gaze into the busy street, we might conceivably see a girl in a red cloak walking past us. We might describe her to someone else who was with us in the room, but it would be foolish to waste time in speculating upon the symbolism of the red cloak, or in wondering what message such a sight was meant to convey to us.' In short, it was a random glimpse into the street, and many ghosts are simply the result of a random glimpse into the Astral Light.

But in many cases there is a definite reason for the appearance of the ghost in some particular locality. With all objects is bound up a certain portion of the Astral Light, and upon that portion are imprinted the records of the happenings, physical, astral and spiritual which take place in its vicinity. This, of course is the basis of the art of psychometry. It is also the underlying reality behind all psychic magnetization, blessings and consecrations, and it is employed alike in the preparation of 'Holy Water' the making of talismans, and the consecrations of persons and objects which play so great a part in the ritual of the Catholic Church.

Under conditions of extreme terror or emotion, exceptionally vivid images may have been impressed upon the Astral Light in some particular locality, and these images may be perceived by anyone who comes in a sensitive condition to that place. In many of these cases the drama is re-enacted before the horrified spectator — the victim flies in terror down the haunted gallery, and as the old music-hall song has it — 'The villain still pursues her!'

These ghosts who haunt definite localities often seem to exhibit some curious cyclic variation, the anniversary of the deed of violence, or some one or other of the etheric tides of this planet. Here we are leaving behind us the ghost who is simply a picture in the Astral Light, and we are coming to the ghost which is not merely a picture but is an 'ensouled picture'. Ensouled by what? Once again, several agencies may be suggested but one, and that a sufficiently powerful and comprehensive one, is that which I will now try to describe.

Let us take the case of the victim who has suffered violent death at the hands of the villain. As a personality she has passed into the astral world, and progressing steadily upwards, has finally reached union with her Higher Self — that union which is the death of the personality. As concrete memories, the earth experiences will have been left behind, but the magnetic trace of the last personality will have been imprinted upon all the levels of the Astral Light through which she has passed. This magnetic



trace persists in the Astral Light, and is one of the conditioning factors in the building of the next personality. It equates with the 'skandha' of Buddhist philosophy. Under certain pathological conditions the magnetic trace may be psychically linked with disintegrating etheric form, and then becomes the 'galvanized astral corpse', so beloved of some Theosophical writers. This, however, is what we may term an astral pathology, and under normal astral conditions the magnetic trace subsists in the Astral Light as a quiescent line of images — in contact at its higher end with the radiant Higher Self.

Again under normal conditions the attention of the Higher Self is turned inward to its own centre — the Cosmic Atom of which it is the reflection, and because of this withdrawal of attention, the astral images are not vivified. (A similar condition exists when the Day of Manifestation draws to its close, and the attention of the Solar Logos is withdrawn from the field of the Ring-Pass-Not).

We have here taken for our example the case of a personality completely withdrawn into union with its Higher Self, but it is obvious that all intermediate stages will exist, according to the speed of withdrawal and the purgatorial experiences of the discarnate spirit. In some cases we shall have the recently discarnate personality active on its own level in the Astral Light, and in others we shall have but one more remnant of the veiling personality, and the communications will be from the Radiant Self — if the sensitive can function upon such exalted levels.

To return to our line of astral images, one end of that line is, as we have already said, in contact with the Radiant Self. The other end is in contact with the stabilizing matrix of the planet Earth, i.e. the astro-etheric level. Vivification of the astral images may occur through stimulation from the lower end or from the higher end of the chain. Now it has been said that the purified spirit dreams in the heaven worlds, the 'spheres of contemplation' spoken of by 'Imperator', the spirit guide of Stainton Moses (M.A. Oxon.).

In the course of such dreams, the happenings of the life that is past are recalled, and some part of the energy of the dreaming spirit is automatically projected down the line of the magnetic trace, until it is 'earthed', as it were, by the astro-etheric reservoir of elemental energy. But in this impaction of spiritual energy upon elemental energy lies the possibility of a temporary intensification and ensoulment of the dense astral images connected with the material locality dreamt of.

We have now a reconstruction of the old personality, and the

old records may become perceptible to a sensitive observer. There is a difference, however, between the perception of unvivified images due to their deep impression in the astral medium and the contact with the vivified images. The one is automatic and the actors are but picture images — it is but a cinematograph display. The other is the perception of ensouled images, and contact is found to be established with some portion at least of the actual intelligencies whose phantom presentiments are seen.

The communications from 'Brother Johannes' in the Glastonbury Scripts clearly point this out. Johannes, the lover of Nature and holding the remembrance of the Abbey dear to him, writes thus: 'For I, Johannes, am of many partes and ye better parte of me which remembereth clingeth like memory to what it seeth yet.'

I have not considered in this paper the ordinary astral revenant who is a frequent visitor to spiritualist circles. There are seances held by the thousand in England alone, where earth-bound spirits are prayed for and helped. But they are the more ordinary ghosts. I have tried to show how the localized ghosts of the old-fashioned ghost story may be understood. *They* do not ask for our prayers, for the radiant intelligencies who once strode upon this earthly stage have attained to levels of light and happiness far beyond our comprehension. In a perfect community of love, thought and being, they subsist in that realm of Love Eternal until the call goes forth again to strive and to conquer.

Let them speak for themselves. Brother Johannes, the spokesman of the Watchers of Avalon, writing of these things says:

Each one, in his remembrance, is the link which makes for us all the faire story of Glaston as one continuous whole.

So I, being linked in spirit with Eawulf who comes from out the Danes of olden time, see with his eyes and live in mine own spiritual life the life that he lived in his day. So does Eawulf and so does Abbot Kent who loved the Mere and there took his pleasaunce, go with me, and in me, and I in him to see the sunset imaged in the waters and hear the tide coming in the sedges of Cock Lake, ere it reached me over dear Mere.

So being united and yet separate, in that he is hym and I am Johannes... soe, I say, do we live and have a hundred lives where once we lived but one. Thus are we. Is it not the Paradise of Saints in which we all dwell and praise and rejoice as one?

So, when in our occult work we meet with the earth-bound dweller in the antechamber of Osiris, let us by our prayer and wisely directed effort help him in advance, but when we hear of medieval hauntings and family apparitions, let us bear in mind those splendid words: 'The Souls of the Righteous are in the Hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seem to die, and their departure from amongst us is taken to be utter destruction but — they *are in Peace*.

### The Astral Light

The name 'astral', 'relating to the stars' was given to this realm of Nature by the medieval occultists and indeed the name aptly describes the substance of the higher astral levels.

When we speak of astral 'substance', what do we really understand is meant by that term? Is the astral world a *real* world like this physical plane?

Yes, the astral world is a *real* world in terms of its own order. Unreal and illusory if compared with physical grossness, real and substantial when viewed as the matrix of physical manifestation.

For the astral world is the realm of Kamaloka, the Desire World; and the Astral Light, as distinguished from its basic Astral Ether, is the result of the action of organized consciousness in the emotional sphere.

Upon all planes are to be found the dual principles of 'force' and 'form' and the Astral Light is a realm of existence where the 'force-aspect' is predominant, even as here in the physical levels the 'form-aspect' is the ruling factor.

We must now take into consideration a point which has sometimes been lost sight of. 'As above, so below' is the reputed inscription on the Smaragdine Table of Hermes, Thrice Magus, but as far as the Astral Light is concerned, the reverse is true, 'as below, so above'.

The ever fluctuating billows and currents of the Astral Light engender by sympathetic induction definite states of mind and emotion in all who dwell in the Sphere of Earth, and these induced emotions are imaged by the rolling tides of the Light, and reinforce those images and currents which brought them into being. So action and reaction are set up and intensify their rhythmic swing, until finally the accumulated and intensified power is discharged and materialized in earth conditions.

From this realm of the Astral Light proceed those moral and

psychic epidemics which so astonish the world, and from its higher realms come those spiritual impulses which make for the regeneration of the Race.

For the Astral Light is dual. Like a glittering Fiery Serpent the lower levels of the Astral Light wind their evils around the Earth, they inspire earth's wickedness, they contaminate its inhabitants, and gain in a vicious circle by the perverted power and energy which is poured out in response to their stimulus.

This is the terrestrial Dragon, 'earthly, sensual and devilish', and within these realms are to be found the darkest abortions of the human and animal-human mind. Here are the matrices of the past of evolutionary time, here are the discarded moulds of early days, the dog-faced demons of the Pit.

And here too, acting as channels for the influences of the Lords of Unbalanced Force, are the astral simulacra-ideas of the gods of death and destruction, of lust and wanton evil, of that terrible perversion of the Fire of the Logos Himself.

And here too, are the tribal gods and fetishes of primitive tribes, here are the gods of vengeance and of wrath; above all, here are the powers of darkness in whose image ignorant man has made his gods.

Here are those gods of the infernal region, and here gather and are reflected again into earth conditions the clouds of thoughts of anger, hatred, malice and all uncharitableness.

So the human race peoples its current in space, and these thoughts and emotions, coalescing with the semi-intelligent forces of the lower astral assume a semi-independent life of their own.

But there is a celestial Dragon, whose glittering coils encircle the Earth. From her flow harmony, peace, happiness; although far below the Supreme Nature, yet of her also, it may be said that 'her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are Peace.'

Within her realm are to be found the heroic images of the past. Here are those mighty ones of past epochs, their traditional forms still imprinted in the astral light, and to this region there ascend all images of the good, the beautiful and the true.

But *forms as forms* are not native to the Astral Light.

Just as, in our minds, the latent memories persist as 'tendencies', not definite images, but may gather around them — may build up — appropriate images, so in the Astral Light, the forms are due to the image building power of the mind working along personal lines.

But, if the mind provides the images, the Astral Light vivifies and makes potent those images, bringing them a stage nearer their



materialization in the physical world.

So we must, to some extent, think of this realm of the Unseen as possessing the qualities of both mind and emotion, and think of it as the 'Kama-Manasic', or 'Desire-and-Thought' world.

Let us visualize the Astral Light as an interpenetrating atmosphere of pure flaming energy, reflecting like a mirror the forms impressed upon it either from mental and spiritual realms above it, or from material realms below it.

Such is the Astral Light, and in this Light exist forces and powers which may indeed lift us to the eternal stars, or drag us down to abysmal slime.

The true past departs not. Nothing that was worthy in the past departs, no truth or goodness realised by Man ever dies.

— Carlyle

## 16.

### The Witch Cult

*It is difficult for me to write about this article for I have worked in the Craft, and still do, and I have found a genuine and loving fellowship there with nothing of the diabolical about it, just people worshipping their Creator in the form of the Goddess and Her Consort the Horned God of Fertility. At first glance it would seem that Ernest Butler had little love for the Craft, but if one looks at the article closely it can be seen that he is speaking in the main about the degenerate aspect of the Old Religion and all religions have that aspect, orthodox Christianity included.*

*It should be remembered that W.E.B. was an ordained priest in the Liberal Catholic Church, for him it was a calling, a true vocation, and he fulfilled his vows in every way. This included obeying its tenets concerning certain ways of belief. But the man behind the priest spoke of the true Craft with sympathy and understanding.*

*He says himself, '...whatever is written here should be checked against the findings of others in this field if a comprehensive picture of the subject is required'. No clearer indication is required to see that he is saying that his is by no means the last word on the subject.*

*The people of the Craft would be the first to admit there are a few among the Old Religion who follow a darker path, they are aware of them and do their best to counteract any harm they might cause (Would that other religions might set their house in order in the same way!). For myself, I must speak as I find, and I find the Craft a religion of dance, song, fellowship, and joy in Nature, and if I must, I will disagree with a much loved teacher who taught me to question and to seek my own answers.*

D.A.N.

**The Witch Cult: Part 1**

One of the most interesting phases of occultism in the West, namely witchcraft, has been curiously neglected in the past; this has been due, perhaps, to the instinctive desire on the part of occult students to 'let sleeping dogs lie'!

At the present time, however, there is a great deal of interest being evinced in the subject of witchcraft, and many books are being published concerning it. A close examination of these books, however, reveals serious defects, sins of omission and commission. They may be grouped under two main headings, with a minor group which works from the standpoint of the new psychology. Of works on witchcraft by masters of the occult there are none in ordinary circulation. Hints are scattered throughout their other writings, but the subject is not dealt with as a separate thing.

It seems to me, then, that perhaps a brief study of the witchcraft of the West from the standpoint of a student of the Fraternity of the Inner Light, might be of interest to those of our members who are interested in the latent powers of man, or who work under the Green Ray of the Nature Contacts.

One of the chief defects of the ordinary books is the fact that their authors approach the subject from the outside, as it were, and by the laborious collection of details endeavour to deduce a theory which will cover the known facts, *but at the same time will not do violence to their own preconceived ideas of the possible and impossible.*

This 'personal equation' must never be forgotten when assessing any theory of witchcraft. It is, in itself, a limiting factor, and it is inevitable that some aspects of the subject will attain undue prominence and others be minimized. A true proportion is hard to obtain, and the writing of a book usually betrays the personal bias of the author. *This applies also to the present writer, and whatever is here written should be checked against the findings of other workers in this field, if a comprehensive picture of the subject is desired.\**

Witchcraft has always been in existence since organized religion of any kind has been used by man, and its manifestations have been similar. We must, therefore, limit our field if we are to attain definiteness of outline. I propose to deal with witchcraft as it appears in the West, since the introduction of Christianity up to the present day. Having briefly glanced at the history of the craft,

\* My italics — D.A.N.

I then propose to discuss the subject from the respective standpoints of *group psychology*, psychic pathology and religion, and finally to sum up the general conclusions to which I have been led.

**Historical**

In the early Christian times, the Church was too busy maintaining her grip on life to seriously consider the subject of witchcraft. Individuals were censored and penalized by heavy fines, but the organized vindictiveness of later days had not yet appeared.

The Catholic Church took over the old pagan sacred centres and reconsecrated them to the Christian tradition, many of the pagan priests became converted to Christianity and henceforth served the altar of Christ, harmless pagan customs were adapted by the Church to her own uses, and in Gaul and Britain the ancient faith passed quietly into the New Faith.

When, however, the power of the Roman Bishop and the stereotyped orthodoxy of the Latin Rite began to gain ground, the line of demarcation between the pagan and Christian was made far more rigid, and persecution began. Just as Christianity had been persecuted by the pagan, so the pagan was persecuted by the Christian. In Britain this change coincided with the rise to power of the Anglo-Saxon peoples, and was intensified after the Norman Conquest.

Coincident with this persecution, the witchcult — as a definite cult — began to increase. Indeed, it is not too much to say that it grew in direct proportion to the persecution. (As we shall see later it had existed quietly for a very long time.)

The witchcult now took on a definitely religious aspect by becoming linked with several pagan survivals, but notably with the Manichees. The Manichaeans were the followers of a religious teacher Manes, who, in the fifth century, taught a dualistic system which was a Christian adaptation of the Zoroastrian faith.

As long as the witchcult had existed as an unorganized survival of old practices, it has attracted only few of the intellectual people of that age, but with its organization as a religious movement, a number of men and women of a highly intellectual type began to make very definite use of it.

The dualistic principle of two opposing Gods, Ormuzd and Ahriman, between whom is eternal conflict, permitted a definite worship of the Evil Principle to be set up, since it was argued that



Evil was necessary that good might act.

A more naïve belief, current even today among the Yezidee tribes, who worship the Peacock Angel 'Melek Jaos', otherwise Satan, was that since the principle of Evil was the Prince of this world, as the Christian religion itself declared, it was wise to placate Him by worship.

So the worship of Satan began in Western Europe, and increased both in point of numbers and also in ritual, until, in the days of Louis XVIth of France, the full degradation of the Black Mass was reached, with its obscene rites and female altar.

Against this parallel religious development the Church and State made common cause, and the dealings of the Roman Church with the followers of the witchcult make dreary reading for those who believe the Church to be the divinely-appointed Society of the Master of Love and Compassion. Nor were the Reformed Churches any better than the Roman communion. The Puritans were responsible for the Swedish and the New England witch persecutions, and were as bigoted as any Inquisitor could have been.

One of the factors in the extraordinary vitality of the witchcult was the influence of that great wave of intellectual and artistic power which brought into Europe that era which we know of as the Renaissance period. With the beginning of the inductive methods of science, with the liberation of the creative forces of the Western races, and the religious tolerance which gradually became evident, the witchcult began to die down as an organized entity.

From the psychological viewpoint, the witchcult was a dissociated complex of the Racial Consciousness, and when the repression which had caused it to become definitely organized was removed, it began to lose much of its vitality.

In the records of the witch trials we have a mass of evidence which at first sight appears to be too consistent to be genuine. As a good deal was elicited under torture, and in response to 'leading questions', it has been thought by many that it is valueless as true evidence, but there are several points to consider before we can adopt this attitude.

Firstly, a good deal of evidence was given voluntarily. Isabel Goudie, the Witch of Aulderne, concerning whom the late J.W. Brodie Innes wrote a most interesting novel, *The Devil's Mistress*, made a full and voluntary confession of her dealings with the Devil, and there were many others who gave evidence without being put to torture.

The Inquisitors of the Roman Church followed a set routine in their questions simply because they had, by judicious sifting of such voluntary evidence, narrowed down the field of enquiry to certain definite points. Thus, to mention one point, dealings with the Fairy Folk were sufficient to throw grave suspicion upon the accused person.

Now between the 'good folk' of the fairy legends and the witchcult, there was a very definite link, and it was along this line that the examiners looked for evidence against the witches. It may be of interest to point out that one of the charges against Joan of Arc was that she was a witch, and had had commerce with the Fairy Folk at the Fairy Tree in Domrémy. Miss Margaret Murray, in her book *The Witchcult in Western Europe*, inclines to a belief that Joan was a member of some Dianic cult, and links her up with one of her comrades-in-arms, the infamous Gilles de Rais, Maréchal of France, more commonly known, perhaps, as Bluebeard.

We will now examine the general organization of the witchcult in France and Britain, and endeavour to gain some idea of the growth of the cult and the general cultural background.

When we commence our examination, at the end of the thirteenth century, we find in both France and Britain the feudal system coming into full power, although the oppression of the lower classes was never so great in Britain as it was in France. It was, however, sufficiently harsh.

In France, where the seigneurial rights were rigidly enforced, the serfs revolted, and in the Jacquerie risings endeavoured to throw off this intolerable yoke. They failed, and no great attempt was again made until that period which saw the French Revolution.

It was in France, therefore, and more particularly in the Basque country that the unorganized witchcult increased rapidly, but it was in Britain that it developed an independent organization.

On the other hand, it was in the district around Lyons that the witchcult picked up its Manichean contacts, even as, in Britain it picked up its Celtiberian and Dravidian contacts. In the Basque country, too, it brought over the contacts of the pre-Dravidian Aurignacian peoples who first colonized that region.

From Italy it obtained its links with the Roman and Grecian religions, and also brought, from its own Romano-British and Romano-Gallican traditions a mixed contact, whilst from Spain it obtained its link with the Eastern religions, through the Moorish influence in Granada and elsewhere. The Nordic tradition came

via Sweden and Germania, Blockula and the Venusberg being the two centres.

## Part 2

We have briefly considered the general outline of the witchcult in the West, and have come to the conclusion that it represents a dissociated Racial complex. Let us now study its organization. We have seen that many contacts went to build up this group-mind of the witchcult and with each new contact the organization became more elaborate.

Commencing with a prehistoric fertility rite, the central nucleus of the cult drew into itself elements from the surrounding traditions, and one of the first and most dangerous of these intakes, was the knowledge possessed by the Dravidian peoples who followed the First Tradition Working. Because of this, in classical times the witch was also the poisoner and the brewer of love philtres, etc.

But the first Tradition, quite apart from a very good practical knowledge of various medieval and aphrodisiac drugs had its own particular variety of contact with the Unseen. These contacts, and the methods used to form them were of the lowest order, and are generally contingent upon drugs, hypnosis, and sex.

The drugs were of various kinds, but their general effect was the same, with the exception of one particular drug whose manifestations were of an entirely supernormal character. This particular drug was known as the 'Wine of the Fauns' or the 'Wine of the Sabbat', *Vinum Sabbati*, and it had (and has) a very remarkable power which we will discuss later.

As a famous New England witch persecutor said, the witch covens are organized like the Congregational Churches. This was quite true, with the exception that the congregation had not quite so much power over its leader as that possessed by any ordinary Church.

The number of witches and wizards in any coven was thirteen. This applies almost without any variation from the times of Gilles de Rais up to the present time. Each coven has a 'devil' who was its leader, and usually a Devil's Secretary who kept the Book.

This Book contained all the practical recipes of the witches, and at the monthly meetings of the elders of the covens, various recipes were given out for the purpose of experiment. The results were set forth at the next meeting, and whatever fresh knowledge had been gathered was written down in this 'Devil's Book'.

These 'Devil's Books' are of exceeding interest but — and here is a point well worth noting — there are practically none extant at the present time. Even when the covens were raided and caught red-handed, the 'Devil's Book' disappeared mysteriously. Now there was, as I shall show later on, a very definite reason for this spiriting-away of the book of tried and tested magical knowledge. The Devil's Book is one of the most annoying points of the whole witchcult considered from the sceptical anthropological school's point of view.

Here we have these monthly meetings of the 'Inner Section' in which these methods of occult work were taught, the results of former practices judged *by their results*, and definite training in the art being given to certain selected members. Have we not, in this monthly 'Esbat' or meeting of the elders of the coven, the rough analogy of an esoteric school, with its outer section, its inner section, and its initiate leader?

Now the leader of the coven was a bird of different plumage to his followers. In some cases he was of high social or political rank. Francis, Earl of Bothwell, was such a one, and King James I had a fairly good reason for his fear of Bothwell.

Whether we are dealing with the witches of the North of England, or with the South, or the Eastern or Western counties, or whether we are discussing the Basque and Swedish cults, we always come down to the curious similarity of organization and the existence of leaders who had apparently been trained in the same school.

But, in considering this hidden 'school of Diabolus' we shall find that its knowledge issued forth along three definite channels, which have a very remarkable connection with the three channels of the Western Tradition.

The three Paths of the Western Tradition are:

1. The Green Ray Contact of Elemental Power.
2. The Blue Ray Contact of Hermetic Wisdom.
3. The Purple Ray Contact of Christian Devotion.

In the witchcult we have the three paths of:

1. Poisons, drugs, sex, physical phenomena.
2. Hypnosis, telepathic malpractice, and, curiously, healing.
3. Adoration of the principle of Evil, and perverted religious rites and ceremonies.



Remembering our thesis that the witchcult represented a dissociated complex or group of complexes in the Racial Mind, we can see that not only would the witchcult link up with all the various repressed forces and beliefs of the past, but also would, and did, represent a definitely pathological occult system which might be termed 'regressive occultism' since it depended upon regression to the past for its adjustment to reality.

The Western Tradition in its higher forms represents the Secret Wisdom and Theosophy of our Race, whilst the witchcult represents the Lower Magic of the Race.

If this be so, we have next to face two pertinent questions. One is, what was the White Lodge of the West doing to counteract this development of the Lower Magic?, and the other is, from whence was the teaching of the 'devils' derived?

To answer this last question we must revert to the subject of the Wine of the Fauns, the *Vinum Sabbati*, and to answer the first we must consider what did happen to the witch covens.

### Part 3

We will deal with the question of the policy of the White Lodges with regard to the Witchcult first, and then consider the Wine of the Fauns and its use in the ritual of the Covens.

At the time when the Witchcult flourished in Western Europe the prevailing religion of the West was the Roman Catholic faith, and that particular Church made very little distinction between white and black occultism when it came to definite claims being made. The Church arrogated to itself the sole right to teach religious doctrine, and any body of men which taught outside the Church's pale was suspect.

Because of this, the White Lodges kept themselves well in the background and worked against the more debased aspects of the Cult of Diabolus in a hidden and guarded manner. Note that it was only against the more debased and intelligently malevolent aspects of the Cult that the White Lodges waged war. For much of the Witchcult was nothing more than the *debased remnant of the pre-Christian worship of these Islands and afforded an outlet for the repressed energy and human desire for happiness and social enjoyment*, for in spite of the efforts of G.K. Chesterton and others of the medieval school of thought, life in the Middle Ages was not very pleasant for the poor man, and his privileges were very few. Church and State combined to make him realize that his rights were few and his duties many. It is not to be wondered at,

then, that the repressed desires and general feeling of inferiority should find expression in the excitement of the Witchcult and its rituals. Against this aspect of the Cult the White Lodges made little war, for the adepts knew that so far as that particular aspect was concerned, there was nothing that would seriously injure the evolving group-consciousness of the race.

It was different, however, with regard to the use of some of the secrets of the First Tradition, and because of this, the White Lodges took care, through their members who were in prominent positions in the Church or State, to obtain the 'devil's book' whenever a Coven was raided, and the book discovered. The anthropological school must surely find some difficulty in explaining away the continued use of these books unless they admit that the recipes contained in them were actually found to work.

It was, however, with the deeper secrets of the Cult that the White Lodges waged incessant war, and more particularly with what we may term the 'physical phenomena' which were displayed in the inner circles. Which brings us to the Wine of the Fauns.

Before discussing this point, let us see what the occultist and spiritualist has to say concerning the physical body of man. We are all aware of the lament of the gross man with regard to 'this too too solid flesh', and we may be apt to think of material of the physical order as being the only tangible reality. Let us listen to the testimony of the experts.

Modern science declares that physical matter is but the manifestation of forces working in an intangible medium. The occultist speaks of the etheric double upon which the body is built and the experienced spiritualist points to the phenomena of materialization and de-materialization in proof of the teaching that 'of the soul and body form doth take, for soul is form and doth the body make'.

Under strict test conditions, ectoplasm has been seen to exude from the body of a medium and form itself into recognizable forms, both animal and human, and, what is still more astounding, the body of the medium has been seen to partly de-materialize in order to provide the material of the materialized form. Here we have the clue to the use of the Wine of the Fauns. It must be borne in mind that this is not a wild dream of some story-teller of the *Arabian Nights*, but the sober truth, vouched for by scores of scientific observers both in England and on the Continent. Materialization and de-materialization are both actual

facts in Nature, and it is the basic reality behind these phenomena that is the key to the secret of the Wine of the Fauns. One of the most evidential of these cases of de-materialization was that which occurred with a famous medium, Madame d'Esperance, and it is related in her book *Shadow Land*.

We may say then, that it is possible, under certain definite conditions for the physical body to be partly de-materialized, and for the matter thus exteriorized to be built up into a separate form, which may be used temporarily by some other entity. But, and here we begin to touch upon a realm which has been little explored by the orthodox spiritualist, it is possible for this de-materialization process to take place in such a way that the ectoplasm is not exteriorized, but the entire physical body becomes plastic as it were, and can be moulded into any desired form by the will of a competent operator.

Now the particular forms of evil indulged in by the initiates of the deeper side of the Witchcult required the co-operation of others and the use of the Wine of the Fauns not only brought them into contact with non-human beings, but also enabled Qliphotic entities to so work that forms of obscenity and vice unspeakable were superimposed upon the normal bodies of the participants in these rites, as well as being materialized separately. It was against these things that the White Lodges waged war, not, as a rule, against the average semi-psyche members of the outer covens. The Wine of the Fauns was a potent drug which operated in such a manner as to induce that peculiar de-materialization of the physical body which enabled it to be moulded into other forms, without the long and tedious process of 'development'.

Now it is a common enough thing on the Astral to meet people who, by a natural law of correspondence have temporarily taken upon themselves the form of some animal, corresponding to their particular vice. Swedenborg mentions such cases, and in many spirit messages the same things have been mentioned. These things belong to the pathologies of the Astral life, and for that reason are usually not referred to in ordinary spiritualist literature, but they nevertheless exist, and under certain conditions can make their presence known. But the power of bringing about the same results consciously with a view to the heightening of the ecstasy of the orgy of obscenity which was part of that deeper evil knowledge was one which, in the interests of humanity needed to be taken away, lest greater evil ensue. So the White Lodges acted swiftly and drastically, and even at the present day, should this particular knowledge be again

disseminated, the resulting action of the forces of Light would be both swift and effective. For the use of the Wine of the Fauns is a reversion to a forgotten and forbidden magic, it is a devolution, and leads to the path of no-return. Those who take it must be prepared in the end to pass to that conscious endurance of personal annihilation which is, for the Higher spiritual Self of that personality an aeonian failure. Such personalities are those who have been described as 'wandering Stars, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever and ever'.



## 17.

**The Group Mind**

*The Lore of the Group Mind is something that the Mystery Schools have kept close to their chest for a long time because it can be misused on a massive scale. Hitler was a master of this lore and used it with a chilling effect at his rallies. Such was his control of the Mob Mind that he could drive even normally decent human beings into a state of frenzy and hatred. But he met his match in Churchill who showed the same mastery of the subject.*

*The Group Mind principle is taught in the inner court of most Mystery Schools; in this article W.E.B. goes into it more deeply and at greater length than is usual. It should not be confused with the Group Soul principle which is another matter entirely.*

D.A.N.

**The Group Mind**

It is surprising how little people *realize*, despite their theoretical studies, that thought, when energized by emotion, is projected as a form of radiation from the mind that is doing the thinking. If emotion-charged thought is directed towards a particular place, person or thing, it takes the form of a beam like that of a searchlight; if it is an undifferentiated brooding, it is a generalized radiation like that of a lamp, in the immediate environment of the thinker, lingering there for a greater or lesser time after his departure, according to the concentration and clearness of his thinking, in exactly the same manner as an odour lingers. It can cling to objects even if they are removed to another place, as an odour clings, and like an odour, it can be dispersed more or less speedily by the appropriate means.

Purely intellectual thinking has little projective power; it is

only when a mental image is charged with strong emotion that it projects in the form of a beam of pure emotion. In actual practice, emotion and thinking seldom exist in their pure states, as each is usually tinged with the other, and therefore the beam of projection is rare; but as anyone who thinks persistently or feels strongly will radiate energy, then mental atmospheres which reflect one's conditions are inevitable.

Each person makes an atmosphere with his thinking. If this is realized, it is readily seen how important it is to watch and control one's thoughts, lest one makes a bad atmosphere and harms one's self and others. It is also the fact that if a person has so trained his mind that he can direct his thinking and control his feeling, he will be able to accomplish definite constructive work and obtain some very remarkable results.

This is only possible to the trained and disciplined mind, for most people, unless obsessed by an idea, neutralize their own thinking as fast as they do it. Considering what the average unpurified, uninstructed mind is like, this is just as well. It is because of this very real power developed by the trained mind, that we must always be very careful whom we accept for the deeper training of the Mysteries.

But in addition to the thought force given off by each individual, there is also what is termed the *Group Mind*. This is formed by the pooling of all emotionally toned ideas that are held in common by a group of people who are gathered together and who are 'of one mind in one place.' Exoteric psychology is not without knowledge of this important factor. It recognizes its workings in panic and mob law, also in morale, of which there has been so much talk and so little understanding. What it does not recognize sufficiently is the fact that a group-mind can be deliberately built up and maintained; this is one of the secrets of the higher grades of the Mysteries, but this knowledge must also be given — to some extent, to every member of the group, for no one can co-operate in that which he does not understand. Equally, he has a right to know the nature of that in which he is asked to co-operate so that he may decide whether he wishes to participate or not.

In 1895, a Frenchman, Gustave Le Bon, published a book *The Crowd*, and this became the most important — or rather, influential, book on social psychology ever written, though its treatment of the subject was biased by his fear of a new era of crowds and an age of socialism. With the murderous mobs of the

French Revolution in mind, Le Bon said that the leading characteristic of 'crowds' was a suggestibility in which normal intelligence is overshadowed by animal instincts. Thus, a crowd always has a *collective mind* inferior to the individuals. Many of his observations on the lynch type of mob were shrewd and true, and gave the social scientists a theory to explain the worst forms of crowd phenomena, such as mass hysteria, irrational crazes and booms, social leadership by demagogues and charlatans, who arouse the worst in us.

But the suggestibility of the crowd can be used to build up a Group Mind that is the superior, rather than the inferior of all the individual minds composing it. Whereas the inferior aspect of the Group Mind can be used for destruction and irrationality, the superior type of Group Mind can supply energy which can lift the whole of the Group concerned on to higher levels of consciousness.

Actually, the Group Mind, whether in its higher or lower manifestation is a mental container for the living energy of those whose minds have built it up. If that energy is unbalanced, then the Group Mind can revert to primitive expressions of that unbalanced energy. Conversely, if the energy is balanced, then the Group Mind can contact higher energies, and express these. Again, you will see that the Tree of Life can provide us with a good reference frame. Balanced or unbalanced force. If the Group Mind to which you belong shows signs of reversion to the primitive, then somewhere, somehow, unbalanced force is making its presence felt. We have then to see whether we are helping to cause the unbalance — and that is all we need to do, *for each member of the Group can only judge himself*. If each member tries to correct unbalanced force in himself, then the aggregate of unbalanced energy in the Group Mind become less.

A single, shared idea is enough to form a rudimentary Group Mind. One has only to cry 'Fire' in a crowded building to demonstrate this. It does not matter whether the idea is true or not, so long as it is capable of arousing a widely felt emotion, as the German propaganda people found out during the Second World War. If, however, a system of ideas, a philosophy, in fact, be held by a number of people, and it is possible to introduce an emotional tone into it (which is not so easy in the case of a philosophy) it will form a Group Mind developed and integrated in proportion to the development of the philosophy that ensouls it. This is seen in a very highly evolved form in the Roman Catholic Church, and in a more rudimentary form in the

Protestant Churches; again, it does not depend upon the truth or worth of the ideas but only on the psychological efficiency of the method. It has been proved in the history of religions and nations, that totally erroneous ideas have been potent to influence the minds of men and the fate of nations.

Remember that when a number of people meet together for a certain definite purpose, it is not only the *conscious minds* of the participants which are engaged, but their subconscious and superconscious levels of mind are also involved. We have, indeed, the linking up of the *whole personalities* of those concerned. Now the word 'personality' comes from old days of Greece and Rome, when the actors in the theatre used a mask through which to speak, and this mask indicated the emotion they were portraying. The Latin word for such a mask was *persona*, and the word personality has been derived from this, and it is interesting that the English word 'parson' carries the same meaning, for the parson was the one through whom his Master could act — he was, in effect, the mask through whom the teaching and power of that Master was held to flow.

It is common, these days, to hear those people who have become enamoured of the Eastern religions, but who have not grasped anything of the theology underlying such religions to speak airily of 'eliminating the personality' — I've heard the term used many times. Perhaps the people who devised the slogan which appears on many vans and trucks in the United States had something of the same idea when they implored the passer-by to 'Thank God for Ex-Lax'! But the 'elimination of the personality' requires something a little stronger than any material medicine. I once heard Sir Oliver Lodge say, 'It is evident that there must be something very special about the 'personality' and I believe this to be true. Here, of course, we begin to encroach upon the theological scene, for one of the unending arguments amongst theologians is the 'Personal God' idea and the 'Impersonal God' idea. Most esoteric schools stress the *impersonal* point of view, and all the established Christian churches — with a few exceptions — think of God as *personal*. At the moment we are not concerned to swim in these deep waters, but I've mentioned it because from the point of view of some occult schools, there is a very real truth within the idea of a personal God, even though we may not think of this in 'orthodox' terms.

I remember many years ago, having the privilege of speaking to a very advanced Adept about this question of personality. He said 'In the Inner Worlds, *Principles express themselves as Personalities*



by a natural law of the spiritual realm.' When I asked him if this explained the gods and goddesses of classic times, he said 'Yes, in part, for though the Principle expresses Itself in a Personal manner, the *form appearance* of It is the result of the form-making faculty of the original 'seer' and is an indirect expression of the true Personality-Principle.'

In view of the present drift of opinion in esoteric circles, it might be as well if we kept these remarks in mind. Apart from the manifestation of the personality-principle in the macrocosm, we may look within the microcosm of human life and see the same process at work. There would appear to be a fiery fountain of energy within us which is always making new forms of expression for itself, and it is this outflowing energy which, reacting with the conditions of life around us, builds up the personality of which we are so proud. But should this personal self become for any reason, inadequate, then the inner fiery force will begin to formulate a new personal expression. Thus we get the various forms of personality aberrations — and changes. The most spectacular of these was without a doubt that of the American housewife whose life was portrayed in *The Three Faces of Eve*. Since that book and the film were produced, she has had over nineteen new succeeding personalities!

Before considering the interaction between the Group Mind of which it forms a part, I am told that I should digress a little to consider some of the aspects of the regions wherein the Group Mind is located, and its relations with other types of Group Mind, as well as with the many denizens of those regions. So I hasten to comply with the wishes of my Inner Plane friend.\*

It is necessary, as a first essential in this study to realise that there are two distinct aspects of the Inner Planes, and we may perhaps best term them the natural and the artificial parts of those inner levels.

Here of course, we have a situation which is closely analogous to the situation upon this physical earth. On earth, we have a physical planet which is the home of myriad forms of life, all working and living in the context provided by the material substance of this plane, the whole providing a marvellously interwoven ecology. But we also have Man, who in many ways breaks away from this harmonized life, and constructs a more or less *artificial* world of his own. So it comes about that the dweller in a great town may well be unable to visualize the life of the

\* This article was written at the behest of his 'Inner Contact'.

country. This same thing happens when man passes into the next plane of life — known to occultists as the 'Astral Light'. This Astral Light is a free-flowing energy substance, possessing a fluidity which is the exact opposite of the inertia of earth. This astral substance is the field of expression of countless intelligences, ranging from mighty Angelic Beings down to the minute elemental beings. The expression of the consciousnesses of these beings takes shape in the Astral Light in accordance with the laws of their own being. Here, too, are the archetypal stresses which will express themselves in the kingdoms of nature on the earth, and here, too, in the higher levels of the Light are to be found the Archetypal stresses which correspond to the Divine Ideas of the Platonic philosophy and to the Archetypes recognized by the Jungian psychologists, and the whole of this involving and evolving life is lived in a fourth-dimensional setting.

Into this level of manifestation comes Man, with his mind built up by the forms and appearances of earth, and the mobile substance of the Astral Light responds to his dominant thinking. So is built up what we term the 'Astral Plane'. It is from the varying levels of this artificial world — the creation of the created — that the majority of the messages from the so-called 'dead' emanate, and it is mostly in this 'illusionary' world that the average psychic perceives the forms and appearances which he describes. What is seen is objective to him, and he so describes it, but it is usually the artificial creations of the mind of the discarnate spirits which are so discerned, whilst the multitudinous beings and forces which have their natural home in the rolling billows of the Astral Light are unperceived by the ordinary psychic. But not only are there these two expressions of the Astral levels — the 'natural' and the 'artificial', but there is also the subjective reaction of the man himself to the varying forces and beings and these reactions immediately express themselves in forms which naturally express their own intrinsic nature.

Now the Magician comes into the picture. Using the techniques of magic, he goes to work, creating those forms which he has been taught to build up and also he calls out of the depths of the Astral Light those forces which he has been taught to invoke and those beings whom he has learnt to evoke.

It is into this complex three-expressed and fourth-dimensional continuum that we enter when we work in our personal selves with what we have named the 'Group Mind' or 'Egregore'.

The 'persona' which we all possess, is constantly changing — it

is like a kaleidoscope, every shake of which reveals new patterns. There would appear to be a basic personality within which all the transient expressions of consciousness take place. But even within this basic personality we can perceive other influences. Some of these are what, in the Buddhist philosophy, are known as the 'shandas' or 'traces of the Past'. They are the memory traces of past personae which have been expressed by the unifying principle in each of us. As a *general rule* such 'traces' are not perceived in visual terms, but rather as an emotional 'overshadowing' of the present personality aspect of the central Self within.

If we watch carefully the emotional moods which sweep over us during the day, we shall often observe that some of these moods do not arise from thoughts and emotions which have passed through our minds during the day. Moreover, there will be found a curious 'archaic' feeling to these moods — as though related to 'far off times'. And, as we persist in our daily self-analysis, we shall discover that some of these archaic moods are, as it were, not our own, but are second hand, derived from other minds around us, both incarnate and ex-carnate. So, far from being an integral encapsulated self, we are a varying centre in the midst of a concourse of forces, each of which must, in the end, be controlled and balanced.

Within the general field of our personality we *do* achieve *some* kind of stability, but we must always bear in mind that below this personal level, in the depths of the subconscious, is the raging vortex of the concourse of forces within us, plus the interaction of discarnate and incarnate minds which are ever playing upon us. Only as we advance upon the true Path do we gain the power to stand in the heart of the vortex, as Christ did on the boat in the Sea of Galilee, and speak the word of Power to the discordant elements 'Peace, be thou still'.

And in the calm which follows, the light of the Augrides, the Spiritual Sun of our Eternal Self, will shine with all its power and brilliance upon our personal self.

Let us revert to the Group Mind, using this term for a definite artificially constructed grouping of a number of individual personalities. There are, of course, myriads of group minds which are formed by apparent accident (though much that passes for accident can be otherwise classified). With such apparently haphazard group minds we are not *at present* concerned. Only with group minds which are definitely and consciously constructed for certain definite purposes. Examples of such group

minds are magical lodges, therapeutic groups and certain meditation groups concerned with occult or mystical movements.

The underlying principles are the same in all cases, so we will take just one of these specialized Group Minds or 'egregores' — the 'magical lodge'.

Let us briefly recapitulate. The surface personality is but a temporary aspect of the result of a swirling concourse of forces within each of us, and is constantly changing as one or other of the inner forces becomes dominant. Also, within this whirlpool of dynamic energies, are certain forces which apparently come in from outside the memory — traces from the Past, the more permanent power flowing in from the true self, of which the personality is but a partial expression, and the great feminine force which builds and supports all the manifestations, physical, emotional and spiritual, of the self. (This feminine power is usually known in the East as the Kundalini Shakti).

Also working within the personality are the minds of beings both incarnate and ex-carnate, together with the forces of minds which have never worked through or in a physical body and personality. There are other forces, too, for man in the microcosm — the lesser universe — of the macrocosm in the Spirit of which he lives, moves and has his being.

So *all* the forces of the universe flow through the personality of man. 'The self of man is a point through which the universe is continually flowing' it has been said.

But for the purpose of analysis we must make some line of demarcation between ourselves and others, and in actual life we do this by making a definite boundary between ourselves and others. This boundary is manifest in what is known as the 'aura' or field of force which surrounds each one of us. It is this which in the Bible is termed a 'land-mark', and in the rituals of the Masonic Craft as a 'superficies'.

In the Bible the injunction is given thus: 'Cursed is the man that removeth his neighbour's landmarks.' And in the Craft rituals the charge is the same. We may, however, lower or remove our barrier, so that others may come through. This opening of the personality may be purely unconscious, or we may consciously construct channels through which external forces and intelligences may flow in upon us. One example of the unconscious letting down of the barrier is when we 'fall in love', as the saying is, or when we join some special social group. But it is when we consciously join a 'magical' group that we begin to build up a true Group Mind.



Incidentally, this barrier or 'land-mark' perpetually occurs in Nature both physical and super-physical. It is one of the great Archetypes, and it is one of the expressions of the Eternal Will. Through its agency all evolving life builds up forms on all planes of existence — forms through which that life may express itself.

But, as man begins to work and co-operate with Nature, he must first become capable of building — on all planes of planetary existence — 'bodies' or 'vehicles', through which his power and consciousness may be effective in earth. Then he must learn to cease to rely upon 'form' and increasingly become capable of holding consciousness and *wielding effective power* on all levels *without* the use of form, simply by radiating from his Self a field of force which becomes part of the universal pattern of forces, the effective, already realized, Kingdom of the Spirit, the accomplished Plan upon the tracing-board of the Master of the Universal Lodge.

## 18.

### The Ashram Concept

*In the last few years the idea of occult Ashrams and Communes has been tried more than once ... never with very good effect. There always seems to be those few who claim it is their right to sit, in meditation of course, and do nothing while others toil the clock round. If there is a Teacher or Guru so called, most of the time they are placed upon pedestals so high they must inevitably fall off.*

*In this article Mr Butler states his case quite clearly, he is not in favour of this 'sitting at the feet of the teacher' lark. He discouraged it in his own students and deplored it in the students of other teachers. Few people even called him Mr Butler... it was usually Ernest, or in the case of a few people, Cheiron, the pet name given to him by my daughter meeting him for the first time at the age of eleven, a name which he gleefully accepted and kept until the end.*

*The lesson he tries to get across in this article is this, learn to stand on your own feet, learn to work alone, then you might be fit to work with others after a while. He enjoyed having people of all ages around him, but just as much he enjoyed those days spent alone with his dear life's companion and his family. Even the teacher needs to be alone at times.*

D.A.N.

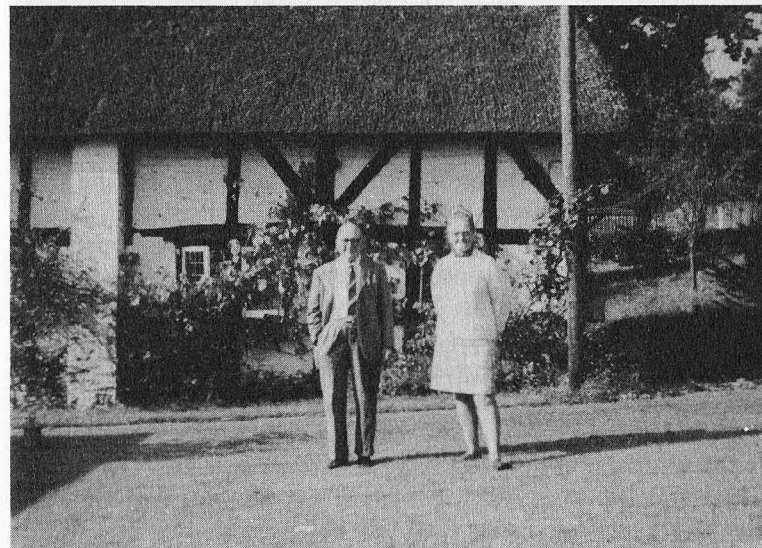
It was suggested, during a recent talk around the Table, that it might be helpful to our students if we briefly considered the nature of what is described in Eastern esoteric works as the 'Ashram'. This has been taken to be the dwelling place of a Teacher, in which he receives his students and gives teaching. And this is true, in both East and West. But there are other

implications, and it may be helpful if we discuss some of them here.

We are so deeply under the material illusion that we automatically take this to be the only way in which the Teacher may teach and the chela or pupil may receive that tuition. This is but natural, if we remember that for countless thousands of years man has tended to form small groups — of the family as the basic group, and then subsidiary groups within the tribe, larger groups in the nations, and is now tentatively thinking in terms of a world-wide universal group of all men upon the earth, whilst there are those who would go further still and dream of a life-group embracing *all* living beings, through all the kingdoms of Nature, and embracing elemental life on all planes, and the denizens of the unseen, both human and non-human. If all creation has its essential root in the Divine Nature, then this latter grouping is inevitable. But we are still many ages from *that* grouping, and these different levels of union have been mentioned here because I want you to try to think of these things from the correct angle — as living spiritual beings — instead of the poor ineffective person using a material brain and looking at life from the wrong end. One of the poets puts it well — ‘Know this, O man, sole root of fault in thee is not to know thine own Divinity’. If, therefore, we begin to try to look at all life in this way, then the first and archetypal ‘Ashram’ is the manifest Universe, where all life comes together to sit at the feet of the Supreme Teacher — the eternal Logos, and to be taught by Him, the Supreme Guru, as one of the Hindu books describes Him. All lesser groups receive that teaching under a Veil, and as we come down the Worlds, so the single primordial teaching is mediated by many individual groups, whose leaders receive the teaching and the power to the best of their ability. So, as the groups multiply by division, a multiplicity of teachers appears, each working with his own group. So we have the lesser ashrams built up on both the earthly and the inner levels of being.

Because, as I have said, we habitually look at life from the wrong end, we are inclined to feel that the physical home of our Teacher where, with one or two other pupils, we can receive instruction in such a friendly, cosy kind of way is surely the very best way of receiving esoteric instruction. From some points of view this is perfectly true, but it is not the whole of the story by any manner of means. I still remember with affection the gas-lit room in that small house in a quiet London square, where sometimes with others, sometimes alone, I sat and listened to the

teaching which my own Teacher gave. Not only teaching, but demonstrations of power and knowledge; there was there built up an atmosphere of power, which worked powerfully upon us, tuning us in to other levels of life and consciousness, transforming us by a wonderful alchemy of the spirit, until some of those things which we had been taught in theory became powers which we had gained, through the action of the power which flowed from and through the one who taught.



W.E.B. and Dolores at ‘Little Thatches’ in Southampton

Here, in this intimate method of teaching, was a profound satisfaction and we often felt, all of us, that, like the disciple of old, that ‘it is good for us to be here’, and, like him, we were prepared to stay indefinitely at the feet of the Teacher. But we were reminded by him, in no uncertain terms, that it was time for us to leave! For this is the danger of the Ashram on the physical plane. We want to make it a kind of *sanctuary* where we can escape from the hard facts of life on the physical plane. This we must not do, for teaching received in the ashram is intended to train us to ‘work with power, love and wisdom in the material world, in the service of God and Man’. At the beginning of the Theosophical Society, there were many enthusiastic members of the Society who wanted to dash off to India, in order to contact the ashrams of the Masters. But both Madame Blavatsky and her



Masters soon knocked this idea on the head, for it is an erroneous idea, and though at one period in the life of the aspirant it may be helpful, yet sooner or later it must be discarded. But does this mean that such intimate contact with the Teacher must be entirely lost? Not at all, for the principle of the ashram is to be found, as we have said, on all levels, and though on the physical plane such intimacy may be grown out of, yet on the Inner Planes it still plays a very great part — though even on these levels, it must be superseded by a deeper level of approach.

There are astro-mental ashrams, and there the disciple may meet and be taught by senior pupils of the Teacher. But again, as we have said, he must not *rest* in that particular group, helpful though it may be. Indeed the teaching received will be directed towards training him to obtain, in an increasing degree, the direct teaching from within himself. This inner teaching, coming from the transcendental levels of his mind, will be educed by the teaching received from the seniors of the ashram, and will gradually transform him until the ashram no longer performs any helpful function as far as he is concerned. He automatically gravitates to deeper levels of tuition, in which outer teachers play an increasingly smaller part, and he begins to be instructed by his own 'Indweller of Light', as one of the Gnostic books so beautifully terms it. So, in the teaching aspect of our work, there are many temporary abiding places — even as it was said of old, but all must be transcended as we progress in the Light, until we consciously attain to union with that supreme Knowledge, Power and Wisdom in which we live and move and have our being.

## 19.

### The Egregore

*In a way this follows on from the last two articles, they have a common thread running through them. Many occultists, especially new ones, talk glibly about the Egregore of their school, but few realize the importance of its work or their role in helping to create and sustain it, or, more to the point, how easy it is for them to taint it, or even to help destroy it all unknowingly.*

*Running an occult school is never easy, when you start thinking how much you have to get into your students' heads it can lead to moments of despair, at such moments it is the Egregore that can be your best ally. The only real chance a school has of surviving is to make it an integral part of a student's life, their pride in its achievements, their sense of belonging to it, and to each other, their sense of honour in upholding its principles, without this there is Egregore, and no school.*

D.A.N.

In *this* Letter, we want to talk about something which is very important, but which is usually forgotten by the majority of esoteric students. This what is known as the 'Egregore'. You may have come across the word in books, more particularly books issued on the Continent of Europe, where the term is much more common than it is elsewhere. We may best define it as the collective Group Mind, in both its conscious and subconscious aspects which is formed by the united thinking and feeling of a number of people. It need not be religious or ethical in its tone — an egregore can be built up around ideas which are anything but ethical or religious — but there must be a strong mutual feeling between all its members. In psychology the Group Mind is quite definitely recognized as one of the factors to be reckoned with in

psychological treatment, and, of course, the mob orator, the spell-binder, the political or religious fanatic are all adepts in building up and utilizing such a Group Mind.

From the inner point of view, we may see it as a composite thought-form, charged with emotional energy. This energy is evoked from all those who are linked with the thought-form, and if there are those in the group who know something of the psychic mechanism involved, it can be directed upon any chosen target. It is obvious that such energy can be used for evil or for good, the 'intention' of those who manipulate the energy within the collective thought-form determining which way it is directed.

As a general rule, the Egregore is built up around some person or group of persons, and as the numbers admitted increase, so the Egregore grows, and a curious reciprocal action takes place. Each member of the group pours energy into the collective thought-form, but equally, into each member there also passes the influence of the group as a whole, and this reverse action brings in certain problems. It is increasingly apparent to those outside the group, that any member of it is being influenced to some degree by the pressure of the collective thinking of all linked in it, and unless care is taken, his power of independent thought may be reduced. For many people this is something which they seek — perhaps they feel inadequate, and feel that by being linked in this way with many others, they are protected against the aggressive tendencies of others. Or, they may feel inadequate in dealing with new ideas and situations, and feel that by allowing the group-mind to 'think for them', they will not be in danger of wrong thinking. Both of these tendencies are unhealthy, but they are common, more particularly in occult and religious circles, and indeed, where the mental and psychic conditions of the person justify such domination by the collective Group Mind for a limited period, such a dependence upon the Egregore may indeed be remedial. But any organization which makes such dependence mandatory upon all its members is treading a dangerous and slippery path, and sooner or later trouble will arise.

For this reason, the wise leaders in such organizations will steadily discount excessive 'personality worship', and encourage each member to both think and act independently when or if the occasion demands. Not that respect and love for any individual is in itself wrong — it can often lead to the sincere endeavour of the disciple to emulate those things which he admires in the leader or other person concerned, and this can be of the greatest value to the entire group. In fact, the very word discipline — in spite of

the harsh overtones attached to it by current military usage, really means that the discipline is in fact the deliberate choice of the disciple to follow in the footsteps of the one he admires — it is a link of admiration and love. Where the object of this love is wise and understanding, such a 'guru-chela' relationship can be of the greatest value, as we have said, but far too often it becomes an unhealthy psychic and mental relationship which, like a poisoned limb, can poison the whole body of the Egregore.

Dion Fortune used to say that the best way of judging the spiritual health of any organization was not to take its statements and public teachings as proof of its integrity, but to look closely at the type of person which its discipline turned out. As she put it 'If I join you, will I behave like you?' Here is the ancient touchstone which we can always apply, for it is eternally true, 'By their fruits ye shall know them'.

Let us now apply what has been said to the Egregore of this Helios Course. In an article on Psychic and Occult Contacts, which I wrote for the New Dimensions Red Book, I said 'In the new age which we are now entering, revolutionary changes are taking place, and the esoteric schools must, to some extent, adjust themselves to the new tempo of life if they are to be of any service to humanity. It has to be recognized that, like many other venerable institutions, the esoteric fraternities have accumulated much unnecessary lumber in their passage through the ages . . . some of it could be jettisoned with advantage. To jettison the useless, whilst retaining the necessary — such is the problem before those who bear rule in the Lodges of the Mysteries.'

This Helios Course\* was the method Helios adopted to carry out the implication of the foregoing statement, and it will be seen from what I have said concerning the possibilities innate in the Egregore, why we have insisted upon a loosely-linked Group. The loose linking prevents undue concentration upon one or other of the personalities concerned with the work. At the same time, there is no reason why small groups composed of people who are studying the Course may not be formed, and, indeed, we welcome the formation of such groups. Such groups will tend to form spontaneously, and, indeed, the beginnings of such groups are already visible. At the moment, there are four such groups of students formed or in the process of formation in the United States, and there are further possible grouping points elsewhere.

Now this development of the work inevitably presents new

\* Now the Servants of the Light.



problems to the Director of Studies and his Assistant Supervisors, but these are being dealt with successfully. Now we come to an important point. Hitherto, we have not referred to another aspect of the work of the Course, but it is now necessary that some reference should be made to it. The reason for our silence hitherto is simple. An analogy may be found in some developments in the Theosophical Society at the present time, where some of its members are claiming practical infallibility to Madame Blavatsky, the Founder of their Society, and an equal infallibility to certain letters said to have been written by certain 'Masters'. Now, our attitude is that, greatly though we admire and respect Madame Blavatsky, and deeply though we respect those august beings whom it is the present-day fashion to call 'Masters' (the old designation was 'the Brothers'), we have not escaped allegiance to an infallible Pope and an infallible Bible, to fall into the same trap again. An esoteric school must be judged by its teachings and by the calibre of those who are its members, not because of claims regarding 'Masters' or Messengers or 'Outer Heads'. For this reason we have played down the Inner Plane assistance which we have received — and which, in various forms, all our students have received, even though they may remain entirely unaware of it.

Nevertheless, that Inner Plane assistance has been and still is being given to the Egregore of the Helios Course. There is no need here to discuss the putative 'Grade' of our Inner Plane helpers — grades are like paper money — they need to be backed up by real currency. We may say, however, that one of those helpers is the Master of Magic whom we referred to in preface to the book *The Magician, His Training and Work*.

So our Egregore is contacted on the Inner Planes, and also on the outer levels. Primarily it is linked with and draws its power and authority from the Western Tradition. It is a loosely-knit Egregore, and this, we feel is an advantage, since such a structure makes for flexibility, and because of its linkings it has much to give to these students who have truly entered upon the Course in the spirit of those who desire to know in order to serve.

## 20.

### Groups and Organizations

*This is very much a 'grab bag' of information concerning the groups and schools with which Ernest came into contact during his years as a 'Master of Magic'. The very rare irascible side of W.E.B. comes to the surface when he speaks of an author who wrote without bothering to get her facts right. I can only remember seeing him angry on three occasions and that was one of them, I was thankful the lady in question was not around, and even more thankful not to be in her shoes.*

*He deals with many points concerning the SOL contact, the opening up of the occult field and the changes that he saw ahead. Much of what he told his inner group has come to pass and had it not been for his foresight we might have been swept away with the force of these changes.*

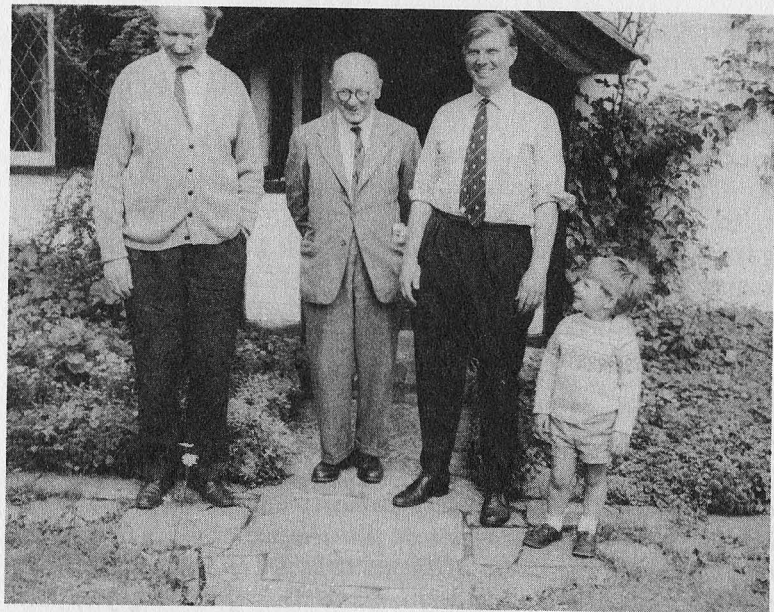
*He tells of the changeover from Helios to SOL and of the debt owed to John Hall and Basil Wilby (Gareth Knight). But underneath the words, one can sense the excitement as he contemplated the new challenges ahead. If there was one thing he enjoyed, it was a challenge.*

D.A.N.

#### Concerning 'Dr Taverner'

When Dion Fortune wrote the series of short stories entitled 'The secrets of Dr Taverner', she also made it clear in the introduction to the book that 'Taverner' was her first esoteric Teacher\*, and actually did have an establishment somewhere near Hindhead in Surrey.

\* Dr Moriarty



L. to R. John Hall of Helios Book Services, W.E.B., Gareth Knight and son Richard.

Since her death, several books have been written about the history of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn and its offshoots and many guesses have been made as to the identity of Dr Taverner. In a recently published book, the author, Ithell Colquhoun identifies him as Brodie Innes, who was one of the principal officers in the G.D., whilst the writer Colin Wilson says that 'he was undoubtedly Aleister Crowley', and yet another 'authority' surmises that he was the doctor husband of Maia Tranchell-Hayes who was Dion Fortune's teacher in the A.O. lodge she had entered.

'Dr Taverner' was in actuality, a certain Dr Moriarty, who, it was claimed, had been an Officer in the Indian Medical Service, and the occult training establishment which he founded not far from Hindhead was known to many students of esoteric matters during the latter part of World War Two. There are still living people who were taught by him, and some of his ideas were published in a small book which, although privately printed and circulated in a limited edition, is still in existence. Reading it recently, I was struck, as others have been by the fact that the

peculiar terms and language used by him show through in a very obvious way in the teachings contained in *The Cosmic Doctrine*. As Dion Fortune received the Cosmic Doctrine through her own trance-mediumship — after her own Fraternity had been formed by permission of the last Lodge of the S.M. which she had transferred to after leaving Moina Mathers' Lodge — it is evident that the subconsciousness of the medium coloured the Cosmic Doctrine communications. This is something known to all who have critically studied the workings of trance-mediumship.

However, the real Cosmic Doctrine trance communications were *not* received before 1923, although much other information was obtained before then. The real reasons for Dion Fortune's exit from Mrs Mathers' Lodge lies elsewhere.

Dr Moriarty died suddenly, and left a fully furnished Lodge-room in London. Dion Fortune, although she had left his Group, still kept in touch with him. I remember sitting in Lodge one evening when Mr C.T. Loveday reported to the assembled Brethren that he had visited Dr Moriarty's rooms and had dismantled the Lodge furniture and stored it safely elsewhere. This was done on Dion Fortune's instructions.

So much for 'Dr Taverner'. Now for another prominent figure in the Fraternity of the Inner Light who has not received the recognition which he really deserves. At the end of the First World War, a certain Charles Thomas Loveday was asked by a friend to go with him to Glastonbury, where a curious resurgence of certain strains in British art was centred around a very interesting lady — a Miss Alice Buckton — who lived at Chalice Well on the outskirts of the little town. He went down to Chalice Well (on the pillion seat of his friend's motor-bike) and met Dion Fortune. He told me the details of that meeting, and later on, perhaps, I may write of it in this magazine. The contact so made resulted in his deciding to support Dion Fortune in her practical esoteric work. At this time she was working in Moina Mathers' Lodge, but, as I have said, she joined another Lodge, and, as my friend Israel Regardie has said in *The Eye in the Triangle* she was given permission to organize her own Group, which was envisaged as a feeder Group, through which knowledgeable members might pass to the Order itself.

At this time, also, she was the President of the Christian Mystical Lodge of the Theosophical Society. Charles Loveday occupied a responsible position in the offices of the London Tramways (where I often visited him) and he decided to sell some property he owned and obtain a place where Dion Fortune could





W.E.B. at Chalice Well, with American students.

work. So he acquired the property at 3, Queensborough Terrace, an address which was shortened in conversation to 3 Q.T. — thus saving time. Loveday also obtained the property at Chalice Orchard, and bought from the army authorities a large wooden structure which had been an Officers Mess Hut during the War. It was transported by train to Glastonbury and erected at the top end of Chalice Orchard. This was the main building, and was in position in 1924 — *not* 1930, as Miss Colquhoun surmises.

I first visited Chalice Orchard early in 1925, and there met both Dion Fortune and Mr Loveday. He was not a young man, as Miss Colquhoun says, neither was he her 'current boy friend'. He was her right-hand man in the organization of the Fraternity of the Inner Light, where he lived and worked until his death at Glastonbury in 1947. His body lies next to the grave of Dion Fortune in Glastonbury Cemetery. As to any involvement with Dion Fortune as the term 'boy friend' suggests, this was not the case. If he had any such feeling for anyone it was not with her, and I regret the somewhat perjorative reference by Ithell Colquhoun. Of course, there is absolutely no truth whatsoever in her wild surmise that he might be the 'Raoul Loveday' of Crowley's Abbey of Thelema, and a simple enquiry could have prevented this mis-statement, since the graves of both Dion Fortune and C.T. Loveday are clearly marked by headstones. To C.T. Loveday (*Amor Vincit Omnia*) I owe more than I can say, and because of this I have given this necessarily brief outline of his part in the formation of the Fraternity of the Inner Light.

\* \* \*

We have to apologize for the delay in issuing this number of *Round Merlin's Table*. There are very good and sufficient reasons for the delay, and we feel that these reasons should be explained to all our Students. Briefly, we have left the sheltering arms of Helios Book Services, and launched out on an independent course. This has meant a condition of affairs closely approaching chaos, but we have been greatly helped in tackling the new developments by the kindness and active support of Helios Book Services. They have 'leant over backwards' as the saying goes, in their endeavours to help us, and we are very grateful to all concerned — John and Mary Hall, Basil Wilby and the staff of Helios Book Service. It is only as we wrestle with all the big problems involved in this new departure that we realize how much we have depended in the past upon the unnoticed work of



all at No. 8, The Square.\*

There are several reasons why we have decided to become a separate organization, but it is only since we commenced the change-over that we have realized how the administration of the course by Helios Book Service must have 'jammed the lines' as far as the normal activities of Helios (the sale of Occult books) was concerned.

So to our friends of Helios Book Services we wish to express our sincere thanks for all that has been done for the course by them. The friendly relationship which has been built up through the years will not be broken by this new move on our part, and we look forward to seeing those relations continued and intensified in the future.

We expect that for some little time to come there will be minor mistakes and occasional delays, but we hope to eliminate these as soon as possible. In the meantime, we would ask for the indulgence of all our students.

Some students may be wondering whether this new venture will mean any change in the teaching and aims of the course. The short answer is 'No'. The subject matter of the course will continue as before — though some new aspects of our chosen subject may well be opened up in the future. Students will be informed of these new developments as they arise, and will be able to accept or reject them as they feel so moved.

Those who are now administering the course will be known as 'Servants of the Light', and the course itself will be named 'A Practical Course on the Mystical Qabalah, by W.E. Butler'. Our Association has purchased the copyright of those lessons of the course which were originally written by Mr Gareth Knight †, and the combined copyrights for the entire lessons is now the property of the Association. It should be noted here that the word 'Association' is *not included in our official title* although we may occasionally use it as we have above. The bulk of the work which was formerly done at Toddington will now be done in the Channel Island of St Helier, by Mr and Mrs Ashcroft-Nowicki. Owing to certain legal delays, the address which was given as the one to which all communications should be sent cannot yet be used, and it may have to be altered. However, all students will be informed at the earliest possible date, as to the correct address.

\* The old Helios address.

† The first 6 lessons.

This new venture has been started on what is sometimes termed 'The Tide of Destruction', and some students of the occult may feel that this was the wrong time to start such a venture. Perhaps so, if we only think of the negative aspect of Destruction, but we are looking at this matter from a more positive angle. When storm conditions prevail, only that which is built in accordance with Cosmic Law will be safe from destruction. If, therefore, we have built upon insecure foundations, then the destructive forces will break down that which we have built. It is far better to find out our weak points as soon as possible, than to go ahead building a more complex superstructure which, when tested, will fail the test. Whilst our new structure is still flexible and capable of being altered without being entirely wrecked, such tests as may come to us will help rather than hinder our work. Receiving the swift reward for any mistakes we may make, our organization will be tempered and strengthened by the tests through which we may pass. At least, that is what we have understood to be the effect which this action of Cosmic Law is intended to bring about, and it is in this spirit that we face the future as an esoteric organization.

We commenced our work in the esoteric field as a simple course in the practical Qabalah, and it is apposite, perhaps, if we survey the road we have traversed since those early days. The course, despite its defects — for, like all human undertakings it has its failures, even as it has had its successes. Looking back, therefore, we can see that there were certain things built into the course in those early days which have hindered the full expression of the work. Those blemishes were productive of quite a fair amount of trouble for those who were directing the course and tended to upset the balance of the work. Unbalanced force is always a present danger in any esoteric organization, and the control and neutralization of that force in our midst has been one of our major problems. However, we have survived the days of 'storm and stress', and can now go forwards, having overcome some of the unbalanced forces in our organization. It must always be remembered that any human organization contains not only the balanced energies of those who compose it — it also contains the unbalanced forces of those same people. And who are we to say that *we* are free from imperfections. In the Bible it is written 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves', and this is very true. So, as we go forward we would ask our students, each in their separate ways, to uphold us in their prayers and thoughts, that we may worthily represent the long line of teachers who through the



ages have served the Altar of the Mysteries. The purpose of our work is that our students, through our teachings and through the changes in consciousness which should result from the practice of those teachings, may live to extend the Light. 'Light in Extension' as the initiates proclaimed of old — this is what we would do through this course, and we ask all our students to help us in the Great Work. For we can only truly spread the Light by opening ourselves to that Light and allowing it to take over our personalities and flow through us out into the outer world.

It is not by that which we *know*, but by that which we *are*, that we really affect the world — that we begin to build up in this planet that 'noosphere' — that higher planetary consciousness — of which du Chardin wrote.

Now, things being as they are, and human nature being what it is, the above statement is in the nature of what in the Catholic Church is known as a 'Count of Perfection', towards which we struggle, and it is whilst we are so struggling, that such a course as ours can be helpful. Occultism, as a recent writer has emphasized, is a *science, not a religion*, it is the science of the Unseen, the science of the soul, for as it is studied and developed, it leads to a deeper realization of that 'Ground' within each soul where the Eternal Spirit abides in the Fullness of Power, of Love and of Wisdom. This, of course, leads us to the Mystical Way, and, indeed, all human attainments and sciences, when purged of their misdirected energies find their ultimate justification and fulfilment in Union with the Eternal.

However, as we have said, these are Counsels of Perfection, and for most of us, perhaps, aspects of life for which we are not yet ready, or towards which we are not yet inclined. It is so very easy to wander in these refined atmospheres — though true occultism and true mysticism both present a Path whereon the wayfaring man need have no exceptional powers of intellect in order to tread it and err not thereon.

So much for the background against which we view this our course. However, we are trying to help those who, for one reason or another, find, in the study and practice of esoteric science, an opportunity of treading the Path, instead of merely talking about it. Those who would enter our course must be imbued with the '*desire to know, in order to serve*' and this knowledge must be translated into practice, if that service is to be effectively carried out. In order to remove any suspicion of ambiguity, let us say that the service which the student is called upon to undertake is a twofold one — the service of the Eternal, and the service of his

fellow man. It is perfectly possible to 'serve' one's fellow man in such a manner that, although to the outer world true service *has* been given, the result has actually been to boost the ego of the 'server' or to effect a domination over the spirit of the one who has been served. In the same way, it is perfectly possible to 'serve God' in a cold, negative and egotistic way. Both of these are far from the spirit of true service. The true service of our fellow man must be a service which stems from an increasingly developing awareness of our brother man and his *real* problems, an awareness which is in no way dependent upon political party or any 'ism'. In the same way, the true service of the Eternal is an endeavour to reach up to that Supreme in a loving devotion which offers the whole of one's self as an instrument of His Will. Herein is our own true Peace — the Peace which passes understanding. For as the Blessed Souls told Dante, 'In His Will is our Peace'. So we unite our lesser will with that Divine Will and Intention, and as we hear in the heavenly conclave those words 'Whom shall We send, and who will go for Us?', we find ourselves caught up in the fire of that Will and, weak as we are, we make the only response 'Here am I, Lord, send me!'

Both of these ultimate aims are, for many of us real Counsels of Perfection for we know that we are not yet able to achieve those heights. Yet it is possible for us, through the disciplines of esoteric science, to approach that point in our own development where they become to some extent possible. But these must be the greater Lights towards which our souls must be set, if we would profit by the study of the esoteric sciences.

We do not claim that we have gained those heights, but we do know that, by the Eternal Grace, we have been 'met by the way', and it is in the light of what that meeting has meant that we go forward in this new venture.

Now that the course has become a separate entity, we have had to take a close look at it, and see whether it can be improved in any way as far as its presentation to the outer world is concerned. Having taken such a look at it, we can see a number of ways in which we might be able to expand and improve it, and we shall from time to time introduce these new features. At the same time, of course, the main teachings of the course will be carefully preserved. So we hope to make the course of still greater use. There is a reputed Hollywood saying that 'History is never so good that it can't be improved' and this, however true it may or may not be as regards history, is certainly true as far as the *presentation* of esoteric teachings is concerned.

So we hope in the future to increase the teaching by 'side lectures' dealing with technical points in esoteric work, and we also will encourage our students to construct models of the various symbols employed in the teachings. This last is particularly important, in view of the close linkage between the various symbols used in Qabalistic teaching. So we hope to expand our teachings along this line of work, and we shall also endeavour to train our students to employ some of the latest psychological teaching in their studies. Any system of teaching, if it is to be successful, must be continually expanding, even though the essential teachings remain untouched.

At the start of our work on the course, we envisaged our students going out equipped with a basic knowledge and experience which would enable them to carry on their studies without any further reference to us. In this respect we have found that the direction taken by the course has brought us to the consideration of what might be termed 'post-graduate' teachings, and we hope to expand our work along this line.

We have referred to the Inner Plane Helper, the 'Opener of the Way', to whose inspiration this course is chiefly due, in former numbers of *Merlin's Table*, and we feel that we must again speak of him and his work with us. There are those students who, for one reason or another, find it very difficult to believe in the actual concrete existence of The Opener. We do not blame them in any way, for there is no compulsion for anyone to believe in his existence. Indeed, simply to believe because one is told one should, is no good basis for true esoteric study. The teachings are to be studied for their own sake, and the critical faculty of the mind exercised on them in just the same way as if we were studying any other subject. Either they are true in their own right, or they are not. If they are true, then they do not need to be boosted by being linked with any teacher be he incarnate or discarnate. If they are *not* true then no amount of association with any teacher will make them true. The student must judge the teachings for himself, and come to his own conclusions, quite apart from any seen or unseen 'authority'. All the teachings of the course as it is at present, together with any later additions, must always be received in this manner, and considered on their own merits. *There must never be any uncritical dependence upon any teacher or Group Leader.* This is one of the great underlying principles of the Western Tradition, and any departure from this vital principle is a divergence from the true Western Way. Any one who teaches that dependence upon the teacher is essential —

beyond such simple limits as the fact that the Teacher may know a little more than the pupil — thereby shows that he has not fully understood one of the fundamentals of our Western Way, and those students who are just commencing the course should always keep this in mind. However, although we must not compel, we are free to give advice, and where the exercises which are given in the lessons are concerned, we advise the student that he follows them out in their detail and does not try to mix them with other exercises derived from other sources. Now and then we have had a student who knew more than we ourselves — at least, so he said — and who altered the exercises to suit some formula he had dreamt up or read about. We had the task of getting him out of the psychic morass into which he had flung himself by such ill-advised 'mixing of the drinks'. This was not only a waste of our time, but meant that the student in question had to retrieve much ground which he had lost as a result of his foolish escapade.

This number of *Merlin's Table* may seem somewhat scrappy and disjointed, but nevertheless we have said much that needed to be said. In the near future we hope to issue separate monographs on various aspects of esoteric work, and in these we shall expand some of the points which we have been making here.

Many years ago, we took upon us the Magical Title which expressed the inner dedication which we had made. We have never rejected this Magical Name, although we have worked under another such Magical Name for many years. The old Name was always there, in abeyance. So now, as we launch this course of the Servants of the Light, we take up again this Name from of old, and henceforth we shall work in the spirit of that Name as:

#### 'THE SERVER OF MERLIN'

\* \* \*

One of the crucial times in the history of any esoteric Group comes when, for one reason or another, the leadership of the Group has to be given up by the one who may have directed it for many years, and be transferred to another. There have been cases where the Group fell apart and ceased to be, simply because no provision was made for a successor to the leader. In other cases, the leader who passed away was able to hold the group together by using the psychical faculties of someone in the Group. However, this usually means that such a discarnate leader works under considerable disadvantages, and it is far better if this matter



can be dealt with before the leader is no longer on the physical. This point in the life of the SOL — for the Correspondence Course Students form such a Group as those we have been speaking of — has now been reached, and we thought it well to ensure both continuity of teaching *and* continuity of Inner Plane Contact.

We have never over-emphasized this question of our own Inner Plane Contacts for various good reasons, but we must here affirm that the course has been, and still is, directed by certain people on the Inner Planes, and more particularly by one whom we affectionately refer to as 'The Opener of the Ways'. Who he is, or what his exact grade in the occult hierarchy is we cannot say, for any claims — which cannot be sustained by physical plane evidence and proof — must remain purely a matter of subjective opinion. Also, the teaching and influence given is what matters, and this is to be judged not on the status of any individual Teacher, but on the results of that teaching and influence upon the student. However, we *do* affirm that such an Inner Plane Teacher is the directing power behind the SOL Course.

It was, therefore, necessary that we should consult him on such an important matter as the transfer of leadership. We therefore asked him to help us by giving us certain evidential matter through whomever he found capable of being a channel through which he could work — and who, *themselves*, were capable of doing the work involved.

He responded, and through one person he gave us the evidence and assurance that this one was capable of taking over the office of Director of Studies — a by no means empty title! At present the one who will be Director of Studies is being trained for the work involved and is working closely with us as Assistant Director. As we ourselves gradually withdraw from the active work, so the new Director will take over, and, we hope, the change of leadership will be harmoniously made. This does not mean that we will entirely withdraw from the work of SOL — indeed, we may be able to do more in certain directions, since the heavy load will have been taken over from us. So with the coming-in of the Tide of the Vernal Equinox, we set out on a further adventure of the Spirit, but still under the same direction, for the inspiring and directing power still rests with and will be exerted by our Inner Plane friends, and above all by that friend whom we know as The Opener of the Ways.

\* \* \*

As most of those who read this letter will know, there are arising in various parts of the world, loosely-knit groups of SOL Students. Chiefly is this the case in the United States of America. We had the pleasure, this year, of meeting with some of the leaders of these groups, and we were happy to see the keen interest which they showed in the work in which they were engaged. Such a keenness augurs well for the continued growth and success of these groups. It was a very happy meeting, and we trust that they, in their turn, felt that their meeting with us had proved fruitful.

What is written in the rest of this letter is intended both for the members of the groups *and* for the many students who, for one reason or another, are solitary workers. That which we have to say is equally important for both classes, for as we have so often said, the groups are *loosely-knit* associations, and students do not surrender their independence by joining one or other of them. At the present time there is sweeping through the field of what is commonly styled 'occultism' a wave of power which shows itself in a clamorous demand that we should re-examine our truths, and discover whether or not they are valid for the present age. This many of us have done, and have satisfied ourselves of the stability of the foundations of our esoteric philosophy. In this re-appraisal we have also discovered that the techniques and disciplines which we have used in the past are still — in essence — in agreement with the fundamental laws which underlie all manifestation. However, these essential laws still hold good, we have also found, in our re-examination of the psychic and psychological methods which we fashion and use in the Great Work, that the way in which we use these psychic and mental 'tools', together with the way in which we describe our methods and training, do indeed need altering, if we are to appeal to the modern outlook.

However, we have to be careful that we do not fall into the trap of thinking that by changing the labels on the goods, we necessarily improve their quality. If, as a draughtsman, I use a pair of compasses to draw a circle, and I am told that to use such an instrument proves me to be stuck in a rut, and unable to draw a circle without the aid of instruments, such criticism moves me not at all. I know the principle of the compass, and I know by *practical experience* that when I use a pair of compasses, I can draw a circle. If there are other ways of producing a perfect circle, then I may well explore them and report on my findings, but I am not, on that account, going to throw away that which I have found to give me correct results. At least not until I have clearly proved for

myself that these other methods are superior to the one which I have been using.

If we *must* change the labels on the tools we use in our esoteric work, we must also keep in mind the truth that *the tools themselves remain the same*. Today, it is 'old-fashioned' to speak of 'clairvoyance', but change the name to 'extra-sensory-perception' or 'hyperdimensional consciousness' and you are 'with it' (or whatever the current jargon may be). But the phenomenon so re-labelled is just the same as it ever was.

Changes — great changes — are upon us all, but we must be careful in our evaluation of those changes. People will proclaim the beginning of the new Aquarian Age; others will speak of 'astral tides' which sweep periodically over this planet, and others will simply cry that 'the great and terrible day of the Lord is at hand'. Each label will be applicable to some part of the storm and stress in which we find ourselves at the present time, but none of them will cover the whole field of experience. Because of this, it is as well if we refrain from any boastful assertions that we alone have the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. This warning is especially needed in occult study, for we tend to regard through rose-coloured spectacles those teachings which have helped *us*.

This warning is very necessary today, when so many Schools of occult and mystical philosophy are competing with each other for consideration. Now, a thing is not necessarily good and true because it is *new*, nor is it necessarily outmoded, misleading or bad because it is *old*. In passing we may note that those who have most loudly criticized 'the archaic language of orthodox religion' have nevertheless gone back to the same 'well of English undefiled' which the religious scholars drew upon, and have dredged therefrom the latest in 'four-letter words'! It is very true that new methods are coming in, and these methods must be tried out and evaluated in the light of practical experience, and we would ask our students to refrain from hasty and ill-considered adoption of new methods simply because they *are* new. At the same time, of course, we must always be flexible in our approach, looking always for new methods in view of the constantly changing psychic, social and spiritual conditions of today. In the cosmic heavens, our sun, with its attendant planetary system is constantly traversing new tracts of Space, and new stellar influences are being experienced. So, although in a sense 'there is nothing new under the sun' as Scripture declares, yet, in a truer fashion *everything* is new under the sun. So we have two aspects of

manifestation — orderly recurrence of influences and forces, and an everchanging and expanding framework within which that recurrence takes place. Now, all of this applies to the Groups of students which are built up in any Esoteric School, and, indeed, the same principle also acts in each individual member of the Groups and in each independent student of the course. For, 'As above, so below, to accomplish the miracle of the One Thing'. We, as microcosms share in that eternal Flux in the Macrocosm which guides and sustains the Pleiades and Orion with his sons.

This is something which we wish to impress upon our students. The initiate in the old Mysteries was asked the ritual question 'Who are you?' and his answer was 'I am a Child of Earth, but my Race is from the Starry Heavens'. It is good for us to attempt to realize this, for it has many applications in our life. It throws new light upon the nature of our earthly personality, and tends to modify some of our ideas concerning ourselves. For just as our physical bodies are constantly throwing off the materials of which they are composed, and building in new material, so are our emotional and mental vehicles constantly changing their substance in the same way. So, in the microcosmic way, we are 'a point through which the universe is moving'. Now, in our personalities as we know them, the Microcosmic 'concourse of Forces' is constantly being influenced by the changing phases of our Higher Self, which is its own macrocosm. Or, rather, that aspect of the greater macrocosm with which we are personally concerned. So, as the different and changing tides in that Higher Self sweep over our personality, we find reproduced within ourselves some of the attitudes of mind, some of the ambitions and ideas which were once the ambitions and attitudes of past personalities. We are overshadowed, as we would say, by the influences of our past lives!

This brings us to what we dealt with in the first part of this Letter, namely, the increasing desire for the adoption of new methods and new ideas in the esoteric schools. For such periods of unrest and turmoil have recurred again and again in the religions and philosophies of humanity, and for many people the memory of those ancient times tends to rise when, in this life, they become subject to the stress and change which confront us today. Such people, drawn to the esoteric schools find themselves, because of this revival of ancient memories, unable to accept any formal discipline, and they bring into any Group which they join, stresses and strains which will sorely test its integrity. If they can be assimilated, they can be of the greatest value to the Group —



and, indeed, to the general Tradition to which it belongs — but unfortunately, human nature being what it is, and not what we would like it to be, they are far more likely to wreck the organization.

Such people, as we have said, *can* be of the greatest help, and it is our hope that any such who may join our loosely-knit Groups will try to maintain some kind of *via media* — a Middle Way — which will enable the best of their intuitions and ideas to be incorporated into the common stock of the Group. At the same time, of course, much depends upon the leaders of the Groups in the way in which they deal with the 'stormy petrels' who may come in. Also, of course, the other members of the Group concerned must deal with their fractious brethren in true brotherly affection. This is not always easy, but it can be done, as we have personally observed. In fact, it is often very good for a Group to have one such brother in its midst. Quite apart from the fact that it makes for a certain liveliness, the insights which such a brother can give the common store may be very valuable.

It is apparent to us that there is now a steady tide beginning to manifest in all countries — a tide which is gradually moving away from the older Groups on the one hand and from the wilder avant-garde Groups on the other. This, in view of the Qabalistic philosophy was predictable. At the moment it is not so noticeable as some might wish, but it is steadily increasing, and we feel that this also is part of the rhythmic activity of the influences of the life of the Inner Planes. Someone recently asked us if we had the necessary organization to deal with any expansion of our work. The answer is that the principles of such organization exist and will automatically come into action when and if we are called upon for such expansion. We would prefer to say that, as this rising tide becomes more powerful, it will make for itself an *organism* based upon the principles of which we spoke. For this rising Tide is a Tide of Life; and this Life will produce its own forms. Our business is to develop and train ourselves that we, desiring to know in order to serve, may become living channels through which this tidal wave of Life may pour in this present age, when the Eternal, in the rhythm of Cyclic Law once again 'pours out His Spirit upon all flesh'.

## 21.

### Unity

*It is fitting that this should be W.E.B's last piece in the book. The very thing he claimed to be so pessimistic about came to pass in August 1984 at a lovely country house in the Malvern Hills. There, thirty-two high level occultists representing the Qabalah, the Hermetic Schools, the Craft, the Pagan, the Egyptian schools and others, all came together for the first of a series of high level rituals designed to raise the Earth Spirit to her rightful place, and to open the way for the New Aeon.*

*They worked in love and harmony, and with great skill; as I write they are preparing to meet for the third and final time to open the Gate of the Ages, something that happens only once in two thousand years. It is due in no small measure to the life's work of W.E. Butler that they meet thus. Some of them knew him, all of them acknowledge a debt to him in one way or another. Knowing him, he will find a way to be there among his old friends.*

D.A.N.

I see there is a plan afoot to try to get all the various occult groups, fraternities, lodges, covens, and what have you, to come together into one united body. This was one of the dreams of Dion Fortune in the early days of her work with the Fraternity of the Inner Light. Unfortunately, she found it was not possible, under the conditions of that time, but I know she cherished the hope that, at some time in the future such a coming together could be achieved. Those who are at present putting this idea forward are among the most level-headed and responsible people

in the occult field, but, even so, I don't think they will succeed. This may seem a pessimistic conclusion, but it is based upon more than sixty years of experience in the psychic and occult world. At the same time, there is a very large amount of common ground upon which we can all meet, but it would be something of the order of the lion lying down with the lamb — a veritable miracle — though such a consummation is much to be desired.

## Afterword

Mr W.E. Butler — An Appreciation

'To die will be an awfully big adventure'

— J.M. Barrie

When the news came of Mr Butler's death on the morning of August 1st, 1978 it was the above words that came to mind. To him it would have been just that — a big adventure. He never lost his sense of wonder, or adventure, or humour.

He was once described in a magazine as the Grand Maistre of English Occultism, a title that delighted his impish sense of humour. It suited him, but he was also much more to a great many people.

A devoted friend and colleague of the late Dion Fortune, he was among those who helped her to build the Society of the Inner Light into a sound and highly effective Mystery School. He remained a member of this Fraternity until his failing health forced him reluctantly to resign. It was always a delight to hear him speak of Dion Fortune's early days and the struggle to get the school going, and of the many people who had given time and effort to its birth.

He was renowned as a teacher and there are many, all over the world, who will remember with love and gratitude the training he gave them. He was always ready to help, equally ready to point out where you had gone wrong, with severity if need be, but the severity never lasted long. He held the highest of Occult Principles and lived his long and active life by them . . . and expected others to do the same, especially those he had trained himself.



His books and articles and tapes on occult training are among the best of their kind, widely read by those well versed in the magical arts as well as those just beginning their training. They were written with clarity and the minimum of fuss, and expressed a method of teaching he had evolved over a lifetime of service in the Great Work.

He never forgot his own teachers, or the things they had taught him. He gladly passed on their words, keeping nothing back or 'secret' — something he deplored in other teachers. The seminars with him are now treasured memories to be shared with those who will now never know the man himself.

Behind the Priest and Teacher, there was always a warm and loving personality, a man who loved people. To spend a day in his company was to learn with no consciousness of being taught, yet at the end of the day, on reflection, you would find you had received a great deal of knowledge. This was part of his genius, that he made learning a natural flowing thing, a painless process.

His home was always full of people of all ages, types and races and always welcome. He was blessed with a warm and loving companion to share his days. When in later years his health failed, he never allowed it to overwhelm him or the pain to distract him from teaching. He had an immense store of knowledge and he felt it his task to pass it on to those who came after him.

In his late sixties he joined Gareth Knight in the setting up of a new occult school to be called the Helios course. Later, other commitments made it necessary for Mr Knight to take on other work and Mr Butler took on the task of writing the rest of the fifty lesson course and the burden of work as Director of Studies.

Soon after this my husband and I completed our training in the Inner Light and with their permission joined Mr Butler on the supervisory staff of the Helios course. This was the start of ten happy and productive years in his company.

During those years, with the blessing and help of Mr Knight and his partner, Mr John Hall of Helios Book Services, the course became separated from Helios and passed under the complete Directorship of Mr Butler. Renamed The Servants of the Light, he poured into it and into the training of its staff, all his considerable occult knowledge. In the next few years it began to expand and take on the shape of things to come.

Ill health had already begun to take its toll of his strength and in 1976 he was advised to undergo the amputation of a leg. If anything, this made him more determined than ever to get as much work done as possible. In order to give as much time to his

writing as possible, he resigned the Directorship of the S.O.L. but retained a lively interest in its new phase, as it started to extend its sphere of work to twenty-three countries and three languages.

The S.O.L. was to Mr Butler the culmination of sixty years in active occult work. Into its lessons he poured all that he had been taught and learnt through experience. Those of us who knew him, students and supervisors alike, can pay him no greater homage, show him no greater love and respect, than to make it a living growing tribute to his life of work and service.

Adept, Teacher, Priest, Author, Helper and Friend — to this list we can add the words from the poem, 'Abou-ben-Adam,' by L.H. Hunt, that he was . . . 'one who loved his fellow men'. It is an epitaph worthy of his own great humanity.

— Dolores Ashcroft-Nowicki  
Director of Studies of the  
'Servants of the Light'

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