

The Sanctuary of Self

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



THE SANCTUARY OF SELF



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DEDICATION

To

Kendal Brower

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

R.M.L.

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INTRODUCTION

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

I venture the opinion that the chaff of mysticism is this dogma. It is often the result of some ardent exponent of mystical philosophy having tried to enlarge upon the basic and slowly evolved mystical truths. Since an air of reverence has settled as a mantle upon some of the older mystical philosophies, it has often been considered a sacrilege to amputate the offending dogma. It plagues the student with confusion and tries their patience, and it also places mysticism in an unfavorable public light.

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

There are those who do not harbor prejudices against mysticism and who are, in fact, searching for what it offers. Yet, they are discouraged by the chaff in many of the mystical systems. If one whose consciousness is ready to embrace mysticism can be made, by this work, to recognize true mystical precepts from chaff, then this book will have accomplished its purpose.

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

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

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

Part Two of the book is termed, The Technique. It consists, as related, of those principal practices by which the mystical state could be attained. Part Three is the negative aspect, The Pitfalls. It contains an admonishment for what not to do and what not to think. As every diligent student knows, the boundaries of mysticism, occultism, hermeticism, and metaphysics have frequently been allowed to overlap. It is only when a student has gone quite far in one direction that they

sometimes discover that they should have turned to the right or to the left long before so that what they really sought would be found.

Part Three undertakes to define the boundaries between various subjects. It also attempts to outline the obstacles and the pitfalls that the student may expect to encounter. We spoke of chaff amidst the kernels of mystical truth. This part of the book refers to the harmful qualities of this chaff and how they may be combated.

Part Four of the book endeavors to evaluate the mystical life by enumerating what the successful aspirant will acquire as the result of their labors. It does not merely hold them up as ends but attempts a definition of what is almost beyond description. Those who attain these ends may not agree with the positive content the author has assigned to them for, after all, they are a personal experience. However, I believe that the reader will concur with the conclusion on what these ends of an aspirant's mystical labors should not look like.

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

Ralph M. Lewis

May 1, 1947

PART ONE
The Mysteries

Chapter I

THE MYSTICAL LIFE

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

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

An aspect of living, and one which is overlooked by most people, is the mystical life. The mystical life provides the reason why we live. The

mystical life determines the cause of our individual lives and the use to which we should put our bodies and our animal vitality and magnetism. The mystical life, like the physical life, requires certain preparation. If we must study the rules of diet, if we must study hygiene, if we must know the rudiments of good health to be healthy and physically normal, certainly we should give some thought and consideration to the mystical side of our existence as well. We must also prepare for it in an intelligent manner.

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

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

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

Simply put, the mystical attitude of mind which is displayed is not a divine conception. The mystic is one who is evolved, and they must

use the faculties which they have and awaken the latent qualities and direct them in that channel which constitutes the mystical attitude of mind. The mystical approach to life is not a mysterious mantle that descends upon an individual and sets them off, by intention, from other people.

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

Bacon stated that people should rid their minds of idols and the things which they have wrongly built up in their minds out of fancy, out of suppositions, the idols of tradition, the things which are accepted because they have been handed down or because they have merely the authority of age to support them. We must approach life as though stepping from a dark chamber into a lighted one for the first time without any anticipation or expectation as to what we are to see or hear. We must then subject each experience to our own analysis that is not colored with the analyses of others. The person who really wishes to approach the mystical life in a frank manner with the hope of then being able to govern himself properly must not be a coward. Public opinion must not be feared and there should be no hesitation to oppose or challenge tradition.

Have you ever stopped to think about what the real value or worth of tradition is? When is it a benefit to humanity, and when is it a hindrance? Traditions are like rungs of a ladder. They represent the elevation of people. They are intended to prevent people from slipping backward, but they are not intended to hold them back.

Whenever a tradition holds you fast, so that you cannot raise yourself to the next rung, it then becomes a hindrance. We should look upon traditions as signs of encouragement, and we should find satisfaction in them because of the advancement that people have made. We should take from tradition the best that it has to offer and build upon it. It is necessary, therefore, that each of us take the traditions of the day and subject them to a personal examination to see, so far as we are concerned, why it is necessary that they should be abided by. If we can improve on the traditions, we should do so. If we cannot, we must not relinquish them unless they prove to be of no further value.

Human beings possess reason, a faculty found also in lower animals, and we must employ that reason. We must not be like children and accept conditions and circumstances merely on faith alone. We must weigh them. People who do not employ this power of reason have not advanced beyond the child of ten. In fact, it is safe to say that they have not advanced much beyond a chimpanzee that instinctively reacts to its environment as a small child will, not knowing why it does so or without even being concerned with the reason.

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

In beginning with humanity, you must realize that it alone is not Divine. It is, in one sense, unfortunate that almost all religions and philosophies have built up the impression of the Divine nature of humanity so strongly that, in the minds of many people today, all things apart from what they term the soul of humanity are declared

vulgar and hardly worth the consideration of thought except as we need them for our existence. Such a concept is an injustice to the Infinite Intelligence that conceived us all. In the first place, it must be reasoned and realized that the multitude of things which exist apart from what is stated to be the human soul are not of human creation and are not the result of the effort of a human mind. Consequently, they must necessarily be from that same Source, that same Infinite Source from which all things come. Everything of which we have cognizance is, by that reasoning, of a Divine Source.

It is unfortunate that some people refer to the acts of animals and of some types of beings as not being Divine. In each thing which has existence, there is instilled its function and, while it has that particular type of existence in its process of development, that function is natural to it and is not unholy.

Can we damn or condemn a barbaric people to oblivion because they conduct themselves and their lives in a manner which is in accordance with the intelligence that is theirs? Are they to be considered as any less Divine in nature because they have not the ability to distinguish between the right and wrong which we have conceived by virtue of a greater intelligence and a more advanced state?

Would we like to think of ourselves as being considered profane, vulgar, and unholy by a civilization of a thousand years hence because our acts today will fall short of their attainments? Would not our plea be that we acted in accordance with the best of which our nature was composed and of what constituted our inner intelligence? No being is impious unless it can be shown that they have the ability to ascertain the difference between right and wrong and then act wrongly. Therefore, each class of people today, each race of people, must be measured by its state of advancement and found guilty by that measurement alone.

One of the Neoplatonic philosophers, the mystic philosophers before the Renaissance of the Middle Ages, declared that people have been given will only so that they may choose the right course of action and so that they may follow what they understand to be right and to be good. They are found to be guilty only when they direct that will in opposition to understanding what is good and what is wrong. So,

when we approach the mystical life and begin with humanity, we look upon all things as Divine because they emanate from the same source, and no being is unholy unless we are in a position to point out that they have directed their will in opposition to what they know to be best and proper.

According to Islamic mysticism, or the mysticism of the Muslims—which, incidentally, is a highly organized and inspiring system of instruction—there are three stages of the mystical life. Certain aspects are veiled in the beginning and in the middle. In the beginning period, external things, the things of the world and temporal interests, so occupy the consciousness, according to Islamic mysticism, that the inner sense, or the Divine, is veiled from consciousness. People then have little concern for the spiritual values of the Divine impulses.

In the middle period of existence, a transition occurs. The world becomes veiled because people have a sudden awakening. They have a realization of their spiritual nature, and they take such a delight in it that they adjust their whole thought and living in accordance with this newfound and newly realized experience. They are inclined to neglect practical living, the realities of the everyday world, and so the veil again comes before their consciousness. This middle period of the mystical life is called the period of intoxication by the Islamic mystics. It is a period of spiritual ecstasies, an *afflatus*, when the consciousness takes wing and transcends all worldly interests sometimes to the detriment of its welfare.

In the final stage of the Islamic mystical life, the created things or the things of the world no longer veil the Divine from the consciousness of the mystic who is quite aware of the nature of the Divine. However, the mystic's realization of the Divine no longer veils their consciousness of worldly things. The Divine is seen as the creator, and the universe is seen as created things. In other words, in the final stage of the mystic's life, a balance is struck and people have an equal appreciation of the law and the manifestation of the law. This final stage is appropriately called sobriety by Islamic mystics. It is the soberness of understanding and the temperance of understanding. It is neither the extreme objective consciousness nor the extreme of Divine Consciousness.

Traditional mysticism may be reduced to the fundamental principles that the soul is the spiritual self of a person, and the soul is part of a universal soul which permeates the entire universe. That soul is the Supreme Being. The material world and the physical body are the negative side of this positive, absolute soul, or Deity, which permeates the universe—a sort of imperfection, a falling off from the goodness. When the soul is embodied in a physical form or body, the unity of both the soul and body of a person is not perfect. The body, the material, must be brought into harmony with the soul, the immaterial. A person will be confined to a body, in various lives, as long as they permit the temptations, the desires, and the appetites to dominate their nature. They must struggle to overcome them, to suppress them, to give themselves over entirely to those spiritual urges within their own nature. These urges are the dictates of conscience which find expression in ethical, moral, and religious conduct.

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

A study and an examination into this material mundane world is advocated so that people may try within their limited power to regulate it and to prevent it from controlling or dominating them. Mysticism advocates intensive study and learning so that people may know the relationship of this mundane, material, imperfect phase to the perfect absolute or Supreme Being. Thus, modern mysticism declares that there is a duality of the universe in effect but that, in essence, it is one. All things are of that one although there are stages of its perfection. The material world and its manifestations are not considered as perfect as the spiritual world, yet they are of it. The duality enters into the conception by declaring, on the one hand, that the soul, a part of the

absolute whole, is good and that all else in contrast, even though of it, is by graduated degrees less perfect.

It behooves the individual who declares himself to be a student of modern mysticism and an aspirant to the mystical life to make a very thorough study of such terms and subjects as the absolute, spiritual, being, material realm, free agency, and the scientific attitude of mind. These fundamentals and a few more like them are the foundation stones of an individual's philosophy if they purport to be a mystical philosopher. Those who have a thorough knowledge of these fundamentals will not find it difficult to assemble and reassemble them into a system that will help them to reach their goal in a rational manner. That goal we presume to be the inner satisfaction and attunement which the real mystics declared constituted a sense of the Divine.

Chapter II

THE DIVINE CONCEPT

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

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

We find that the splendor attributed to the Divine by present-day theology surpasses in many respects that of the past ages. Further, we find that the Divine's accomplishments of today are manifold in comparison to those ascribed to It in other eras. At one time, the Divine possessed a multiplicity of forms, but most people now think of a single entity and even an impersonal intelligence pervading all. It is, however, declared fervently by modern creeds and sects that the

Divine of yesterday, today, and tomorrow is the same. They declare that the Divine is the only unchangeable factor in a universe of change. If the Divine is unchangeable, perfect, and a supreme excellence, how can the religionists reconcile that with the obvious differences of nature ascribed by all who recognize It? Obviously, all conceptions cannot be right. Some must be erroneous.

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

Most often, someone's spiritual ideal, like the moral code which they graciously accept, is an inheritance. The Deity of their parents and of their parents' parents becomes the blessed guardian of the virtues of a higher life. Much of the intolerance and bigotry that may encompass the faith of one's forebears may also be accepted. Some people resent the questioning of any of the doctrines of their faith or their interpretation of the Deity they have accepted. It is not because they have come to know that Deity and, with infinite contact, have experienced what they previously only believed. It is merely because it affects their pride and their human ego, and challenges their judgment or the judgment of their kin .

Some people seem to have become smug members of religionism. Unquestionably, one might say, they have accepted a prescribed faith, one that has been prepared for them. They do not accept a Deity because they have come to know It but, rather, because It has been prepared for acceptance by someone else. They are content to feel satisfied and assured in the righteous selection of their faith even

when a neighbor may differ on every doctrine of religious belief. A neighbor may be an adherent of a faith as recognized and as established as their own but as different as daylight from darkness. The incongruity troubles them not at all. The insistent claimants of the different faiths do not disturb them or cause them to realize that there can be but one Deity and not the varied Deities of many religions.

The Divine is not a personal experience for some people but, rather, a magnificent picture or ideal that has been transplanted into their consciousness. It has not been born from a personal germ of thought, a spiritual perception, or from aspiration. To such an individual, the Divine is not a guide or Infinite Master that one may call a companion but just a stabilizing force. The concept of the Divine is merely a means of keeping them walking the straight path of society. It can be changed as often as they wish. As long as it serves their purpose, they are content to go to their graves with no further intimate contact with the Divine that they took to themselves.

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

People can never know the Divine from without, no matter how alluring and magnificent may be the description given, if they lack a responsivity to a spiritual urge within themselves. They cannot accept the Divine defined by another if the description does not invoke a

sympathetic appreciation within them. The eyes of an artist and of a physicist may view the same dawn, but the idea engendered in the consciousness of each is different. One appreciates the mechanics of what they see, the physical law accounting for the phenomena; and the artist feels the harmony of the color, its balance, its proportion, and the exhilaration of true beauty which actuates the sensitivity of their soul. Each could comprehend the idea of what the other perceives, but neither would have the same emotional feeling toward that idea as they would for their own.

To every person who is a theist, the Divine is the summum bonum, and they instinctively endeavor to pattern their life in accordance with this Divine good they see in life and in human conduct. This is religion's greatest duty—defining what constitutes the good in human action and in all things perceived by humanity. Because of this, religion could easily be unified; but when it attempts to limit the Divine to form and to describe Its nature, confusion arises. Then there are those who come into being and who are said to be atheists.

Religion has called the Divine the First Cause or the equivalent in all languages. However, it is the varying characteristics which religion has attributed to the Divine at different times, as we have stated, which have brought about the confusion as to Its nature.

Let us assume that religion is right and that the Divine is the First Cause. Do the things that follow from the Cause do so by intent or by necessity? If the Cause is intentional or purposeful, it must be of the mind. The only comparison we have for conscious causes is ourselves.

If the Divine is an intentional cause or mind, it would be necessary to have certain characteristics similar to those of the human mind. The Divine would have the faculty of perception and, thereby, would perceive the present existence. Further, the Divine would have to imagine an insufficiency that was to be overcome or a needed perfection. Thus, this First Cause, if intentional, would set for Itself certain ends to be attained just as does the human mind. The religionists who reason thus have engendered for themselves certain ontological problems. They are in effect saying, "The Divine is the primary substance in which all things are said to have their existence, and yet such things are also said to be the fulfillment of Its purpose."

It would appear that at some time the things of the Divine's intent were not of Its substance. Obviously, something which already is would have no need to become. Did the Divine realize that It was incomplete or imperfect and that It would need to conceive a plan and become purposeful in order to overcome such conditions? To accept such reasoning would mean that the Divine purposes or ends which the Divine sought were more complete at one time than Its own being. Further, if the Divine had conceived the lack of something, from whence would it come if it were not already in the Divine substance? To answer this by saying that the Divine evolved the ends that were realized from Its own nature is equivalent to saying that the Divine was imperfect and was evolving toward perfection. When religion offers such reasoning, what assurances do mortals have that the Divine is still not merely evolving toward perfection and that, therefore, the Divine is now imperfect?

To meet the ontological problems, religion developed a dualism. The Divine is one aspect of this dualism and is absolute, perfect, and complete. The Divine is conceived as a mind and is all-wise. The other aspect is the world—namely, all beings other than the Divine which, as mind, acts upon this mass. The Divine evolves and creates in It that which serves Its own will. By this ratiocination, religion has not solved the problems it faced; rather, it has created another tremendous breach in its arguments.

“The Divine has created being,” religion says. Thus, the Divine has created something less perfect than Itself. Though this being must be of the Divine, yet religion will not admit that matter and the things of which our existence consist are Divine substances.

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

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

If the Divine is Mind, and therefore causative, how is matter to be explained? If the Divine Mind created the gross substances which people perceive and have named matter, from what did this Mind create them? Since the Divine Mind is all-being, limitless, and all-inclusive to the mystic, there could have been no other substance from which it could create physical properties, matter, and even souls.

A belief that the physical world and material substance was generated out of a state of nothing is inconsistent with the nature of the Divine to a mystic. Since the Divine is everything to a mystic, there could not be any condition or negative state of nothing which would exist concomitantly with or beyond the Divine. If something can be created out of nothing, then nothing is something. If anything else existed, then that would limit the nature of the Divine, for at least the Divine would not be that thing.

The phenomena which people recognize as matter, and which science demonstrates as having existence, must have come from the nature of the Divine, this Divine Mind. If it came from Divinity, it never was really created for it always would have been. If this Divine Mind constitutes all of the realities in the universe, in other words, All-Being, it must always have been. There could not have been any beginning for the Divine Mind because where would it have come from? Since the Divine Mind is eternal, then that which is of its nature, or the substances which flow from it, are likewise eternal—physical realities, for example.

To the mystic, the Divine Mind did not create Earth, the worlds beyond, and all of the material particulars of which we have knowledge. Their essence, the radiations and energies of which they are composed, are of the nature of this Divine Intelligence and have always been so. They change, yes, just as mind itself is ever active in the changing of consciousness.

The true mystic is very definitely a pantheist; namely, to the mystic the Divine is in everything, everywhere. To the mystic, the stone, the tree, the bolt of lightning, as well as people themselves, are the Divine. These things are not creations of the Divine, they are of the nature of the Divine—the Divine Mind. To the mystic, this simplifies one of the greatest theological and philosophical problems of the centuries which is trying to reconcile the spiritual with the temporal. Since all things are of the Divine Mind, there is not the difficulty of trying to show a relationship between two conditions which are ordinarily conceived as diametrically opposed. As an analogy, darkness is not a positive state, such as is light, it is only a lesser manifestation of light.

Does the mystic have the same adoration for a tree and a mountain, for example, as an orthodox religionist would have for their deity? The mystic replies to such a query by asking, “And where is the Divine?”

Since the Divine or the Divine Mind, to the mystic, is ubiquitous, pervades everything, and is everywhere, It exists in all things of which the mystic is conscious. Each thing which manifests itself does so by virtue of the intelligence of the Divine, and that intelligence constitutes the properties of the thing that humanity perceives. The mystic does not see the Divine as remote in a legendary region, or within the confines of a temple or a cathedral, or off in a corner of the universe but, rather, in each breath which is taken into their lungs, in each sunset, and in each leafy bower.

There is a distinction in that each particular which the mystic perceives is not all of the Divine Mind but, rather, just one of an infinite variety of its expressions. Consequently, the mystic is not in that land of a pantheist who is a nature worshiper. Since, to the mystic, the Divine Mind pervades all, no one thing depicts all of the Divine nature. Just as the personality and abilities of a great person cannot be known by

any single one of their accomplishments, the Divine Mind, even so, cannot be conceived by a study of any one of its myriad phenomena. Since the Divine Mind is all-inclusive, the mystic realizes that their devotion must also be all-embracing. Each thing of nature which a person discovers, the mystic reveres as one member or one finite part of the infinite Divine Being and, therefore, devotes spiritual love to no one thing or substance. Conversely, nothing, no matter how mean its effects upon the mystic's well-being, is to be considered entirely outside the bounds of the Divine Being.

The mystics of old thought the Divine was unknown for two reasons. First, the intelligence of people was so inferior that it was not possible for them to comprehend the Divine in Its entirety or to really know It in any sense of the word. Thus, the mystic contended that a person should not attempt to use the brain of the mortal body to reason as to the nature of the Divine or try to define It and state what It is or is not because that would presume that the consciousness of a person is capable of embracing the idea of the Divine. Second, it was contended that people must transcend, even rise above, the use of the intellect because the intellect is of the body. If people even presume to say that there is a Divinity, they imply that intellectually they have some knowledge of the existence of It.

The mystic stated that we must give up entirely any attempt to know the Divine by reason or intellect. Rather, people must enter into a state of contemplation and meditation where they will free their minds of any conception as to whether the Divine is or is not. They must permit themselves to be absorbed into the absolute—that is, into the very nature of the Divine. When they are absorbed into the nature of the Divine, they will have a feeling of serenity and peace, and that alone is the only divine reality by which they will come to feel the Divine and will approach It. When we say that a person must enter a state of contemplation and permit himself to be absorbed, we are confronted with the problem of this self. What is self? What is its connection with soul? This we must now consider.

Chapter III

SELF AND SOUL

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

The first classification consists of those realities, objects, and events which people can perceive by means of their sense receptor faculties; namely, their eyes, ears, et cetera. Obviously, such realities, so far as our consciousness of them is concerned, have a dependence upon our physical organisms such as our nervous systems and brains.

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

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

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

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

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

It has been proved that when you remove the brain or completely inhibit its functioning, you have not destroyed the elements of self

which pervade humans but merely the means by which we exist to ourselves. Without the brain, the function of self in a person would be much like the simple consciousness which exists in a blade of grass. The intelligence associated with the life force in each cell of our being would function, but there would be nothing in which it would be mirrored. As the brain reflects externalities and existences that are outside of us, it likewise reflects the world within, namely, self. The introversion of this consciousness of the brain, its response to the inner sensitivity, is what is commonly referred to as its subconscious functioning.

To the mystic, consciousness or the state of awareness is existence. To an individual, that which they are conscious of is. All the powers which a human is capable of exerting—whether physical, mental, or psychical— can be related only to that of which they have knowledge, that which is real to them. For an analogy, if there is more than one target in target-shooting, a choice may be made as to which one to shoot at. If but one target can be perceived, then that becomes the object of the participant's efforts and whole attention.

The mystic knows that the realities of their consciousness are dual: those things, or particulars, which have an objective existence such as the body and the external world; and those realities of consciousness that are inner perceptions that arise from deep within them such as emotions, moods, and inspirations. These latter may become an impetus which will cause them to have objective experiences, but their origin seems confined to the ethereal nature of their being.

To the mystic, the only separation that exists is the duality of their consciousness, the inclination to make a distinction between the realities of self and those of the objective world. Actually, the mystic understands that all these realities are part of one great hierarchal order, a graduated scale. The gradation is according to the simplicity or complexity of their nature. The more complex the realities, the greater is their manifestation of the one universal intelligence—in other words, the more they represent the entire hierarchal or Cosmic order.

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

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

Since the causes of the sensations of self are quite intangible, are not identified with substance, and cannot be actually localized in the human body, they have always been most mysterious to people. Further, we cannot commonly experience sensations independently of the body. The body, however, at transition continues as a substance for an indeterminate time before disintegration and, apparently, without these elements of self.

Early observers were led to believe in the duality of a person's nature. The body fell within the same category as all other reality that may be physically experienced as matter. How, then, were the intangible elements of our beings to be identified? The conclusion was that they must transcend the world because of their inability to be experienced as of the world. These elements were held to be of Divine nature because of their seeming infinity and immateriality. The soul, therefore, became the repository for all of these indeterminate qualities of humanity—the ancient Greek word for soul being psyche.

The idea of the soul gave expression to the spiritual life of a person. When the soul's subtle influences and its strange effect upon them as their better nature was realized, a person's spiritual life changed accordingly. They tried to live in harmony with the feelings of the soul and with their comprehension of what they thought it was.

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

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

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

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

After a lapse of about two thousand years, we find a tremendous step forward in the conceptions of the soul, of the Divine, and of the future life of the soul. During the Eighteenth Dynasty of ancient Egypt from about 1550 to 1300 BCE, we find the Egyptians definitely recognizing

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

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

Christianity does not recognize the perfection of the soul. This may be a point of controversy, but the controversy merely arises out of the differences of interpretation. A person's soul, to the Christian, is imperfect until it has been purified—until it goes through the process of salvation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter IV

LOVE AND DESIRE

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

Loves are of various kinds. In Sufism, a form of Muslim mysticism, the Divine's love is said to be expressed in a person's love of the Divine. It was the Divine, according to Sufism, that made it possible for a person to love the Divine. So, when a person expresses love for the Divine, the Divine is really loving Itself. When a person denies love for the Divine, they are restricting the nature of the Divine, and Sufism holds Divine love to be the most exalted.

Dhul Nun, Muslim mystic, asked what pure love is—love free from depletion. Then he replied to his own question for the enlightenment of his disciples. He said that it is love of the Divine because the love of the Divine is so absorbing that no other love can compete with it or detract from it. He further said that this love of the Divine, pure love, is a disinterested one. By that, he meant that it is not affected by benefits which may accrue from it. In other words, one who has this pure love will not love the Divine any more because of what may flow to them

as a result of it, nor will they love the Divine any less because It would require them to make sacrifices to love It.

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

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

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

Al-Ghazali concludes with, "Where beauty exists, it is natural to love." If the Divine is beautiful, most certainly It will be loved by all of those to whom It is revealed and, the more beautiful a thing, the more it is loved.

Plotinus, father of Neoplatonism who contributed much to the world's mystical doctrines, also declared that there are different loves. There is, for example, the love of creation as a craftsman's love of their work, the love of a cabinetmaker for their work, or of a goldsmith for the fruits of their art, or of a student for their studies. The highest love, said Plotinus, is the hierarchal love. That is the love of the Universal

Soul within us for the Absolute, for the oneness of which it is always a part.

For the moment, let us accept the previous esthetic and Eastern mystical viewpoint of love; namely, that it is an impelling urge of the spiritual nature of a person to satisfy the purposes of the soul. Do we find in the compound nature of people any parallels to love? In other words, do we find any other urges to gratify the nature of a person?

Someone's physical nature is one aspect of their generally accepted triune being. There are factors which are essential to it such as food, drink, shelter, and sleep. If their physical nature is to perpetuate their kind, there is as well the factor of procreation. These things are ends, shall we say, which the physical being must attain to remain what it is. When these things are possessed, a harmonium or a state of balance is temporarily enjoyed. When there is a deficiency of them, there is an unbalance. The plenitude or fullness of a person's physical nature is its normal state. This normalcy is accompanied by the sensation of gratification, a kind of pleasure which we know as happiness. When there is a deficiency, a lack of that upon which someone's physical being depends, we become conscious of an irritability or of a lack of harmony. This inharmony engenders desire.

Fortunately, ideals accompany physical desires and the realization of what is required to satisfy them. An animal realizes those things in their experiences—namely, what they see and hear—which will satisfy their hunger or thirst or passions. Among the lower animals, this realization appears to be an unconscious response. The smell of food is subjectively associated with the desire for it, and the animal seizes their prey.

In humans, that which will satisfy physical desire is consciously realized. In other words, we know what we want as well as that we want it. Our desires are, then, not as general as are those of most animals. They are more specific. We know of things or conditions which we are certain will remove or gratify our desires. That which we conceive of as beneficial to our needs is the good. Moreover, anything which is capable of producing pleasant sensations, those which harmonize with

the nature of our physical being, becomes sought after. Such things or experiences become our ideals.

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

Desire is the urge to find the beautiful or its equivalent. It is the seeking out of that thing or condition which will satisfy that nature which the desire serves. No one has ever had a desire for that which was not beautiful, namely, for that which did not represent a pleasant experience to them in some form or another. If a desire was not for that which would appease a person, they would remain unsatisfied and physically would become abnormal and would, accordingly, suffer.

Ever since people have speculated upon their own complex beings, they have most frequently considered themselves to be of three natures: first, physical; second, intellectual or mental; and third, spiritual. However, they have often united the first two as one nature. The three natures constitute the hierarchy of the human being. All three blend into each other, and yet they have distinctive characteristics. After all, if these three natures are in any way related, each in turn from the highest downward must need to exercise some influence on the other. They could not be absolutely separate. The lowest or physical has its ideals as well as any of the others. The ideals of the physical are those which, as we have stated, the senses experience as pleasurable and which satisfy the desires of the body. The body must marry its ideals. In other words,

the body must be wedded to those things which are beautiful in the sense in which we have used beauty in order to gratify the appetites and the passions. If it does not, the body becomes deformed and imperfect.

The desires of the body are, thus, the loves of the body. To practice self-abnegation, to suppress the loves of the body, is to corrupt one of the natures of one's triune being. Such loves are essential to the physical. They assist it to be wedded to that ideal which will maintain the harmony of its essence.

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

There are also the intellectual loves, the desires of the mind—the active intelligence—which can establish ends and aspire to purposes. These aspirations are mental ideals. The mind seeks to bring them into reality, to objectify and to realize them, just as the sculptor brings forth a statue so that they can objectively experience the idea he has in mind.

The intellectual love is far greater than the bodily one. Its ideals are far more numerous. Each such intellectual ideal, though it satisfies the intellectual love in part, impels the love to create still greater ones which bring increasing intellectual satisfaction. Whereas physical love, if indulged too frequently, may become satiated, intellectual loves ever increase the enjoyment they provide the mind of a person. The ideals of the intellectual natures of people are knowledge and accomplishment. The intellect must become married to these ideals if it is to experience normalcy, regardless of what loves and gratifications a person may have physically.

Next, we consider the highest nature of people—the spiritual—interpreting that nature in whatever way we wish. Must we think of spiritual love as being, in essence, extremely different from other loves only because it seems more impersonal; that is, because it serves a greater self? Is not a person's love for the Divine also a desire—a desire having a higher or more exalted end? It is a desire which is intended to keep the spiritual nature of a person gratified. Plotinus, the great Neoplatonic philosopher and expounder of mysticism, said, "Love leads all things to the nature of the beautiful."

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

No one love of which a person is capable is, therefore, unworthy or to be suppressed. Each love—those of the body, the mind, and of the soul—must be wedded to its respective nature. Such is mystically the marriage of the trinity or the marriages of a person's triune nature. Each marriage is within its own caste or class. Difficulty is experienced only when one nature loves the ideal of another. When someone dissipates their spiritual or intellectual loves, neglects them for those of the body, the result is degeneration and unhappiness. Spinoza has said, "The love of the Divine should be a love of the immutable and eternal... not stained by any defect inherent in common love... this love of the Divine for the unchangeable and eternal takes possession of our minds without arousing emotions of fear, anxiety, hate, et cetera."

A love of the Divine is a love of that which never ends and which has no diminishing nature. It is the love of something that cannot be stolen and of which no one can be envious, so it is a love that is free of the emotions that accompany the loves of the body. "This intellectual love of the mind toward the Divine is the very love of the Divine with which the Divine loves Itself." In this, we see that the Divine's love

is manifested in a person's soul as their desire to love the Divine, to understand It, and to be absorbed into Its nature. It is like a rubber band stretched between two points. Each point, or each end of the band, seeks to return to the center and more so when the other is pulled away.

Sufi mystic al-Hallaj said, "Before creation, the Divine loved Itself in absolute unity. Through love, It revealed Itself to Itself alone. Then desiring to behold the love—in aloneness—the love without duality and as an external object, the Divine brought forth from nonexistence an image of Itself and endowed it with all of Its attributes. This image is humankind."

Briefly put, our love for the Divine is the Divine's love objectively reduced to a lesser state—just as a reflection in a mirror is less real than the object.

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

What do the Rosicrucians say of love? From one viewpoint, a rational approach to love is necessary. They realize, of course, that love is not merely an intellectual experience. On the other hand, they also realize that it is essential to understand the causes of love so that the most lasting effect can be produced. They say, first, that basically all love is desire. It is a yearning, or an appetite if you will, for that which brings us pleasure. No one has ever loved that which brings pain, suffering, misfortune, or torment. Consequently, Rosicrucians contend that love is the desire for harmony. However, love of that which would be harmonious only to the physical senses would leave certain

other loves unrequited. The love of the intellect for the realization of its ideals would be neglected. The love of the emotional self would be forgotten, leaving it torn with fears perhaps. The love of the spiritual self to express its sentiments psychically would also be submerged if we were to concentrate on a love which brings harmony to the physical senses alone.

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

Chapter V

LIVING FULLY

EPICTETUS, IN HIS *Discourses*, states, “Life is indifferent.” But he also asserts that the use of life is not an indifference. This may be interpreted to mean that life fulfills its function of generation and of the development of living things indifferently insofar as the individual is concerned.

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

It is also a law of life, we are told in philosophical literature, to copy what follows from nature; that is, to pattern ourselves after it. If we desire every act and every circumstance of our living to conform to nature, it is incumbent upon us to observe nature in her many moods and aspects.

We may construe this to mean that nothing exists outside the pale of nature.

As we have been often told, there is nothing new under the sun. Everything has its form or its cause rooted deeply in the laws of nature. Consequently, it behooves us, if we are to follow the laws of life, to tie fast to nature the elements of our imagination and our plans. The more, in fact, we inquire into the phenomena of nature about and in us, the more doors leading to the fullness of life will be unlocked. We can see this demonstrated about us. Every modern invention has its parallel in some existing phenomenon of nature. The camera with its lens, iris, and even its film corresponds to the human eye. The phone's receiver may be likened unto the human ear, which has a diaphragm and impulses which are carried from it. The most delicate electrical system corresponds to the sympathetic and spinal nervous systems. So, if we wish to expand our living, let us follow nature.

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

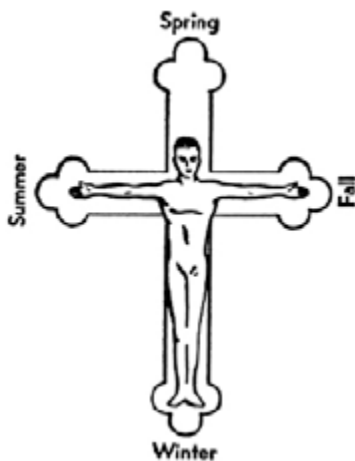
Pythagoras compared life to the great games such as the Olympian games that were played in Athens. He said some went to the games to compete for prizes; others went there just to sell their wares as vendors; but, best of all, were those who became spectators of the games.

The spectator of life is one who has a philosophical attitude. They don't presume that life has any single value to any person. They believe there are a variety of values and, consequently, they are always alert to many experiences, and they participate in as many as they possibly can. Gems are buried in those varied experiences—the gems which form the diadem of happiness.

Pythagoras divided life into four quarters with each being of twenty years. The first quarter is the boyhood period; the second quarter is youth;

the third quarter is adulthood; and the fourth quarter is maturity. These four quarters correspond to the four seasons of the year: namely, boyhood to spring; youth to summer; adulthood to autumn; and maturity to the season of winter.

Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa, born September 14, 1486, was a great occultist, mystic, and philosopher. In his renowned work, *The Magic Mirror*, he also divides life into four quarters. The first quarter, he relates, is from the first to the twenty-first year of existence. It is the spring season of life and represents youth, love, and growth. The second quarter is from the age of twenty-two to forty-two. It is the summer period, and it represents mind, intellect, maturity of thought, adulthood, and fruitage or accomplishment. The third quarter, covering the years from forty-three to sixty-three, is the fall season of life that he depicts as comprising wealth, physical and mental maturity, and karma. The fourth and last, or winter season, includes the years from sixty-four to eighty-four and is the time of the passover or the preparation for transition. Each of these quarters of life, Agrippa stated, begins with the vernal equinox, the spring period, and each of the quarters of life ends at the winter solstice, which is usually on December 21.



Agrippa also related that a person has three equal points in their life. In other words, there are three periods within life, and he referred to them as being primary initiations which we must pass through during our life period. The first begins after our physical birth, the first spring

quarter of our life from one to twenty-one years of age. The second period, or initiation, comes at forty-eight years of age when we have crossed the meridian of life or the zenith of our life's period. The third period, or initiation, is when we enter into the winter season of our lives, the sunset and the closing quarter. Agrippa states that the upright body of the cross symbolizes these quarters of life. For example, the upper point of the cross symbolizes the spring season of life; the left arm of the cross represents the fall quarter; the right arm of the cross, the summer season; and the base of the cross is the winter season or the close of life.

Most interestingly, Agrippa analyzes the value of the seasons or quarters of life and what a person is expected to do in order to utilize them intelligently. By the time one has attained twenty-one years of age and has completed the spring season of life, they should then have received the tools for their future. These tools may be the trade or profession in which they should be trained or prepared, or they may consist of the accumulated experiences of others which were expounded to them by preceptors in schools or universities.

The summer season of a life, the middle period, is the time for mental and physical activity. It is a time to produce; namely, to create and manifest the ideals which should have been established during the spring season of life. If our products and our achievements during this summer season are not the best, it is probably due, says Agrippa, to our desultory living and to our neglect in preparing ourselves during the spring season of our lives.

Agrippa states that the winter season, or the sunset years, is the time when a person calls a halt to their labors. It is the time to reap the benefits, if any, from what has preceded. He states that this is the time when people strike a karmic balance. He does not mean that is a time when we must compensate for what has occurred in previous incarnations but, rather, that it is the time we should begin to enjoy the results of thoughtful planning or living or when we should experience the results of careless living and wasted years.

What do the Rosicrucians say of life? They say that life—physical existence insofar as humanity is concerned— is for a very definite

purpose. We are permitted to experience it so that we may learn the laws of existence—our own and those of other things. This is accomplished through our combating the forces of nature which are around us.

Only as we face opposition, only as we place ourselves where we are exposed fully to the laws and phenomena of the universe, are all of our faculties and all of our powers drawn upon. One who excludes themselves from the world, one who becomes an anchorite or a hermit, fails to utilize all of that of which they are capable and, consequently, they learn little of the laws of existence. For an analogy, we are given eyes to perceive that substance and matter visually which might destroy us and crush us out of existence if we could not perceive it. In fact, all of our objective senses—seeing, feeling, tasting, and so forth—are given us because our existence is in those dimensions where we need these senses to cope with other substances or other masses such as ourselves. To live in accordance with those laws, those physical properties which have given us being, we must use the senses by which they can be discerned.

We have been given an emotional nature beside our peripheral senses. This has been conferred upon us for the purpose of evaluating the relationship of things to ourselves so we may establish such notions as good and evil, order and disorder, et cetera. Each thing lives fully only to the extent that it expresses all of those functions of which it is capable. A deer that does not run, or a rooster that does not crow, is not living fully according to those functions which it has. They are not true to the cause of their existence. Likewise, a person who does not exercise their reason or who does not employ their emotional and psychic faculties and powers is not living as a human. They are neglecting that of which they are capable. In other words, they are opposing the very order of their existence. They can come to know only ennui by such living.

The Rosicrucian conception of proper living is, first, to departmentalize one's being and then to determine what are the principal elements or factors of which we are composed. This is not difficult. You recognize your physical and material being. You know that if you neglect your body, the physical side of yourself, you are closing a door on a part, an important part, of the complexity of your nature. Again, you recognize

that you have an intellectual part to yourself and that you have such faculties as reason, cogitation, and imagination. If you neglect them, then another part of your being is deteriorating and atrophying from disuse. If you neglect any part of your being, it is like blindfolding one of your eyes. The function of your vision becomes limited. Therefore, your conscious existence may become distorted.

Chapter VI

LIGHT AND ILLUMINATION

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

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

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

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

In the Book of Genesis (1:3) in the Old Testament, the Divine said, “Let there be light.” Then, we are told that the Divine divided light from darkness. This very definitely indicates that darkness and light were considered by ancient Jewish people as separate creations. It also indicates that the light of day was considered a physical condition and was referred to in that sense. The Greater Light with its mystical and allegorical significance was not included in this reference because later (Genesis 1:14) we are told that the Divine said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky,” and this referred to the stars and the moon which were the lesser light. It concerned physical light and was not a metaphor or an allegory.

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

It is often said that those who search for knowledge and for learning are dwellers in light. It naturally follows that light is commonly held to be synonymous with learning and knowledge. In fact, there are a number of fraternal organizations today who oblige their candidates or

applicants for membership to state in their applications that they are searching for light before they can be admitted. That means they are searching for knowledge and for further learning.

The mystics of old had a far different conception of light. To them, light did not mean merely knowledge and learning. The mystics and the Rosicrucians of today also distinguish between light and illumination. The distinction is a fine one but worthy of our comprehension.

Our eyes may be open and our vision good, and we may see things which we have never seen before; consequently, we have knowledge of their existence. Yet, having seen these things and knowing that they exist, they may seem without purpose to us. We are still puzzled, still in doubt about them and, therefore, our visual experience has little value to us. For example, we may be shown a large and complicated piece of machinery or laboratory apparatus. Our vision of it is quite clear. We can describe what we see, as well as the person who has pointed out the machinery to us, and yet it is still puzzling and confusing. We may, therefore, have perceptual light—an accumulation of facts—and yet remain very much mentally in the dark. Consequently, to the mystics, illumination means understanding.

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

In the Rosicrucian studies, it is said that illumination follows a period of meditation. This meditation is a deliberation upon the knowledge which the Rosicrucian student has acquired from the degrees of their study. Consequently, it proves that illumination is understanding, and that it is something which must follow knowledge. One of the Rosicrucian degrees is known as the Illuminati. It means that a student's consciousness, the various aspects of their consciousness, should be imbued with an understanding of that which they have studied. We, therefore, should make profound comprehension our goal in life, not just a greater fount of knowledge or a greater accumulation of external things and facts. To the mystic, light always means illumination.

Chapter VII

TRANSITION—THE LAW OF CHANGE

THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHER Epicurus stated, why should people concern themselves so much about bodily death and fear it, for by so doing, they presume to know the nature of death, or the circumstances which surround the transition from life to death? Since people do not know these things, they should not dread going through transition and should not live in fear of it. They should not attempt to anticipate the unknown. When the end, the unknown, comes to us, it is then the *known*, and a thing that is known is never feared.

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

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

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

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

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

Just prior to the last breath on the occasion of transition, the psychic body projects itself. That is, it seems to extend a few feet from the

physical body. It is not liberated. It still is bound to the physical body by the silver cord which is a traditional mystical term for that essence of the psychic body which remains attached to the living physical body. The greatest essence of the psychic body at such a time can be sensed or rather, I should say, perceived as a cloud or haze. Sometimes, it is in the form of an oval with a silver cord that is seen to descend as a kind of spiral or vapor. The smallest end of the spiral appears to enter the body at the solar plexus.

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

Chapter VIII

CAUSALITY AND KARMA

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

The second way which Leibniz set forth for how two clocks could keep time together would be to have a skilled person regulate the clocks from minute to minute. In other words, they would make continual adjustments so that the clocks would always correspond in time. This second example is the equivalent of the belief that the Divine or the Divine Mind keeps intervening in the affairs of humanity. It is a belief that the Divine is constantly keeping the minds and bodies of people within bounds and is, in other words, adjusting their relationships.

The final way that Leibniz suggested two clocks might keep perfect time together was that each would originally have been made to be accurate. If each had been made skillfully from the beginning and so

constructed to keep accurate time, then each clock in itself would not only keep accurate time but would keep time with all other clocks. By this, Leibniz meant that if the souls and bodies of people each have inherent in them their specific purpose—the reason for their existence—and have that as their end, they need not be concerned with the ends or purposes of each other because such ends would naturally coincide, it being the intention of the Maker of the souls and bodies of people that they should harmonize. There would, therefore, be no reason for them to influence each other, no reason for continual adjustment from hour to hour. In other words, it would not be necessary for the Divine to intervene in order to keep them in bounds.

We might also use the analogy of a team of horses. Each horse of a team might have on blinders. They would not see their mate. But they could see the objective, the direction in which they were going, and would continue in that direction. Thus, though each horse was striving for their own individual ends, the ends would coincide and the horses would be harmoniously pulling together as a team.

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

Let us start with human experience. Things or conditions are occurring continuously. Something exists which did not before, or at least so it seems to us. However, with a little thought, we will agree that a thing itself cannot change its own composition. Something which is a single substance cannot be that substance and, at the same time, be converted into something else because while it is in the process of changing, it would not be that which it was.

Common experience discloses that things do appear to change in themselves. These things which give the appearance of change are

objects which are not a single substance but are really a combination of parts with one part acting upon the other in its nature. That accounts for the apparent change. Consequently, when we speak of causes, we mean some object or event by means of which another object or event comes to occur. An effect is a change produced by a cause in some other thing. Therefore, we presume that there is an orderly succession in the process of change. In other words, a cause must precede the change or effect which it produces.

It must be realized that there cannot be single causes. A thing cannot act upon itself. Nothing can be produced out of itself. If this were not so, things would soon exhaust themselves. A continuous generation out of something would mean that there would eventually be nothing of that left. Furthermore, if a thing could produce entirely out of itself, then such a thing would be absolutely independent in nature. It would have no relationship to anything else, nor a need to have any relationship. Instead of the universe being homogeneous, we would have a heterogeneous one.

The fact remains that we do not know of any truly independent thing in the universe. Everything in human experience points to unity. There can be no entirely self-generated things. We conclude, therefore, that things do not come out of one another but after one another and as related influences upon each other.

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

Everything, then, must have two causes, and the relatively passive cause is as necessary as the active one. If things are equally active in every respect, they may be alike and cannot produce a change or occurrence

for things cannot act upon their own selves if they have no variant quality. Things which are alike in their actions are the equivalent of being the same thing insofar as causal action is concerned.

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

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

Éliphas Lévi, in his works on occultism, also strikes at the erroneous idea often had by people that equilibrium is important in their lives. He says that if two opposing forces are absolutely and invariably equal, such equilibrium constitutes an immobility or an absolute repression of all motion and of all action by which change or development occurs. Such equilibrium would be the negation of life, itself. Movement, Lévi contends, is the alternating preponderance of an impulsion given to one side of a scale or the other with movement being, therefore, the positive and full quality of anything. On the other hand, if we have movement or motion constantly in one direction, we produce monotony or rest

because change is absent. Sameness and changelessness is inactivity. Light must have its variations of darkness—in other words, gradations or diminishing of light or its intensity—or else we would not appreciate the existence of light. If one was born and remained in a room of an intense light, an intensity which would be constant and in which room it would be impossible to produce shadows, they would have no realization of the meaning of light because they would have no experience of the absence of it and, thus, would not know it existed.

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

Everyone finds a kind of satisfaction in their continuous voluntary acts—otherwise, they would not continue such acts. The doer of evil finds pleasure in the things which they do. They do not realize that they are doing evil. They may be told that their conduct is contrary to what society advocates and that society may term it wrong but, as an individual, to them it is not evil. The rules which society has set up are not an intimate experience and not as intimate as the acts which they enjoy. The only way one may really know that their acts are evil is to realize opposite sensations and sentiments from those acts. When they are acquainted with the contrary of their acts, then they are in a position to term some of them as good and others as evil.

The natural principle of cause and effect, and of pitting opposites against each other, has led to important developments. It became the instinctive basis for the first law of compensation practiced in human society. About 2000 BCE, the sixth in line of the Amorite kings ascended to the throne and was known as Hammurabi. He was a genius both in administration and at war. Under his guidance, ancient Babylonia reached the peak of its culture and became one of the greatest cultures of the ancient world. Hammurabi's contributions to the civilization of his period were numerous and left a very definite

influence upon the world. He reorganized the calendar and caused it to conform to the seasons as we know them. He introduced an equitable tax system, a taxation against the rich and poor alike. He permitted the humble citizen to appeal directly to him if that citizen felt that the King's ministers were not dispensing justice on his behalf.

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

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

Five hundred years after the time of Hammurabi, Moses is related to have received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. It is further stated that he spent forty additional days on the mountain where he was given an amplification of the original commandments—an elaboration

on their content. These later laws were not written but were said to have been related verbally to Moses by the Divine, and they came to be a part of what is known as the Oral Law. The Oral Law, as it appears today, has been greatly influenced by modification and fashioning by rabbis throughout the centuries.

The ancient Hebraic laws may be found in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, and they are commonly called the Mosaic Law. They are found to correspond closely to the code of Hammurabi. Perhaps the reason for this is that the Hebrews, having been slaves and prisoners in Babylonia, allowed their experiences with the Hammurabi laws to enter into the fashioning of their interpretation of the Mosaic laws. The fundamental principle of the Mosaic Law, like that of the Hammurabi Code, is that each person must experience the effect of their own acts. For example, in Exodus 21:23-25, we find, "But if any harm follows, then you are to give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth . . . wound for wound . . ."

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

The whole Last Judgment scene depicts the weighing of the human virtues after going through transition when the deceased has reached

the next world. The heart is being weighed against truth to determine how far the acts of the departed, their conduct during their lifetime, fell short of a positive good—namely, of truth and righteousness. Consequently, there before these deities, the deceased is being obliged to experience the judgment of the effects of their acts. It is Thoth, the deity of Wisdom, who decides the degree of goodness or evil of the past life of the deceased.

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

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

The soul must exhaust karma before it may be delivered from the necessity of incarnating, time after time, in physical form on the mortal plane. According to Buddha, incarnations are like the potter’s wheel which receives impulses from the hands of the potter who keeps it spinning. The acts of each incarnation are an imputation which keeps revolving the wheel of rebirth into physical form. When there is no

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

The Buddhist says that karma is fourfold. There is the karma that bears fruit in the present during our mortal existence here; the karma that bears fruit in rebirth in a future life; the karma that bears fruit at no fixed time and may occur in this life or in one of the many subsequent lives; and then there is the bygone karma. Thoughts which produce acts now in our current life result in karma in the next incarnation. If, however, they fail to produce effects, they have become bygone karma which implies that they have been mitigated in some way by subsequent acts.

The Buddhist makes plain that the blame for our deeds is strictly our own. It is strictly a personal responsibility. We cannot transfer the responsibility to others. The Buddhist further contends that there is no escape from our own deeds. The effects must follow the causes into the heavens, into the sea, or into the earth. The Buddhist points out that when we experience evil, we learn to flee from it. This does not mean an escape but, once having known what effects follow from a cause, we learn to avoid such causes.

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

Chapter IX

KARMA IN EFFECT

IN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY, there is little place for the doctrine of karma. In most of Christianity, as in Judaism before it, the Divine is conceived of as a Father and as a supreme, munificent Being. It is held to transcend the world, and yet It is considered to have an influence upon the world. It is thought to seek a theocracy upon Earth—namely, a Divine Kingdom. People are said to be the children of the Divine.

The relationship between humanity and the Divine from the Christian viewpoint is not greatly unlike the relationship which exists between mortal children and their father. Just as mortals do, orthodox Christianity conceives of the Divine as expressing love, hate, and forgiveness. People may violate the Divine Father's wishes, just as mortal children disobey their parents. The Divine Father, orthodox Christianity expounds, can and will punish an erring human. This punishment consists of a personal act. It is purely arbitrary on the part of the Divine. It is not that the individual by their act has evoked an inexorable law.

According to Christianity, a person is but required to love the Divine Father and, in this sincere love, they will find salvation and forgiveness. Thus, according to Christianity, a person's moral acts produce no independent personal effects which may react upon them. The effects of their moral acts, the consequences of them, lie entirely in the arbitrary judgment and love of the Divine. Thus, one may leave in their wake during life, because of the manner in which they lived and their personal conduct, much sorrow and hurt to others. At transition,

if they embrace the Divine if they sincerely ask the Divine Father for forgiveness, they will receive it according to orthodox Christianity. Thus, while others may continue to experience the effects of their acts and continue to endure suffering because of their previous conduct, the instigator of the evil may be forgiven if they embrace the Divine and admit their wrong.

The punishment the evildoer may receive, according to this Christian dogmatic conception, may have entirely no relationship to the original evil act. The individual may be punished in such a manner that they do not experience the serious consequence of their wrongdoing. Good and evil in Christianity become but a series of admonishments, the establishment of ethical and moral rules which one is obliged to adhere to. Rules, as we all too well know, are not always understood by an individual, and they are not adhered to because when there is no understanding, there is no sympathy.

A parent frequently admonishes their child, "Don't do this, and don't do that." But unless the child has some corresponding idea as to why they should not do it, the admonishment becomes merely an irksome restriction which they try to break or surmount. If the child can experience the effect of their acts, then they will know why they are being asked not to so act. This is the reason why Christianity, in not including the doctrine of karma or the experiencing of the effects of one's acts, has such a problem in the enforcement of its moral codes.

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

The law of causality, Rosicrucians teach, in mysticism as in science, permits no deviation. The effects must follow. From mistakes, pain may often be experienced. The pain, however, which may be associated with the result of the act is not an intentional result. It is inevitable.

It follows from the necessity of the cause, but it is not intended as a punishment. It is not a matter of retribution. From such pains, or they may be pleasures, a person learns the consequences of their causative acts. They know what to expect when they put them into effect.

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

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

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

however, we proceed in opposition to the promptings of this barometer of conscience, we then of course experience the effect which may be an unpleasant one and a bitter lesson to learn.

It is a palmary principle of karma that an innocent violation of a Cosmic law, for example, does not exempt the violator from the effect which will follow. However, unconscious acts, or acts of which we honestly do not know the effects, mitigate what would ordinarily be the drastic results that to some degree the effects inexorably follow. All karmic effects are not adverse.

Most people speak of karma only when they speak of effects which are unpleasant. Very seldom do they mention, in the light of karma, circumstances or conditions which are beneficial. There are deeds which also produce beneficial effects. The so-called good luck which many people have and which may seem to be unaccountable, but which seems to descend upon people without reason or justification, may be an accumulated beneficial karma and the result of constructive, unselfish, and virtuous acts in a past time of which the recipients may have no knowledge. We must realize that in the Cosmic, there is no such thing as time. Eternity may be as a tick of a second. Our acts as causes may have their effects projected into the future, and that future may be the next moment, as we think of it, or this day or this year. Or the future may be several subsequent lives from now. Today's experiences, today's good fortune, may be rooted far in the past.

History is a very excellent example of past karmic causes. Society, civilization, puts into motion certain causes by reason of the things which the people do under the influence of their expressed wishes, the laws they enact, or those which they permit their leaders to enact. The effects of such causes may occur several generations later. Most wars which in their origin seem to perplex the average layperson, can be explained by the doctrine of karma. They are a matter of cause and effect. A selfish disregard by a people or a nation of the international situation in general may be one cause. If we let a people of another nation starve merely because within the boundaries which we have inscribed about us there are many natural resources which make us indifferent, or if we set up enormous tariff walls, shutting out a few products which such people need to sell for their sustenance and their

comforts, then by that cause we may experience a karmic effect in years to come. If we let other nations attain a balance of power whereby they oppress people and monopolize that which other peoples need merely because it does not affect us directly, we are also instituting causes which will produce the karmic effects of war. Eventually, there will be conflagration, envy, and hatred. The result of our acts will break forth into flames that will sear us. It is the equivalent of negligently allowing oily rags to collect in a tight closet which, as causes, finally produce the effect of spontaneous combustion.

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

When we experience misfortune, when we encounter adversity, we should not be embittered. We should not try to affix the responsibility on others. We should inquire into the nature of the conditions, of the causes, which may have brought about the misfortune. We need to analyze the effects intelligently for the determination of the cause and, at least with an open mind, accept the effects as a lesson and as possibly teaching tolerance or humility.

As you learn from adversity and accept the lessons without bitterness but as a means of preparing yourself for more enlightened living, you are creating a favorable karmic effect and possibly years of happiness, if not in this life, then in another. Therefore, like that third example of the clocks of Leibniz which keep time together, we realize that the power of adjusting our lives and of adapting them to happiness and attainment is entirely within ourselves. Favorable and unfavorable events principally lie in our own acts as causes which we alone can institute. Each of our acts is a moving positive cause, and it

acts upon the relatively passive and negative factors of our environment such as objects, events, and conditions. In contrast to ourselves, all else is a negative cause. We are the prime movers, the active causes, and the two—ourselves and our environments—produce effects. The effects always partake of the nature of their causes. If we are conscious of this, we will be cautious in acting upon the things and conditions which surround us.

PART TWO

The Technique

Chapter X

ENTERING THE SILENCE

A PHRASE WHICH students of mysticism often use indiscriminately is, “entering the silence.” It is a mistaken idea with many modern students just as it was with ascetics of old—that mortal existence is an evil one. The physical body is considered a shackle and a negation of the spiritual powers. This conception springs from some misguided ancient people who considered the objective faculties as in some way continually conspiring to deceive and debauch the soul of a person. Ultimately, they become so unreasonable in this belief that, not unlike Pyrrho the ancient skeptic, they will not walk from the path of an oncoming vehicle because they believe its appearance is but a trickery of their senses.

A writer on mysticism in the past said that the ascetic is a kind of athlete because they are continually wrestling with their religious beliefs. The ascetic seeks to subjugate all of their physical desires and to oppose worldly appeals to their senses because they are of the opinion that temporal things are in continual conflict with the Divine self, and they wish the latter to be supreme.

By practicing self-mortification and abnegation—namely, a torture of the body by a failure to recognize its needs—an ascetic expects to liberate the spirit. The ascetic, therefore, is wont to be a recluse, to exclude the world, to climb to a mountaintop, or find a cave in the depth of a forest and thereby enjoy a physical silence by which they feel that the spiritual self alone can reign supreme. The early Christian monks were such ascetics. They, too, felt it was necessary for them to depart from the world of people so as to be alone with their souls.

There is no doubt that our physical senses do engender illusions. To a great extent, the entire physical world and all of its reality is an illusion and must remain so. Our empirical conception of it is not what it actually may be. Between our ideas of the physical world and of what the physical world may actually consist lie the sensations and the impressions of it which must be translated and interpreted and which undoubtedly suffer accordingly.

If we are going to be technical, we live in a world of illusions. But we need these illusions in order to exist on this plane. When you discover that something is not what you previously thought it to be, change your interpretations. Don't damn away your objective senses or body as worthless. Furthermore, all enlightenment, even if it is gained mystically, must be translated into material realities, things which can be utilized right here on Earth, or it has no benefit for you. This means that to freely utilize a Cosmic impression, you must harness it to some reality that you can see, hear, feel, or touch objectively. A negating of your physical faculties eventually affects your ability to use them to serve your mystical conceptions.

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

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

hand. A true mystic feels unworthy of an appeal to the universal mind, of entering the silence of the Cosmic for the purpose of soliciting help, if they have first failed to exercise their Divine gifts of reason and the other mental faculties which have been given them at birth.

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

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

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

To summarize, the occult principle of silence is to permit the soul to hear without ears. It is also to permit the soul to speak or commune

THE SANCTURY OF SELF

with people by other means than that of the mouth. It consists of a complete submission of the will to the Cosmic mind, to hear that which the human ear cannot hear, and to speak through the soul rather than through the mortal self.

Chapter XI

MEDITATION

JOHN LOCKE, THE ENGLISH philosopher of the seventeenth century, said in his treatise entitled *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* that understanding, like the eye, sees and perceives all things but takes no notice of itself. He meant that our objective consciousness, our objective mind, is more concerned at all times with discerning things about us, with examining the world in which we live, and considering our relationship to it rather than with analyzing the ego, the self, just by itself.

If we must look into a mirror to see ourselves objectively, physically, it is equally as important to turn this consciousness upon itself, to introvert it, so we can know the sentiments, the feelings, or the urges of the inner or psychic self. This self-analysis, this understanding of the understanding, may be termed the art of meditation, and it is an ancient and truly mystical art.

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

It is important that a distinction be made between concentration and meditation. Many superficial students confuse the two and interchange them. They are thereby neither successful with one nor the other for one cannot think that the right and the left are the same direction and that either one is going the proper way. Psychologically, concentration is the focalizing of the powers of a mind and the sensitivity

of consciousness upon impressions which come to us in a distinct way. Objectively, we are continually allowing our consciousness to vacillate from the impressions and experiences of one sense to another each minute of the day. In other words, we are continually either looking, or listening, or smelling, and so on. Sometimes, we believe we are doing several or all of these things at once. This is only due to our ability to vacillate quickly from one series of impressions to another.

In concentrating upon something objectively, we are exposing but half of ourselves to impressions—half of the consciousness of which we are capable. We are letting ourselves be actuated by only a portion of that which can move our beings. In meditation, we start with a definite idea, something about which we want more illumination and which we want to stand out clearer in the light. But, in meditation, the consciousness is not directed into just one channel alone to attain that illumination.

In meditation, we do not merely look or listen. In fact, in meditation we remain passive and allow all of the inner and outer impressions to collect in our consciousness and enlarge upon the idea which we have. Meditation is a great deal like entering a large assembly hall. We enter for the purpose of witnessing some performance which is to occur there. There are many doors leading to the stage or platform in that assembly hall. The performers may enter through one or they may enter through several of the doors. We do not know through which one they will make their appearance; therefore, we do not concentrate upon any single door. We remain relaxed and wait for them to make their appearance so we may witness with understanding what occurs. These doors leading into the assembly hall we may call the doors of memory—objective experiences, intuition, and the door of Cosmic Consciousness. Meditation, we repeat, is a passive receptive state that is contrary to the dynamic state of concentration where we reach out through one channel in trying to bring something to ourselves.

One prepares for the experiences of meditation by simple but significant rites. The first is the ancient rite of lustration—or purification. Your consciousness must not be dominated at such a time by the recollections of memory. Furthermore, your emotions and appetites must not be permitted to engender mental forms or irrelevant ideas

which will arrest your consciousness and interfere with its ascending into the realm of self. As symbolic of this mental purity, it is best that you first wash your hands and face in plain cold water, and then begin the actual mental purge.

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

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

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

and what the other party had to say. So exclusion is necessary in the art of meditation—it is a condition of privacy.

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

The next step in the art of meditation is to enter the state with some problem or some definite wish in mind, something you hope to accomplish through the communion, or a request that you want to make. You must be sincere in your wish, your request, or your problem. It must be something that you believe you cannot accomplish or find the answer to objectively. It must not be in the light of a challenge because the psychic self, the intelligence of the Divine Mind resident within you, does not have to demonstrate its ability, its power of accomplishment, to your vain objective self. It can and will do miraculous things, but it does not have to prove it to you and, if you adopt the attitude that it does, you will only know failure.

When you call someone, you are not calling just to see whether the phone works or if the person is available. You make a call because you want to establish contact with a person to convey to them an idea or to ask for certain information. Consequently, when you enter into the state of meditation, do so with a like purpose—for the reason of establishing the contact, for the acquisition of worth-while information.

It is not necessary that you speak out loud or make a vocative wish. You can express your desire silently to yourself but equally as forcefully.

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

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

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

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

You may perform these steps in the art of meditation precisely, or to what appears the best of your ability, and yet have no results. Failure may come from a number of things. Particularly, failure in the art of meditation is due to three things. First is doubt. If you are dubious that your profound problem, the serious situation which you are taking to the psychic self, can suddenly or easily be solved by the Divine Mind within you, if you are skeptical that an answer about something to which you have devoted long hours of study and investigation before, without results, can come through such a method, then you will fail.

Second, if you are overanxious, if you are attempting to rush the communion and to direct the inner self in the sense that you want to tell it what to do and how to go about bringing forth the results you want, you will also fail.

Third, if your problem is too involved, if you have not separated it into the integral parts of which it is composed and propounded one part at a time to the psychic self, you will fail. You will be asking for too much at one time.

Presume that you have been successful, and that you have obtained the essential word, idea, or solution from the source of inner knowledge. Now, you must apply the physical attributes of your being. You must use the energy of your healthy body and objective mind to put the inspired idea into action. You must start to do something about it.

You may have taken a problem, a business problem, to the Divine self. The Divine self may have outlined a course of action for you, but you must put it into effect. The two, then—the physical side, the proper maintenance of the body and of the objective mind, and the mystical life and practice—are necessary for the complete science of mystical living.

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

The fact remains that many people are really mystics and have attained such mystical insight by a process similar to what has been expounded here without a realization that they are doing so. In other words, they have not conceived of themselves as being mystics, and they do not realize that they have practiced mystical insight. Frequently, such individuals have gone into solitude. That is, perhaps they retired to a quiet corner of their den or study and relaxed in a favorite easy chair. They have silently and without the formality of a fixed form given thanks for their many benefits though they may have been simple ones. Likewise, they have hoped that in some way they might become an instrument by which the world may be a better place because they have lived. Thus, they have offered themselves in service to humanity. While in such an attitude of mind, and relaxed, they have unconsciously performed the rite of lustration, and they have become attuned with self and the Cosmic. Then they have what to them seems

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a great inspiration, a hunch, a remarkable idea that seems to come out of nowhere. As a result, their hearts sing with joy. They are enthusiastic and jubilant. Their objective mind later becomes very alert and easily materializes the idea. They have experienced true mystical meditation.

Chapter XII

NATURE OF PRAYER

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

If prayer is a petition, there must be something or someone to whom it is directed. Obviously, we do not pray to ourselves; that is, to our own mental or physical being. If we believe that we are intellectually and physically capable of executing a plan or acquiring something, we proceed entirely according to our own initiative. Prayer, therefore, is an admission of an actual or imagined self-insufficiency. This self-insufficiency causes a tendency in the individual to turn outward, to put dependency upon a force, agency, or source which is external to himself. Patently, our conception of this external source determines to a large degree the nature of our prayer.

A primitive being with a polytheistic conception imagines a plurality of deities. To them, such deities may be resident in inanimate things such as rocks, the sea, or storm clouds. Their conceptions of such deities are distinctively productive in fulfilling certain needs of people. Thus, people who believe this have to assess their deities—to one they turn for health, to another for strength, to still another for support against enemies.

When a person seeks to communicate with a power vaster than themselves, they devise various means of gaining the attention of such a deity. For example, when people call upon a human potentate or tribal head, it is necessary to have the potentate disposed to helping them. Consequently, they seek to gain the favor of the potentate by a presentation of gifts, the gifts being whatever is considered to be of value. Sometimes, the approach to the Divine is the attempt to create a favorable environment in which the Divine may receive the petitioner. Thus, theurgical rites of music, song, and dance are used in an attempt to create a favorable environment.

In examining this method of petitioning prayer, two things can be observed. First, there is the belief that the Divine may grant the request if It is sufficiently pleased with the acts of the petitioner. Second, we find there is no question of the motive of the petitioner. There is no concern as to whether the results of the prayer are contrary to natural law or as to whether they may work an injustice upon other mortals. The psychology in such instances is very crude. It is, in reality, conferring an anthropomorphic nature upon the Divine. The Divine is conceived of as being like mortals, possessed of vanity, easily gratified by gifts, homage, and ostentation. It is further thought of as being capable of dispensing gifts or conferring powers just as some earthly absolute king, without regard to reason or justice. Consequently, the belief is that each person can obtain whatever they wish from the Divine if they are able to perform the proper theurgical rites. Some people vie with each other to gain the secrets of how best to influence the deities. It is this kind of misconception that has encouraged priesthoods from the earliest known society. Priests were and are people believed to possess, or to be trained in, the best way to invoke a positive response from the deities for people's benefit.

Although we speak of the practice as being primitive, yet these elementary ideas have persisted down through the ages to greatly influence the dogmas and creeds of many religions extant today. Certain religious sects currently decree a mode of behavior upon the part of the individual devotee. It may be decreed that they must drop coins into a box, regularly attend certain ceremonies, repeat specific creeds, and enter into authorized rites. If they comply, it is presumed that they

have appeased the Divine, or made the proper approach, and that the Divine will incline Its will toward the fulfillment of the prayer offered. I do not need to designate the sects that encourage these practices because they are known to you and are common in your community. These people, then, pray in good faith and, of course, are most often disappointed in the results and frequently disillusioned, as well.

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

The illogicalness of some prayer never occurs to the petitioner. They may pray for their deity to stop what another religionist in equally good faith is praying to be continued. The fall weather in California affords an excellent example of such an anthropomorphic conception of a deity and prayer.

In late September, the California prune growers are drying their fruit in the sun, and an early and continued rain might prove very ruinous to their crops. Conversely, the cattle raisers at that time of the year are desperately in need of rain for pasturage, especially after the long rainless California summer. A person raising cattle, if they were one of the religionists we have been speaking of, would pray for rain.

Concomitantly, a prune grower would pray that it would not rain. If the Divine were to exercise arbitrary will, opposing the natural law of climatic conditions, whose prayer would It favor? Such a religionist view places the Divine in a ludicrous position and makes religion vulnerable to atheism. If the Divine will could and would function arbitrarily, it would disrupt all Cosmic unity. There would be no dependency whatsoever. It is because Cosmic laws perform consistently and are immutable by the necessity of their nature that humanity has an assurance of dependability of the Divine or Cosmic principles.

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

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

The mystic does not ask for a particular thing to be completed but, rather, for the illumination whereby it might be materialized through their efforts. If their desire for a particular thing is not proper, they may ask that the desire be removed. Knowing the limitation of their own objective self, the mystic asks that if they cannot be shown how to satisfy their need, that they be shown how to rid themselves of the false

desire which causes them to think it necessary. The mystic thus proves that they do not insist that their purposes are infallible. They likewise indicate that they want to be certain that they do no other person an injustice through their desires by requesting something they should not.

The mystic realizes that with proper understanding many of the things we now pray for would lose their importance to us and would be shown to be insignificant and unworthy of a Divine appeal. Many of the things with which we torment ourselves and regard as being so essential to our welfare are so because they have not been analyzed in the light of their broader aspect; namely, their relation to the whole Cosmic plan.

In petitioning the Cosmic, the mystic turns their consciousness inward instead of directing the plea to a distant external entity or power. The Cosmic is in the mystic, they realize. It is not just in the reaches of space. They know, further, that their soul will answer their petition. The soul is of the Cosmic, and it will guide them to self-action.

To the mystic, prayer is really a consultation between a person's two selves. It is an appeal from the mortal mind to the immortal mind of the self within. The answer to a prayer, the mystic knows, is actually an insight into Divine Wisdom through proper attunement. The mystic, thence, is able to evaluate their desires properly, and they are able to act in the light of what is Cosmically right and possible.

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

Prayers are usually of three kinds. There are prayers of confession when a person indicates to the God of their Heart that they are contrite, and they admit a violation of their moral ideals. Then, there are prayers of intercession. These are prayers in which a person asks to be guided so as to prevent the undesired effects of certain causes. There are also prayers of gratitude like those of the Psalms where someone hails the majesty of the Divine and expresses joy in realizing their own Divine nature.

Of the three kinds of prayers, the mystic indulges more frequently in the latter—the prayer of gratitude. In doing so, they avoid the necessity of the other two. If we recognize the Divine and commune periodically with self, which is of the Divine, we acquire such personal mastery of our own being that prayers of intercession or prayers of confession are not required.

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

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

Chapter XIII

THE USE AND MISUSE OF AFFIRMATIONS

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

As we analyze them, there seems to be a dual purpose in the early religious affirmations. The first was to secure the support, and perhaps the intervention, of the Divine agency on behalf of the affirmer by proclaiming or reciting aloud one's pious beliefs. By the believer stating what they believe, they hope to have the Divine power materialize or realize the nature of the belief for them. Consequently, as far back as 1359 BCE, we find Amenhotep IV affirming in his Great Hymn to Aton, the sole deity of the pharaoh:

*You set every person in their place,
You supply their needs.*

Lao Tzu affirmed:

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

Patrick of Ireland affirmed:

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

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

An affirmation actually is but the stating of what we believe or know. If it does not represent a sincere belief or actual knowledge, its value is of no consequence. For example, if one affirms, "I believe there is a sole and living Deity," and yet is inwardly convinced that there is no Deity, no matter what the conception of a deity, the affirmation is a hypocrisy of the worst kind. Consequently, it follows that what we believe or know we do not need to affirm for it already exists as an accepted state in our minds.

No continual affirmation is going to make something more cogent to you if, in your experience or reasoning, the affirmation is based upon a false premise. If you have a severe toothache, for example—the pain of which you are very forcefully conscious—the affirming aloud to yourself that you have no toothache or pain is not very assuring, and the very absurdity of such an affirmation makes such a procedure ridiculous to an intelligent person. Such a method of affirmation is dangerous because it attempts to cause the mind to deny realities which should be accepted and overcome in a practical way. A toothache is the result of a natural cause. To affirm that the very evident result does not exist, and consequently to neglect the cause, is to violate not only good common sense but the very laws of nature also.

Where realities are not concerned, affirmations do have a psychological importance. They are particularly helpful in developing and retaining an individual's morale. For a further example, take an armed force moving to the front. As yet, perhaps, it has encountered no hostilities, but the force knows that they eventually will meet hostilities and that there is a probability that a number of them will never return. A contemplation of these facts would be apt to be their dominant thought while moving forward and would result in a great depression of spirits. The singing of war songs, however, and the chanting of doggerel proclaiming future victory and the utter defeat of the enemy supplants the idea of defeat with one of success. It is obvious that the emotional and physical response to such thoughts would raise the spirits. The very thought motivates and causes the kind of action, by suggestion, that is required to bring about the result.

The value of an affirmation to oneself is the power of suggestion. The suggestion, as already mentioned, must be sincere and must not be contrary to the more positive realities. Thus, if someone has an aggravated respiratory disease and knows that they have it and does nothing to aid themselves other than the use of the empty affirmation, "I am getting better day by day in every way,"—for which the French psychologist Émile Coué became famous some years ago—they will destroy themselves by the use of such a method.

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

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

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

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

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

The first need is to try to determine how much of what you affirm you desire, exists as separate elements in your present circumstances.

Knowing that, then you are conscious of what you need and what to concentrate upon. If I affirm that I shall have a home and wish as well to mentally create it, I should proceed as follows: Reduce the picture of the home that I have in mind to its simplest components. Determine if I have the property, the lumber, the electrical equipment, paints, hardware, and necessary labor for the home. If I do not have these things, then do I have the money or the means of acquiring them?

Suppose I have none of the things I need for a house. I would then have a first step of acquiring the money for the house. If my regular income would not be sufficient to provide such money, then I would need to render some service or to do something extra to augment my income. I would realize that really the first step would be to make myself useful in some additional way so as to get the needed money. I would hold definitely in mind the need for such service. I would suggest to myself, to my inner self, that I be inspired in my daily observations by some idea of service. I would ask the Cosmic to help me to find something in my affairs which by my own efforts I could convert into an act of service. I would keep this thought, in its simplest form, uppermost in my daily consciousness. I would draw to myself the needed suggestions for this service.

Now, let me explain further. This drawing to myself would not be a magical power, a mere chanting of affirmations. It would be that I would become especially conscious of any circumstances or things which had any relationship to my need. For an analogy, I would be like a person very much in need of a piece of red paper. As they walked down the street, everything that was colored red would particularly attract their attention. They would be drawing that color to their attention. By the association of ideas, all red things they observed would make them conscious of the need for red paper. Obviously, then, they would locate the red paper much more quickly than if they did not keep the need in mind. That is what we mean by drawing things to ourselves.

By suggesting our need to the Cosmic and to our own subjective minds, we put these agencies to work for us. They point out as a hunch, as an intuitive flash, or an inspiration things in our environment that we can use in our process of mentally creating. As the term implies, you

are a creator. Mentally, you are a builder. You are the doer, the prime mover.

The affirmer is a mere wisher. They wish or want something, and that is as far as it goes unless they also employ mental creating. The combination of both mental creating and affirming, we repeat, is best. In fact, true mental creating is impossible without first affirming, first positively asserting to ourselves, definitely and concisely, what we want. The affirmation is the direction in which our creative power must go. It is the signpost telling us, "Move along this way. Your destination lies ahead."

We cannot merely start to create. We must first have the conception, the plan of that which is to be built. Can you imagine a person sawing boards, planing them, nailing them together haphazardly, and then suddenly stopping to view what came out of their labors? That would be a kind of creating. It would be making something that perhaps did not exist before. However, without intelligent direction, the results of that kind of creating would be monstrosities of little or no use.

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

Chapter XIV

THE LOST WORD

THE DOCTRINE OF the Lost Word exists as an arcanum of the liturgies of many of our religions of today and in the rites of a number of secret and philosophical societies which are still extant.

Each has its respective theological or philosophical explanation of the persistent idea. On the other hand, they are all related to a fundamental conception rooted deeply in the earliest beliefs of people.

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

It is a matter of observation among people that all natural things have a law unto themselves. That is, there is some particular cause upon which they depend, and such causes and laws are myriad. Therefore, it is the presumption among people that the Word which was first uttered must have been the synthesis of all Cosmic and natural laws.

The Word, in this sense, did not fashion out of other substances the elements of the universe. It was not a Divine agent or force acting upon an indeterminate substance—as, for example, a sculptor's hands fashion a form from clay—but, rather, all things from planets to specks of sand were inchoate conditions of the Word which is thus conceived as a vibratory, undulating energy in which the basic essence of all things exists. For an analogy, we may compare it to a single sound which could include all octaves and pitches simultaneously. Consequently, each individual sound which the ear might discern would depend for its existence upon the original cause, the single united sound.

As all color is a component part of white light, so all creation is of the composite law embraced by the Word. Consequently, such a Word is endowed with the importance of being the key to the universe. A person who could know and intone it would have mastery of all creation. In line with such reasoning is the connotation that the law of creation, or Logos, once made vocative as the Word, never ceased to exist and never died out or diminished.

Upon its continuous tremors or vibratory nature, all things have their causal dependence. Just as the light of an electric lamp is, in effect, dependent upon its constant cause—the flow of electricity to the heated filament within the lamp—so all manifestations are said to owe their existence to the continuous reverberations of the Word throughout the universe. The vibratory nature of each thing thus fits into a gigantic scale or keyboard. Each reality has some relationship to a note, or to a combination of them, which is an integral part of the Word. Thus, certain vowels could contain within their combination the complete creative scale of Cosmic energy according to this conception.

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

namely, through the study of the basic natural sciences and the worship of the Divine or communion with the Absolute. In fact, there are perpetuated today, in rites and sacred ceremonies, certain syllables or vowels which are said to be of the Lost Word and, when intoned, do produce amazing creative and beneficial powers and manifestations. Rosicrucians have used these vowels for centuries with excellent results in the various requirements of living. Other mystics declare that the complete Lost Word is ineffable by a person, and that they would never be able to utter it even if they came to know its content, but that they can pronounce certain of its syllables from which they may acquire tremendous personal power. We have said this belief had its provenance in the early thoughts of people. A review of its history will contribute to our understanding of this mystery which has become a respected doctrine.

According to ancient liturgical texts, the Sumerian vocable for *word* is *inim*, pronounced “enem.” From this word, the Sumerian developed the concept of incantation. To the Sumerians, incantation consisted of the formal words of the magician or priest. In fact, the Sumerian for *incantation* is *inim-inim-ma*, which is a duplication of *inim*. To the Sumerian, *inim* or *word* meant to utter a decision. The ancient Semites regarded a formally spoken word containing the force of a command or a promise as a very definite or real thing; that is, an entity the same as a substance of some kind. Therefore, from the words of a deity, priest, or person under formal circumstances there issued a magical and terrible power. The formally spoken words of the great deities were apotheosized by the Sumerians; that is, they were regarded as a Divine entity equivalent to the Divine Itself.

Because of its conformity to the conception, let us recall our previous Biblical quotation in part, “. . . and the word was with God [the Divine], and God [the Divine] was the word.” Before 2900 BCE, we find the inscription, “Enem-Ma-Ni-Zid,” which, if literally translated, means, “Its word is true.” Likewise, in pre-Sargonic times about 2800 BCE, and on a temple record of Lugaland is the phrase, “Enem-Dug-Dug-Ga-Ni An-Dub,” or:

The word which It spoke shakes the heavens.

The word which beneath causes the earth to tremble.

Here we see the first conception of the dynamic power of the Divine Word expressed nearly 5,000 years ago.

A further development of the Sumerians was the identifying of the Word of the deity Enlil within his spirit. The word of the Divine was made as an attribute of Its all-embracing nature, moving forth from It into the chaotic world. For example, another Sumerian liturgy reads, “The utterance of thy mouth is a beneficent wind, the breath of life of the lands.” Again, by this we are reminded of the Old Testament for in the Book of Genesis 1:2 we find, “And the Spirit of God [the Divine] hovered over the surface of the water.” Following this, we are told that the Divine said, “Let there be light.” To the Sumerians, the breath of the Divine was a warm flood of light. The influence of the religions of the Sumerians and the Babylonians upon their Hebrew captives is quite apparent in the books of the Old Testament.

The Sumerians and Babylonians invariably regarded water as the first principle, the primordial substance from which all things came. Water to them was not a creative force but, rather, the first element out of which other substances developed or evolved. Since, therefore, all things came from water, it was deduced that reason or wisdom dwelt within it. The word which the Sumerians conferred upon this creative principle of water was *mummu*. The Greek historian Damascius said this word meant “creative reason”—the wisdom which created all things.

In the Book of Genesis we find another parallel. That is, that water was the first substance over which “. . . the Spirit of God [the Divine] hovered. . . .” This doctrine of water as the first substance found its way into an early philosophy school of ancient Greece. Thales of Miletus apparently borrowed it from the Babylonians. Anaximander and Anaximenes were apparently influenced by their contact with the Hebrew scholars and their traditions, and so they resorted to syncretism as well. They declared that the Cosmic substance was itself reason, wisdom, harmony, or Nous. This idea, we see, corresponds to the Babylonian Logos, or Mummu, the creative reason which is immanent in water. Heraclitus, of 500 BCE, who expounded a doctrine of evolution and relativity—that all matter “became” through a process

of development from fire to air and return—held that the only reality was the law of becoming, a Cosmic law—the Word.

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

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

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

THE SANCTURY OF SELF

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

Chapter XV

THE TECHNIQUE OF INITIATION

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

Initiation is the outgrowth of two intangible human qualities. The first of these qualities is self-analysis. It is because of someone's intense urge to look upon himself, to analyze himself and their environment, that a person learns to do many exceptional things. Otherwise, they would contribute very little to the advancement of humanity and the progress of society.

A person's natural attributes are mostly within them. Therefore, they are not fully aware of them. They accomplish certain things in life with these powers, but where they derived them from is not always quite certain. To a great extent, many people are like someone who is lost in a great forest and who, in their despair, is seated upon a chest, the contents of which they never trouble themselves to investigate. With the passing of time, their need of sustenance—food, drink, and protection from the elements—becomes greater and, if they would but open the chest upon which they are seated, they would most likely find these necessities.

To use another analogy, the average person is like the individual who leans back against a rock on a hillside and bemoans their fate and fortune and the lack of opportunity to better themselves. And yet that very rock may possess a mineral content that would offer them great wealth. Because of their ignorance and lack of inquisitiveness, they know it not.

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

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

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

Initiation, etymologically speaking, is a derivative of the old Latin word *initiationem*. This Latin word was derived from the word that means beginning, a training, the beginning of a preparation, or the beginning of instruction. This instruction, of which initiation is said to consist, depends upon three very important elements. First, the efficacy, or the power of the teaching that is being given as instruction.

Teachings can have only the influence of the authority behind them; that is, the value of a teaching to be imparted depends upon the authority, the source from which it comes.

Second, the character of the one to receive the instructions, no matter what their efficacy, must be worthy. Otherwise, the teachings obviously will be wasted upon them. Third, there must be certain conditions in existence for the imparting of these instructions if they are to be beneficial. In other words, time and the proper place are important. Profound teachings cannot be discerned at any time. The proper meditation and the proper circumstances must exist for their assimilation or the seed will fall upon barren ground.

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

Primitive initiation, or the mysteries conducted by primitive society, developed into two definite categories. Remnants of these remain today in most of the initiations of many orders and fraternities, but they are not recognized by the modern candidate. The first of the categories was that kind of ceremony by which a power was conferred upon an individual for an express purpose by some other individual or by a group of them. Thus, for example, in certain ceremonies, the shaman or the *angakok*, as the traditional healers of the Inuit and Yupik tribes were known, would impart magic formulas to the initiates whereby they would come into possession of a power to cause rain, to grow crops, or to advance the fertility of the soil. According to the shaman, the power to do these things was transmitted in a material

substance—by means of amulets, in other words. The shaman would give to the candidate, during the course of the ceremony, a brilliantly polished stone, or a bright-colored plume. These were said to have the necessary magical properties.

The second category of primitive initiation consisted of ceremonies which were an integral part of the social life of the tribes. This latter type was by far the most important of the two categories. To explain simply, in primitive or tribal society people of the same age and sex usually had the same interests, the same occupations, and the same tastes. Consequently, there was a tendency to group these particular societies, these particular classes, according to their function, ability, or disability. In other words, the old were in one group, the young in another, those with no children in another group, those who were single, those who were ill or deformed in still other groups, and so forth. It was thought by primitive people that the passage from one group or groups to another produced or had certain effects upon the individual.

The natural effects were obvious. There were the physiological changes that took place when a young person grew up. There were also certain physiological changes when a person became a mother. However, in addition to these, it was believed that there occurred certain supernatural effects. For example, when a young person grew up, it was believed that the power by which they did so, or the power that brought about that change, was also transmitted to them at that time. So, ceremonies were held by which the individual was initiated into their new status in society, and the new function and new powers which they were supposed to have acquired were explained to them.

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

In northern Italy, a number of towns or cities were like sovereign states, independent of each other in every respect. Each city and a certain area around it was a world within itself, and they were often hostile to each other. If they were coastal cities, they had their own navies. All had their own armies. Common examples of such city-states were Venice and Florence. During this period, Venice became renowned for its manufacture of glass. It excelled all parts of the world in its exquisite artisanship. The secrets of glass blowing were passed down from father to son at first but, with the increase in demands for more and more of their products, it became necessary that they enlarge their output and that they induct others into the secrets of their trade. So, the apprentice became the neophyte. They were initiated into glass blowing and had to take vows not to reveal these secrets to the profane.

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

Initiation, as other things, also went through a process of evolution and, with its development, people continued to seek in it certain advantages, but the advantages became different. They were no longer just material or physical advantages. They were moral ones. Through initiation, people hoped to become better acquainted with the deities—how they might be appeased, how their influence could be acquired, what they expected, and what constituted right or devout conduct. This knowledge was divulged to people in the form of dramas; that is, initiations that were likened to passion plays in which the candidate played the principal part or had a role. The candidate, for example, might assume such suffering as they imagined their deities had endured so that they might have salvation or existence. Then again, the candidate might assume an attitude of mind which they presumed belonged to

the exalted state of the deities. Or they might enact a part in which they would suggest by mimicry those virtues which they imagined the deities possessed and which they desired to have incorporated into their life.

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

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

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

show that they have obliterated the past and left all old ways of living and thinking behind them.

The second form of the structure of initiation is the rite of admission. The candidate is made aware by the initiation they are undergoing that they are entering upon a higher plane of thought and consciousness. This rite may suggest to them that they are having a new birth in thought and living, and this may be symbolized by having them lie upon the ground, then rise to their knees, and finally stand erect as if they are growing. They may also be obliged to come from a dark chamber into a brilliantly illuminated one, depicting the coming from the old world of superstition and fear which they are presumed to have left behind into one of peace and new wisdom.

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

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

The fourth and final structure is the re-entry rite. In other words, it is that part of the ceremony by which the candidate is made aware that they are returning again to the physical and profane world from whence they came. Though they return again to the outside, circumstances will never be quite the same because of the experiences

and instructions of the initiation which they have had. Usually, they are obligated to change conditions in their daily life to some extent to parallel the idealism that has been imparted to them during their initiation. Further, during such re-entry rites there is conferred upon them a badge of distinction which is some physical effect by which it can be known that they have reached a certain attainment. Though they live again among the profane, by such a sign they are known to have acquired certain advantages.

Every devout Muslim, if they possibly can during the course of their life, seeks to journey sometime to Mecca to enter the sacred precincts of the Kaaba and to witness there the holy rites. In the past, it was an especially arduous journey because there used to be no highways to Mecca and no railroads. The devotee used to travel in a caravan or, if they were wealthy enough, they organized a private caravan. If the devotee is successful, when they return they are permitted to wear a white ribbon wound about their tarboosh, or fez as it is commonly known, which signifies that they have made the journey to Mecca and that they have been duly initiated during the Hajj. After each such journey, they may place another ribbon upon their fez. I have seen many Arabs in the Islamic countries with two or more such ribbons.

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

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

According to Egyptian mythology, the Egyptian deity Nut wed the Egyptian deity Geb, and they had four children—two brothers, Osiris and Set, and two sisters, Isis and Nephthys. According to legend, Osiris had a deity-given sovereignty over the entire land of Egypt, and his was

indeed a munificent ship for we are told that he introduced laws to the people whereby they could govern themselves. Osiris also taught them art and agriculture, irrigation, and many of the refinements which brought ease and comfort. The people were also taught how to worship their deities. In other words, Osiris introduced religion, and the myth continues that Osiris was most beloved by the people.

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

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

pieces were recovered. The important thing is that when all the pieces were brought together, Isis breathed into the mouth of Osiris. When Osiris received the breath of Isis, Osiris was resurrected and was again a living being—not a being of this world but of another and higher life.

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

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

We are told that the candidate preparing for an initiation had to abstain from food or water as a fast for a brief time, that they had to

shave their head, and that the unfoldment or illumination of the drama took many nights.

There is still another ancient initiation of interest to us. It is known as the Eleusinian mysteries, and it derived its name from the fact that it was performed at Eleusis in ancient Greece. It lasted for a period of about eight days, at a time corresponding to our September 15 to 23. These mysteries had two principal characters, the Agrarian deity—that is, the deity of agriculture known as Demeter and her daughter Persephone.

The earliest Eleusinian mystery plays depict the suffering which Demeter is said to have experienced when Persephone was spirited away by enemies. Later, however, the plays endeavored to convey and demonstrate some knowledge of what people would experience in the afterlife and to teach the lesson of immortality. This was taught by comparing people to vegetation. It was shown how plants wither and die in winter; how they are reborn in the spring, given new life and new power; how they are resurrected from the earth in all of their former strength and glory. And it was declared that when a person's days on this Earth are over, they will wither away to be resurrected in Elysium, the ancient equivalent of heaven.

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

Now, what shall we say is the nature and purpose of the initiations that are performed by the Rosicrucians? First, generally speaking, Rosicrucian initiation is similar in spirit and purpose to all true esoteric or mystery initiations although its function, manner of performance, and symbolism, of course, are different. On the face of each initiation manuscript in the Rosicrucian Order, there is the statement, “Initiation brings into the realm of reason the purpose and into the realm of

emotion the spirit of one's introduction into the mysteries." That statement is really the key, as we shall see, to Rosicrucian initiation.

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

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

While one is objectively going through the Rosicrucian ceremonies, intoning certain vowels and burning incense, they are also stimulating

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

PART THREE
The Pitfalls

Chapter XVI

OCCULTISM, HERMETICISM, AND ESOTERICISM

IN ORDER THAT we may become better oriented, let us consider some of those directions of thought which the layperson confuses with mysticism.

Our first consideration shall be occultism. In the popular sense, occultism is held to be a system of hidden methods, of strange practices, whereby a person may acquire the way of attaining inexplicable powers by which they may do or accomplish almost anything. Such a conception holds that the occultist is able to witness phenomena which the average mortal may never experience. Consequently, occultism is thought to include subjects such as magic, marvels, miracles, and religious ecstatic experiences such as theophany and epiphany.

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

Religion feared occult science. It was the general opinion that the occult scientist might, through their studies and inquiries, acquire such

power as would make them self-dependent and, thus, independent of the decrees and the dogmas of the church. It also held that the occult scientist was interfering with the realm of the Divine, invading the jurisdiction of the Divine, and attempting to investigate matters which were not meant for the comprehension of people. Therefore, the occultist was, in fact, a trespasser on the Divine.

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

Let us take the example of Galileo, now recognized as a noted scientist, and who was in his time an occult scientist as well. He was a great astronomer and mathematician of the sixteenth century. Galileo first drew attention to himself when he disproved one of Aristotle's fundamental theories. Centuries ago, the early Christian church discovered that it could not completely reject and refuse to recognize science because a wave of rationalism was sweeping over the people. Science was impressing them. So, the church felt the need of embracing science. It turned to the doctrines of Aristotle who was recognized as the acme of scientific knowledge, knowledge of mundane things dealing with the laws of nature at that time, and they declared that a person should go no further than to the point of Aristotle's accomplishments. Aristotle was the last word in science.

Galileo disproved Aristotle's theory that bodies fall in space at a speed proportionate to their weight for, in experiments, Galileo

dropped various objects from the leaning tower of Pisa and proved that Aristotle was wrong. Further, Galileo built long inclines down which he rolled objects of different weights and from which experimentation he developed the doctrine of inertia that is now incorporated in the laws of physics. This was a challenge to the scientific theories accepted by the church.

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

Copernicus, who lived a century before Galileo, had affirmed that the universe is spherical and that the sun, not Earth, is the center of our immediate universe. The spread of this doctrine by Galileo caused consternation in theological circles because, if it were true that Earth was not the center of the universe as the church had taught and believed, then humans would not be the principal beings that they were held to be. They would not be perhaps the greatest achievements of the Divine and would not be the only agents to possess souls. If there were other celestial bodies of greater dimension and magnitude than Earth, there might also be intelligences upon them far exceeding the abilities of humanity and possibly possessed of greater Divine powers as well.

Galileo was ordered to appear before a theological council made up of the great dignitaries of the church, and this resulted in their ordering Galileo not to teach and not to write about or to support the doctrines of Copernicus, notwithstanding the fact that Galileo could demonstrate the Copernican theories with a telescope. Galileo apparently consented and, after returning to his home, wrote a book entitled *Dialogue on the Two Chief World Systems*, dealing with cosmological theories, and which really contained a very thinly veiled presentation of the Copernican theory. When this book was circulated, Galileo was accused

of spreading heretical doctrines and was called before the Inquisition. Ecclesiastical history relates that Galileo recanted but, nevertheless, Galileo's discoveries and opinions spread like wildfire and constituted an occult doctrine in opposition to the scientific concepts of religion.

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

Paracelsus's father had taught him that Nature should be seen through one's own eyes. It should not be gleaned from the functionings or the workings of laws, or strictly through the pages of textbooks, but that Nature should be looked upon as it is. So, Paracelsus left the university to start a voyage—a voyage of great discovery.

Paracelsus traveled about the world and visited the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region, Egypt, Jerusalem, what is now Iraq, the islands of the Aegean Sea, and the principal countries of Europe. Diseases were studied directly as they manifested themselves in the flesh, and not as recorded in textbooks. While Paracelsus was making these physical observations, it is related that the mystical relationship to the Divine was long meditated upon. Life and the mysteries of birth and of transition, and the reasons for humanity's existence and the probable course of human life, were contemplated. The result of those investigations and meditations was the development of great new theories for the treatment of disease and the application of new medicines, and Paracelsus was not hesitant to speak out strongly in favor of those convictions. The shortsightedness of medical science as it existed in that time was courageously condemned.

The phenomenal cures of Paracelsus attracted public attention and, by public acclaim, Paracelsus was appointed chief physician or municipal physician of the city of Basel, Switzerland. This city at that time was a Rosicrucian center of learning, including a great Rosicrucian university—the ancestor of the French and American Rose-Croix universities. I have had the privilege of visiting that university and walking through its halls and former classrooms. It is not now a university but a monument to the Rosicrucians. Paracelsus addressed the graduating classes there and even instructed some of them, inculcating the need for a liberal view into the consciousness of the young graduates who were physicians in addition to the need to be individual investigators, to pioneer, and to make nature itself their principal laboratory.

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

Paracelsus was ridiculed to such an extent that his middle name of Bombastus became an opprobrium for exaggerated statements. And yet, today, medical associations honor Paracelsus as a great physician and also as a pioneer in the advancement of medical science. There is a posthumous book by Paracelsus known as *The Seven Defenses of Paracelsus*, which includes great logical and fair defenses of what Paracelsus was doing. Had these things been published or released decades or centuries ago, Paracelsus would not have been spurned all these years, but they were withheld so as to further prejudice public

opinion and because Paracelsus was then looked upon as an occult scientist.

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

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

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

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

Color therapy, a subject long investigated by the occultist—namely, that color affects the human emotions and plays a definite part in relationship to our health, to our moods and our emotions—was heralded by the mundane scientist as another absurdity of the occultist. Today, color therapy is in the process of laboratory experimentation, a branch of psychological investigation by medical science. It is recognized that the colors of our clothes, the colors of our environment, of the walls and furnishings of our homes, and of the lighting, do definitely affect us physically and mentally. The occult scientist is again vindicated!

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

Sikhism is an example of an Eastern religion which incorporates occultism. Sikhism can be seen as striving to harmonize two great religions which are sometimes hostile to each other; namely, Islam and Hinduism. Islam is monotheistic. It recognizes a single Deity—and that Deity is known as Allah. Hinduism, on the other hand, is a polytheistic religion that incorporates some mysticism and at the same time affirms that there is a Deity as a force and a mind which does not exist in a

being but permeates all things and is a part of everything, working in and through it. We see that these two religions are at opposite extremes.

Nanak, founder of Sikhism, was born in 1469 CE. As a young person, some legends say, Nanak argued with his Muslim teachers, disputing some of the principles which they were teaching. Later, instead of entering into the commercial life of the time, it is said that Nanak preferred meditation and spent much time walking in the forest. It is related that on one occasion Nanak had a great vision in which the Divine advised that Its name should be repeated frequently. Nanak avowed to devote his life to a high purpose but was, nevertheless, perplexed by the experience. Some time thereafter, when meditating upon this vision, there came to Nanak as an ecstatic experience a message from the Divine which is now one of the fundamental precepts of Sikhism. It was that there is no Muslim, there is no Hindu, there is but one true Deity.

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

Occultism is frequently confused, as we have stated, with magic and, to better comprehend our way, it is advisable that we clearly distinguish it from magic. Magic affirms and requires a belief in

independent agents, entities existing in the universe. These entities are invisible intelligences, according to magic, which are able to exert efficacies. Some of them are beneficent influences, it is declared; others, malevolent. They are said to reside in animate and inanimate things alike—namely, living things—and stone and grains of sand have these magical properties or qualities.

These magical intelligences have no unity of purpose. Each one exercises its theurgical powers arbitrarily, according to the whims and fancies attributed to that magical element. Consequently, it is held that humans are at the mercy of these powers, and that the unfortunate believer in them is constantly obliged to invoke one magical process against another to mitigate the forces they imagine they have so they can enjoy peace of mind. But what of occultism? Occultism affirms that there is but one system of laws existing throughout the universe, one great governing intelligence, and that all laws are functioning constructively and creatively. People are not at the mercy of these laws unless they turn their backs upon them and refuse to recognize them.

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

Some say that there never was such a character as Hermes Trismegistus. Others proclaim that Hermes Trismegistus lived before Plato, before the Seven Sages of whom Thales was one, and even before Moses. However, Hermes is the name which the Greeks ascribed to the Egyptian deity or legendary character known as Thoth. The title of Trismegistus is Greek for “Thrice Great,” or the Great Great Great. Inscribed on the Rosetta Stone in demotic writing is the name of

Thoth—whom the Greeks called Hermes—and the statement that he was the Great Great Great. The Egyptians characterized Thoth as a human figure with the head of an ibis; that is, the head of an Egyptian bird that used to wade, and still does, in the marshes along the Nile.

In their ancient writings, the Greeks said that Thoth, called Hermes, was the principal source of all wisdom, a sort of fountain of knowledge. They called Thoth the father of philosophy. The Egyptians in their ancient writings referred to Thoth as the Lord of Books and said Thoth was the inventor of the science of numbers—namely, mathematics. They said that Thoth taught people to speak and, moreover, that people were taught with demotic writing. The earliest Egyptian writing was the hieroglyph, or picture writing, and it is said that Thoth taught the demotic writing or script in the manner which we now write so that people would have many signs for many things.

At present, a magnitude of literature is credited to Hermeticism. There are quotations which declare that Hermes, or Thoth, was the author of thousands of works while reliable sources state that Thoth wrote forty-two books, and that these had six sections: one on astronomy, one on the science of writing, one on religion, and so on.

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

In the records in stone inscribed on the monuments of Egypt, the tombs and temples, we find much reference to Hermes or to Thoth, as

Hermes was called, and it is said that the principal seat of the school of Thoth where his wisdom was taught was at Khemenu which the Greeks later named Hermopolis or, literally translated, the City of Hermes. It is said that this school was a place on high ground where Ra, the sun, first rested when it rose in the east. Of course, this is allegorical because these records further relate that the school was a place of initiation for the mystery school candidates. During such initiations, the candidates ascended the mountain of their inner nature, their inner consciousness. When they reached the top, the spiritual sun rested upon them. In other words, when they attained within themselves a state of Cosmic Consciousness, then they were bathed in illumination or spiritual understanding.

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

Metaphysics is wrongly used by many people as a generic term to be all-inclusive and to cover a number of subjects which should be under occultism, esotericism, Hermeticism, or some other branch of learning. It is good that we know the true nature of metaphysics. The works of Aristotle were first collected and arranged by Andronicus of Rhodes circa 70 BCE. Andronicus realized that it was necessary to classify the branches of human knowledge so that they could be perused more easily. That for which Andronicus set about to accomplish humanity should be eternally grateful. Various names were assigned to these different branches, many of which we still use today such as psychology and physic, which at that time included all material science. Aristotle himself invented a method of formal reasoning to assist in understanding. This

was called logic, a term we still use for such a method. To metaphysics, Aristotle gave its meaning as literally that which is beyond the physical, beyond the material, and in contradistinction to that classification of knowledge which he called physics.

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

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

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

Rosicrucianism seeks to reunite humanity with the divine purpose. If its members pursue merely one aspect, they go off at a tangent. They must be drawn back into the whole. So, Rosicrucians avoid having any affection, any particular love for a special bypath, in order to not get sidetracked on their climb upward. They investigate all paths, and that

is why Rosicrucianism seeks to include all tried and tested branches of knowledge. Make certain, whatever the direction in which you move in your thinking, that you return again to the main trunk. Otherwise, you will be opposing your philosophical purpose—the unity of all knowledge.

People are not free to devote all their efforts to the pursuit of their ideals. They must also combat the weaknesses of their natures. It is these foibles which we shall now consider.

Chapter XVII

ILLUSIONS OF THE PSYCHIC

TRUTH DOES NOT always bring an immediate satisfaction. The realization of it is often quite disconcerting. It may cause a distracting adjustment in our affairs.

To seek, or at least to embrace, a truth often requires courage and sacrifice. Though many people affirm a desire for truth, their statements are from the lips rather than from the heart. When confronted with a truth that requires an abandonment of their customary ways of believing and living, they will often actually oppose it. They will prefer an hypocrisy or a self-deception because it is familiar or because it requires less effort.

Truth that is suddenly thrust upon us is often not as appealing to the emotional self as some fantasy. Many people cling to superstitions only because they intrigue the imagination and are surrounded with an air of romanticism which the reality of the truth that exposes them does not possess.

To summarize, there are people who prefer a world, an existence of their own explanation, even if it be contrary to the facts. Many such people are students of mysticism and of psychic phenomena. Really, they should not be called students for they are but dilettantes of the subjects. They like to have their curiosity sustained. They enjoy residing on the outer circle of mystery with the excitement and suspense which it provides. For example, they attend séances of a spiritualistic nature

and listen to the purported communications from those who have gone beyond. They are visibly awed and thrilled by an apparent ectoplasmic manifestation of a soul in a darkened room. They love to interpret every impression of a visual or audible nature they may have, as a Cosmic Master directly imparting wisdom to them. Every light they see, and which to them has no corresponding objective in reality, they insist must be of psychic origin. They extol every book or public speaker who confirms their opinions. They thoroughly enjoy assumptions, and such are assumptions, for these people have not one iota of fact to support the majority of their conclusions.

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

I have actually seen people indignantly walk out of a public gathering because an intelligent lecturer tried to show that every vision seen in a crystal ball, for example, was not a divination or necessarily a mystical experience. To others, they would afterwards relate that the speaker was a materialist who was not prepared for the higher truths. By higher truths, they meant the many false conceptions which they personally wished to cherish.

A higher truth, if one means a Divine principle, will stand the most analytical, materialistic, or scientific scrutiny. It is stronger in its effect upon our minds by reason of such examination. The person who refuses to have what they conceive as mystical or spiritual laws to be tested or tried, or at least examined in an open manner, is fastening their mind on just what they want to believe and rejecting what actually may be true.

The statement by a lecturer that something is not a psychic phenomenon, of course, should not be accepted in itself any more than the idea that it is. If, however, they can show you that the same results

can be attained in a physical and psychological manner, and if you are really a seeker of truth, you will readily admit your former deception. You will not want to confer upon a strictly physical phenomenon the designation of psychic or mystical if it is not.

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

We say that if those who are interested in mysticism, metaphysics, and occultism would devote some study to basic science, physics, and preferably psychology in addition to their esoteric studies, they would derive so much more from their exploration of the realm of the former. Not having any such knowledge, even elementary, of the above-mentioned sciences, they are not prepared to recognize true occult or mystical principles and manifestations. They often waste years of their lives in self-deception, in believing certain of their reactions to be of Cosmic origin, when they are indubitably purely psychological or physical. It is for this reason that the Rosicrucian teachings also include and stress a study of nature's principles and laws as they are manifest in the various physical sciences. As we also study our physical being and the physical world, we know to what parts of the scale of Cosmic manifestations to attribute that which we experience.

Let me cite an actual case of how people who are intelligent enough, sincere in wanting to master mystical and metaphysical principles, deceive themselves through lack of knowledge of the elementary basic

laws of the physical sciences. A woman wrote and said, "I have a small room in my home set aside for my devotions. I notice that almost immediately after prayer in this room, my body becomes exceptionally charged with a Cosmic or Divine energy of some sort. It jumps from my body when I approach the door to exit from the room. This does not occur in any other room of the house. Further, I notice that, if I go through a little ritual which I perform, the energy becomes more intense. This ritual consists of walking about the room three times, and each time facing one of the cardinal points of the compass for a few seconds where I make a symbolic sign. Once, I was in a hurry because of the pressure of personal matters and omitted this ritual. My conscience was bothering me because I neglected it. As I departed from the room, the energy which usually shot from my fingers to the door at a distance of about an inch was lacking. Then, again, I was prevailed upon to take down the draperies in this devotional room and send them and the rug to the cleaners. Inwardly, I felt this rather a sacrilege; that is, the temporary disturbance of this place which was sacred to me. I am convinced that I experienced immediately thereafter an act of retribution. During this time or interval, until the return of the draperies and rug, I did not experience the discharge of the energy from my fingers no matter how long my devotionals."

Here was a difficult situation. To state frankly that what the woman experienced was a self-deception, that there was no relationship between the discharged energy and any desecration of the room or neglect of the ritual, would have been offensive. It would have disturbed the confidence in us. Further, we did not have enough factual information as yet to prove our theory of the physical causes of the experience.

We wrote and asked for a description of the rug and the door as well as a few questions unrelated to these things so as not to cause the woman to suspect that we were making an entirely scientific analysis of her experience. She cooperated. She explained that the rug was Oriental, beautiful in coloring, and with a high nap. It had been made in India and presented as a gift by her brother who was an engineer in India. The devotional room being small, the rug entirely covered the floor. The room had once been used by her brother as a laboratory and the side of the door facing into the room was lined with sheet metal that was finished to appear as wood.

Without appearing to digress from the subject, we asked her to conduct a little experiment for us. We asked if she had another room about the same size, and with a door having a metal knob or handle. She did. It was a service room off the rear entrance of her apartment. We asked her to place the rug in that room and then to perform her ritual. Next, we asked her to leave the room and, as she left, note what she would experience. We requested that she then remove the rug from the room and repeat the same ritual and depart, and also relate what she experienced.

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

As far back as 600 BCE, Thales, a Greek philosopher, found that amber when rubbed with woolen material would attract bits of straw and other light objects. Now, we know that many other objects of different natures when rubbed together will produce this same effect. Objects which acquire this property of attracting different other objects when rubbed together are said to be electrified; that is, they possess an electrical charge. Some substances which have an electrical charge produced in them retain it—that is, it cannot escape from them—and they are called insulators. Substances which lead off electrical charges are called conductors. Metal substances are all conductors.

By walking about a room, the woman described above was rubbing the soles of her leather shoes on the high nap of the rug. This friction produced an electrical charge in her body. This electricity was at rest, or static, because it could not escape her body which acted as an

insulator. When, however, she reached out her hand to grasp the metal doorknob, the metal being a conductor of electricity, it led the current from her fingers. It jumped the gap of space and, at that moment, she experienced a prickly feeling on her finger tips and saw the electrical discharge as small bluish lights.

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

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

MYSTICAL:

- A. Any phenomenon which is the consequence of a person's consciousness of the Divine or Cosmic Mind through the self. Likewise, any principle by which it is accomplished.
- B. In the strictest sense, a mystical experience involves a unity of the mortal consciousness with that of the Divine or Cosmic Mind for a varying period of time. The following are the results which, in part or as a whole, always follow the experience:

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

Physical: The individual experiences great exaltation or ecstasy. They feel as though they have been in the presence of their conception of the Divine.

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

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

PSYCHIC:

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

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

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

Second: Those experiences where you are conscious at all times that you are the motivator or prime mover, as, for example, when you are momentarily conscious of self as being distant

from where you actually are physically. In such an instance, you are aware that the self is the cause of what occurs.

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

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

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

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

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

Chapter XVIII

SUPERSTITION

IT MUST BE understood that superstition never exists where the actual causes of a thing or condition are known or where fact can supplant supposition. Superstition, then, grows out of ignorance and flourishes on fear.

Let us take the example of the commonly accepted superstition among certain peoples that a broken mirror brings seven years of bad luck to the one who has broken it. This belief has actually survived for centuries. It goes back as far as the time of delicately made, finely polished bronze mirrors which likewise could be broken by being dropped. It is rooted in the early religious belief that the shadow or reflection of a human face was the ethereal form of the soul, and to shatter that which reflected the human face or form of the soul was to bring upon oneself the penalty of seven years of misfortune. This reasoning can easily be understood. In the first place, there was no desire to question the religious precept upon which the superstition was founded—namely, that a shadow or reflection of the face was in reality the soul. The soul being Divine, it consequently followed that anything which marred it brought a penalty upon the guilty or careless one. Had it been possible to prove that such reflections were not related to the soul, the supposition and superstition would not have arisen.

Superstitions that arise from interpretations of religious dogmas and creeds are the most difficult to remove. Any attempt to disprove them reflects upon an individual's religious precepts and causes a hostile reaction which, to them at least, justifies their continued

support of the superstition. Religious superstitions can be removed only by the personal evolution of the individual—that is, at the time when they reach for higher concepts because of an inner urge and, after grasping them and being assured, they see the faults in their previous superstitions and, of their own volition, are courageous enough to cast them aside.

Many superstitions have no foundation in religion whatsoever. Take the modern talismanic practices as an example. It is the belief held by millions that some article carried or worn on the person as a charm imparts certain of its conditions to the wearer or will bring them good fortune. What caused some of these amulets to be so venerated and traditionally accepted, even today—such as a rabbit's foot, for example—would be a matter of speculation. However, we can easily understand how they originated by comparison to the origin of our more modern talismanic beliefs.

For an example of a superstitious belief, a person is walking along a road, and their attention is arrested by something glittering in the sunlight and lying, perhaps, in the street gutter. They find, upon picking it up, that it is a small metallic disk somewhat resembling a coin. For a moment, they hesitate and debate whether or not to destroy it since it has no intrinsic value. It is really worthless, yet the fact that it caused them to stop and examine it, and the realization that it is similar in appearance to a coin, eventually make them put it in their pocket without further thought. So far, such actions are quite ordinary and indicate no tendency toward superstition. They are things that either you or I would do under similar circumstances.

Presume that, during the following day, the person who found the disk experienced a number of outstanding and unexpected favorable events. The natural inclination would be to try to trace the cause of the event or events that brought them about and, if no logical reason would become apparent, a credulous person would then begin to seek beyond the natural or, in other words, for some supernatural cause of the good fortune.

The fact that the individual cannot find a natural cause for their good fortune, of course, does by no means establish a supernatural

one. It may mean that they are unobserving or not able to realize the factors which caused their good fortune but, nevertheless and being credulous, they attribute their good fortune to the supernatural. Some credit must be given them, though, for seeking to justify their belief in the supernatural.

The person combs their memory for some incident or sign that occurred recently which would point to some efficacy. They recall the shining metal disk which was found earlier in the day and that the fact that it attracted attention and resembled a coin seemed strange. Immediately, thereupon, the person's mind grasps this as now having some significance. The reasoning followed is that certainly it was not a coincidence that they found this metal disk, and that something must have been intended by it. It must have portended something and, of course, that something is conceived as being the recent good fortune. Thereafter, that disk becomes the person's talisman—their lucky piece. They will relate the incident to others, with all sincerity, and they will tell how the disk brought them the good fortune they experienced.

Psychologically, a superstition strangely affects the reasoning of a person. Each time they clasp or stroke or kiss the talisman and desire it to bring good luck, if they receive the things, materials, or circumstances that they wished for, the talisman then receives full credit. The belief in the superstition is consequently strengthened. On the other hand, when the charm fails, as it frequently does, they excuse the failure and offer some good reason to themselves as to why the wish was not fulfilled. In other words, the talismanic devotee is reluctant to abandon their belief.

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

Almost everyone believes that nothing really “just happens” and that there is a cause for all things, either known or unknown to people. If someone understands the cause, they either utilize it to the utmost, or they try to avoid its results if they are considered to be injurious or detrimental. When they, however, cannot perceive or understand the cause, they still do not declare the occurrence as an accident. Most frequently, instead, they attribute it to an unknown cause. Now, these unknown causes, unless someone is quite intelligent, are most often credited to supernatural powers. That is, if they cannot perceive a cause or understand it, in their opinion it must belong to another world or sphere of influence. In this, we also see a person’s ego.

Many people have a fear and respect for those things which they cannot understand or master. If events occur which are favorable and are related to some incident which, for lack of understanding, they consider supernatural, that incident then becomes a sign or omen of good. On the other hand, if the circumstances were unfavorable to them, the incident is then thought to have portended evil and, whenever it occurs again, it will be thought an ominous sign. Some things, as we have seen, in the minds of people seem to take on certain supernatural powers. Thus, beads, coins, stamps, peculiarly-shaped stones, and even customs such as throwing salt over one’s left shoulder, or happenings such as walking beneath a ladder or having a black cat cross one’s path, become superstitions.

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

There is no relationship between education and lack of superstition. In other words, one who is educated is by no means free of superstition. Many highly educated people, even in professional walks of life, are exceedingly superstitious. That is mainly because they have given no thought to the subject and have made no analysis of the origin or its effects upon them and, consequently, they fall in line with the

superstitious customs of those with whom they come in contact. On the other hand, the really intelligent person cannot accept superstition. Its foundation is too primitive and too inconsistent with what we know as fact today. There are many professional people who practice little superstitions and who do so as a form of habit, not because of a belief in the principles upon which superstition depends. If these individuals took time to consider the origin of these superstitions, they would soon discard them.

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

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

To avoid being superstitious, as we all must do, first try to understand the causes of things. If you cannot, do not presume to know a cause. Such a presumption, without a foundation in fact, is dangerous. Second, remember that there is no such thing as the supernatural. There are only the Cosmic and natural laws existing throughout the

universe. Supernatural is a term invented by people to explain to themselves, or try to, what they do not understand. Remember that radio music coming out of a small square box, or the human voice emanating from it, once appeared to the aborigines in the interior of Australia as supernatural. Why? Only because they were ignorant of the natural laws involved. There is just about as much foundation for the supernaturalism of our superstitions that exist today as there is for the old belief of the aborigines that the radio music or voice they hear is of supernatural origin.

Chapter XIX

NATURE OF DREAMS

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

In modern times, as a result of psychological experimentation, we have come to learn much about the causes of dreams. We are still not certain, though, as to the exact cause of every type of dream. We do know that all objects and actions which are set forth in a dream are symbolic and that they stand for a subliminal or subconscious thought or experience. The difficulty exists in finding the relationship between objects of a dream and that which caused them.

A certain thing or conduct in a dream is a symbol of some antecedent thought or experience, or at least associated with one. But which one? Why do I dream that I am falling? What is the cause of dreaming that I am flying merely by flapping my arms? The superstitious person attributes omens to the elements of their dreams. In other words, they relate them to some incident of actual experience from which they try

to draw a meaning. However, the psychologist knows that the actual stimulus which caused the dream may be quite different from the one which the thinking mind attributes to it.

Many of our dreams are the result of sensory stimulation—that is, the stimulation of our receptor senses of feeling, smelling, and hearing while we sleep. Such dreams are caused by external agents. The stimulation of the senses during sleep will not generally produce the same results as when one is awake—only random ideation may occur, causing dreams. The body may be slightly touched while the subject is asleep. The stimulus will not be sufficient to awaken the sleeper. The ideation or the ideas which they have as a result of such a sensation will not be exactly the same as if they were awake. Such ideational processes have a low degree of integration; that is, the ideas are not tied together in as orderly a fashion. They are haphazard, resulting in the peculiar nature of a dream.

In a waking state, if you experienced certain sensations from which ideas would follow, you would be governed by the law of probability. You would logically reject certain ideas that would come to mind as being highly improbable and as being the cause of such sensations as you had experienced. In the dream state, where this low integration or joining of ideas exists, the law of probability would not exist, and whatever ideas would follow from the stimulation would constitute your dream.

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

In an analysis of 750 dreams made for psychological tests, an inch-square gummed piece of paper was placed upon various parts of a sleeper's anatomy. Various dreams were the result of the sensations a sleeper had from this mild form of stimulation. A gummed slip placed upon the sole of the foot caused a dream of dancing. Why did it cause

a dream of dancing? Perhaps because of a similar antecedent sensation arising from the sole of the foot after dancing. At least, there was some association between the ideas as a result of the test stimulus and what others had from some previous experience.

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

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

As to why such dreams recur, they cannot fail to do so when the elements of which they consist are continually aroused. Most thoughts that we have are complex. They are made up of a compound of many simple ideas. Sometimes we do not realize all the ideas which enter into a thought that we have. A thought may consist of the simple ideas of colors, tastes, and sounds or a combination of these with other ideas as the result of reason and reflection. Take the idea of a church. If it is analyzed, it may be found, perhaps, to consist not only of the visual ideas of the edifice itself—its belfry and its Gothic windows—but also

of the sound of its bells, the heavy perfumed scent of flowers mixed with an odor of varnish, and the mustiness of a place not properly ventilated. Consequently, any sense stimulation which may be related to one of these ideas of the church would cause the whole idea to recur as a dream, embodying the church. One time the stimulus might be merely the sound of bells. Another time, it could be a scent similar to that of an association.

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

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

Chapter XX

PREDICTION

PEERING INTO SOMEONE'S personal future, in all of its diversified forms, is a dangerous pitfall but currently a big business.

Annually, in the United States alone, millions of dollars are spent in the pursuit of what lies ahead. Expenditures range from the deposit of a dime in a vending machine for a ready-made horoscope to the payment of \$100 for a special seance. Such practices do not necessarily connote that the people participating are morons. It indicates, rather, how firmly rooted are the instincts.

Blindfold a person in a place with which they are quite familiar and observe their hesitance to step boldly forward. You will note that, as a precaution, they extend their arms and grope ahead as though to fend off some possible obstruction. People in life, when they are able to realize it, find themselves in a similar or blind state. They find that they have consciousness of just their present existence. Where they are now and have been since birth are the only realities that they have to depend upon. Where they, as a spiritual entity, existed before their birth, from the religious and mystical point of view, and where they as a physical being will be next month or next year are vagaries insofar as their actual perceptions and experiences are concerned.

Millions of people today, as in past ages, are very conscious of the evident futility of planning. Today's accomplishments may be shattered by tomorrow's unforeseen events. Therefore, just as the blindfolded individual reaches out to guard against a possible unknown danger, so

millions try to tear aside the veil of the future to get a glimpse of what lies ahead. Even the revelation of but one year in advance would quite patently be a tremendous asset in establishing confidence and evading possible catastrophes.

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

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

The fact that so many constantly seek to know what the morrow will reveal indicates that either they possess courageous spirits or possibly the belief that the unfavorable may be evaded. If fate is absolute and the course of a person's life or their destiny has been created for them, and they must pursue it like a ball rolling down a bowling alley, then it avails them little to know of it in advance. Such knowledge could not make it possible to escape misfortunes for such would be the natural course of events of their life.

If a person could exercise their reason and power of mind to correct and avoid the future of which they may know, then the future is not absolute and has not been definitely decreed for them. For an analogy, if it has been decreed that it shall rain on Tuesday, and I will become

drenched by the downpour, and that is my fate, knowledge of this in advance obviously would avail me very little. However, if it has been decreed that it shall possibly rain on Tuesday and such a prognostication has no relation to me, I am then a free agent. As such, I can prepare in advance not to be caught in the storm. Thus, it appears that those who resort to different systems of fortunetelling believe that the future is vicarious. In other words, things may occur, but the individual can create or choose a substitute course of events.

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

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

It is needless to say that many practicing the art of fortunetelling are charlatans. However, even where gullible people are concerned, a certain technique is required to insure a successful venture. Consequently, many of the practitioners enter into a dramatic portrayal of their purported powers. Ostentatious gestures and surroundings

add to the psychological impression created upon the client. Odd paraphernalia suggests the conjuration of supernatural forces and also adds to the impressiveness of the setting. Aside from that, many of these practitioners have the native ability to analyze their subject quickly and thoroughly. In a few minutes of conversation, the subject has inadvertently divulged a few words or phrases which become definite clues as to their character and reveal their inclinations and even their wishes. From these, the practitioner is able to weave an imaginative and highly probable tale of generalities. When the subject leaves, they dwell upon the generalities, ruminate upon them, and speculate, for example: "I wonder if the woman that they mentioned with the red hair and who loves music is my Aunt Geneva," or "I wonder if the brown-haired man with a business proposition was the chap who came into my office with the briefcase yesterday looking for me."

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

I personally attended, with an intelligent business person, a session conducted by an eminent fortuneteller. My companion had marveled at what they claimed to have been a former accurate revelation of facts, and they wanted me to witness the amazing powers possessed by this person. My associate, according to them, previously had a disclosure of the events of the next year of his life, and he was now returning to have the second future year's events revealed.

I was unknown to the practitioner but was permitted to sit with the subject while the practitioner read from cards. At the close of the meeting, my companion was ebullient with enthusiasm but, frankly, the prognostications consisted of the most inane generalities I had ever heard. My companion was going to travel. They would close some big deals within the next six months. They had a local rival who was attempting to undermine their business, and they must avoid putting trust in a stranger with a pleasing personality who would visit them in a fortnight. Could these things come to pass? Certainly, in any business person's life almost anywhere in the world. Needless to say, my future was predicted in a similar general manner. My companion called me a skeptic.

There is considerable danger in prediction when one considers the psychological effect on the mind of the many who practice it. The direct suggestions as to conditions that are to occur and will occur according to the oracle or medium, as the case may be, are apt to compel one to fall into a state of fatalism without a realization that they are doing so or without an appreciation of what fatalism means. For example, if a certain seer, fortuneteller, or a certain type of astrologer predicts a period of ill-health which, according to them, one absolutely must expect, the subject resigns himself to the prediction. They relegate their consciousness to the mental picture given them and accept the suggestion as final.

Many people have regulated their affairs accordingly when told by so-called fortunetellers that a certain year is to be extremely bad for business ventures of any nature, no matter what they did to prevent it. They immediately retrenched their business enterprise when that period came about. They would not consider any attempt to oppose the prediction, accepting the prediction as absolute and, of course, the prediction was fulfilled—their business did fail—but they themselves were responsible for its failure.

A person in Australia wrote to me stating that they must be in receipt of materials from me by a certain time as they had only until March of the following year to live. An astrologer told them, so they alleged, that in March they would go through transition. They so accepted this negative, fatalistic suggestion as to actually prepare for

transition as though they had in reality received a death warrant from the Almighty, and the Divine had set their execution for that time.

To do justice to that person, I must not omit an explanation of some results that cannot be depreciated to a status of fraud. Often, individuals recount how, with the most precautionary measures that could be taken, and even with admitted doubt, upon coming into the presence of the practitioners they had been immediately told not only their full names but the names of friends, exact dates of happenings, and minute descriptions of places they had been to or of properties they possessed. Further, they had been told what their innermost and cherished hopes and desires were. Such experiences have been investigated under the form of research known as *psychical research*, and it was learned that they are definitely caused by *hyperesthesia*—a super sensitivity.

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

A great desire, hope, or wish that is firmly implanted within the subjective mind of an individual is an ever active power whether the individual consciously dwells upon it or not. The psychic practitioner feels these emanations. To them, they are sensations and they undoubtedly agitate or engender ideas in the cerebrum corresponding

to those in the mind of the person before them. At times, it is noticed that the practitioner seems to grope for an interpretation of the sensations they feel. Thus, they are apt first to make a statement that is not fact, and they will realize it and perhaps say, "No, that is not it—just a moment, and it will come to me." Finally, they form from the sensations they have received, the right idea which they then relate. This procedure, of course, which is not uncommon, is not actually foretelling the future. It is, however, truly reading a mind. An earnest hope, which one is determined to make an actuality, can thus easily be grasped by a natural psychic. Likewise, a subject may sometime in their lifetime realize their hope or dream. Consequently, that makes it appear that the psychic predicted their future.

These demonstrations are interesting from research and study points of view, but they are not very practical for although it may be amusing to have someone read our thoughts, we gain nothing by that as we already are aware of them before we consult someone else. It reminds me of tests in cases of hyperesthesia that have been made in psychology laboratories. One possessing those powers and standing at a distance is able by concentration to tell what lines on the page another is reading by merely looking at the back of the book. A remarkable feat, true, but hardly necessary from a practical standpoint, especially when one has the book before them and does not need another to tell them what the contents are.

There is so much need for the useful activity of psychic powers that it is to be deplored that they are diverted into channels for attempting the impossible—fortunetelling—and likewise encouraging frauds. Scientific prediction based upon the study of actual causes and their eventual and natural results is the only kind of fortunetelling that is rational, and it is far removed from any form of supernaturalism. Examples of this kind of fortunetelling are to be found in chemical formulas, in the charts of weather bureaus, and in charts based upon cyclical periodicity of natural laws.

PART FOUR
Attainment

Chapter XXI

MASTERSHIP AND PERFECTION

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

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

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

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

A person is strong in nothing who is weak in character. No one can rise very far if they are possessed of uncontrollable passions or inhibited with deep-seated fears. No possession or achievement is secure if it is built upon the faulty foundation of superstition and personal spiritual insecurity. The mystic knows this. They know that a person's objective mind is not infallible, that it is subject to vicarious moods, and that its stock of ideas easily becomes depleted.

The mystic wants an inexhaustible source of supply, a dependable power that they can draw upon before they attempt mastership in mundane things, such as the arts, sciences, and crafts. They know that the intelligence, the mind of the Cosmic, is ubiquitous and that it pervades all. Every mystic, in this sense, is a pantheist. They know that this Cosmic mind is not located off in a distant corner of the universe, nor is it inherent in some remote object here on earth. They are aware that it exists in their being as a higher form of consciousness and as an intelligence which directs and which is all-inclusive. They know that this Cosmic mind does not have ready-made answers and formulas to be released to them in the way one would receive them from a slot machine into which they had deposited a coin. Rather, the mystic perceives this infinite Cosmic Intelligence as properly influencing their own processes of syllogistic reasoning so that from their own mortal objective mind may come the necessary thoughts, points, or principles of living. Since the place where they are most contiguous with the Cosmic Intelligence is within themselves—the recesses of their

inner consciousness—it is there that they turn for this inspiration, this stimulation.

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

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

It is not necessary to sit at the feet of a master in Tibet, in Egypt, or Los Angeles. If what someone has shown you or what they may be able to relate to you does not quicken the entire consciousness of your being so that you may experience the underlying principles of the

desired mastership, continued association with that master will avail you nothing. People who have associated themselves with masters of an art for a long time are often able to be as successful as the master in one application of the art. But if they are able to express themselves only in that one medium, they are not masters for they have acquired but a single end and are not directing a power at will which is necessary to mastership.

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

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

The Great Master today would need to amaze our scientists and startle them into recognition by masterful knowledge of physical laws and the properties of matter with which they are struggling. Jesus would need to astound psychologists and psychiatrists with a profound understanding of the functioning of the human mind. Jesus would

need to show that there are intangible qualities existing in the blood and in each living cell of the matrix of the human system which are contributing to the psychical qualities of people and which could not be weighed, dissected, counted, augmented, or substituted.

Jesus would have to reveal to physicists that the key to the mechanical principles of faster transportation and communication lies not in greater combustion engines, or revolutionary principles affecting the existing ones, or some higher frequency or energy of an electrical nature but, rather, in the human mechanism, in the processes of thought, and in the nature of consciousness. Jesus would have to show the chemists of today that life can be chemically created but that something more than life has made the greatest manifestation of all—a person. Jesus would have to introduce such systems of diet and hygiene as have not yet been conceived of in order to make plain that right living is far more essential than the development of complicated systems of therapeutics for the cure of the ills that come from improper living.

Jesus would not dress conspicuously, and would not appear austere. Nor would Jesus walk about in sandals or speak in a strange tongue. To the intelligent classes, Jesus would be proclaimed as a supreme, uncanny genius, but would win their respect and admiration by brilliance and by actual accomplishments. The greatness of Jesus, by contrast, would make people humble and they would seek to be disciples. They would flock to hear Jesus speak. Jesus could not proclaim to be the son of the Divine. Instead, Jesus would claim to be one of the brothers of humanity, all of whom were sons of the Divine. Jesus would not exhort people to be saved but, rather, that they cease wasting their divine privileges of living and allow Jesus to show them what the Divine had created for their use and understanding.

A lesser master than the one just described might not be so diversified. They might devote themselves unselfishly to but one great human enterprise by means of which to best serve humanity and lift it upward. They might, like Pasteur or Madame Curie or Edison, or a host of others, bring about untold happiness by their accomplishments—or, more important, a respect for the Divine's laws as manifest in nature. They might cause thousands upon thousands of people to think, to turn

their consciousness inward, to meditate and cogitate—as have some of the great poets, philosophers, mystics, and Rosicrucians. They might create great works of art, the beauty of which would cause people to sense in earthly forms a transcendent beauty and, by its attraction, be compelled to seek and to aspire to an understanding of the harmony in all things.

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

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

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

the leaf as the important factor. In developing a shade tree, perfection means a large leaf and denser foliage. An ape is only imperfect by what we expect in humans. A child is only imperfect if measured by that which we expect in an adult. In their own capacity in nature, neither one is imperfect.

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

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

Chapter XXII

SPIRITUALITY

A STATE OF SPIRITUALITY denotes conduct indicative of a person's spiritual nature. To live a spiritual life, then, is to be governed by aspirations, urges, and inclinations originating in the divine self and as expressed by the dictates of conscience. It is also the use of these higher powers and faculties of which a person is possessed and aware.

There are certain noble virtues which are characterized as being spiritually endowed. Such virtues, if not practiced by all people, are at least known to them. A few of these virtues are truth, justice, modesty, and mercy. These, of course, can be applied to daily life, its labors, and its habits. If we accept the viewpoint that the noble virtues are the quintessence of spirituality—as well as that observance of such commandments as the various sacred works and the different religions expound—then a person who is discerned as displaying them is spiritual.

It is not sufficient to know of the virtues; one must live them. A person cannot retire from the world and display justice toward their fellows. They cannot be truly modest in their own presence alone. One who lives as a recluse can hardly extend mercy. A person must, consequently, suffer themselves to mingle with the world. They must get their feet into its damp soil, bathe in its waters, partake of its fruits, rub shoulders with humanity, and share its social, economic, and political problems. They must be an absolute humanist. They must avoid none of the responsibilities, hopes, and aspirations of humanity and yet transcend its temptations and resist its contaminations by the strength of their virtues. They must, as well, indulge their appetites and

heed their bodily desires but circumscribe them with the discipline of their mind. Unless someone participates in life, their virtues are but an aphorism, an untried moral theory. Goodness, Aristotle said, is the excellence of a function. There is no quality of goodness in a person unless they use their spiritual powers to their perfection; that is, not to suppress their somatic existence but to regulate and control it.

An honest person is not one who is always surrounded with only their own property, nor one who is under constant surveillance. Honesty exists in the capacity to be dishonest, and the intentional refraining therefrom. A person is merciful who is afforded the opportunity to be otherwise.

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

The spiritual life is being lived by the person who tarries long enough on their way to offer succor to one who has fallen by the wayside. It is not just lived as is done by the one who tells of the need to do this in prettily-worded speeches in a book or from a rostrum or pulpit. One's deeds travel farther, faster, and are more lasting and convincing than their words.

The soul is a mover of the body, and the latter never disturbs the former. Coarsened hands are far less a barrier to the spiritual virtues than soft hands accompanied by a coarsened character. The chewing of tobacco can never stain the inner character as can lies, deception, and cruelty no matter how finely they are polished. Give me any person

pursuing an honorable trade or work, no matter what its nature and who lives the virtues, and I will show you an earthly saint for all of their overalls and brogans.

There is no necessary relationship between the sensitivity of the inner life and the crudeness of an external manner. Many a vile creature lies behind a mild demeanor and a cultured exterior. One does not need to be an aesthete, know the technique of drama and the intricacies of the great musical compositions, and be sensitive to the penumbras of color to be spiritually inclined. Those who are spiritually actuated need not sacrifice their mental acumen, the sharpness of their reason, the keen delight in consummating a sale, the joy of participating in worldly competitions and in the legitimate trafficking in food, minerals, or even gold and silver. Nothing they can do is profane or a violation of the spiritual if it is always measured by the virtues to which they respond. Nothing of the Earth can blemish their lives if the soul is the master at all times. One who thinks that business efficiency, good judgment and management in material affairs, and practicability are signs of a lowly and profane nature is a hypocrite or is experiencing an unfortunate delusion.

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

I have known people who excused their lack of efficiency in business, their poor powers of concentration, and their deficiency in creative and executive ability by laying claims to spirituality and an austere aloofness from the proficiency of living. I have heard them say sardonically, "A person is a good administrator and, therefore, their mind lacks those finer esoteric spiritual qualities."

One who excuses mental and character weaknesses and indolence by claims to spirituality is more than a sanctimonious hypocrite. They are a desecrater of the Divine by attempting to relate it to their own mortal ineptness.

Chapter XXIII

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

A NORMAL MYSTICAL state is one wherein an individual receives the incentive, the stimulation, and the determination to strengthen their character in order to follow the course of righteousness and to develop the commonly accepted virtues. Such mystical states of consciousness are encouraged by society. Civilization and society, in general, need all such religions and systems of philosophy which lead people to dwell closer to their Deity or the Divinity they conceive of and which will strengthen their character and cause them to follow what they understand to be the spiritual aspects of their inner self.

One of the true mystical experiences is that of inspiration, the sudden and complete enlightenment of a person in an intuitive way rather than through the laborious processes of reason or study. However, every inspiration, the result of the ecstatic or mystical state of consciousness, is not a sudden influx of new knowledge or new truth or a revelation of facts and circumstances. Frequently, it is a consecration, the incentive to devote one's life to a certain ideal and to be loyal, to be truthful, or to attain a worthy goal.

There are certain tests to determine true mystical experiences. Let it be said here that mystical experiences are not exempt from those tests to which any other experience had by a rational observer would be subject. When one believes that incoherence and obscurity are signs of mystical consciousness, they are making a serious mistake for the mystical experience must be coherent, it must be rational, and it must be comprehensive.

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

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

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

The third point is known as transiency. This concerns the duration or length of time of the state of mystical consciousness. It is generally conceded from a matter of record that the state cannot be sustained for longer periods than from thirty to sixty minutes. Further, the details of the experience are always recalled imperfectly. One has a full

appreciation of the result of the experience, of the thing in its entirety, but what had contributed in detail to it cannot be objectively recalled. We may liken it unto a drink which a thirsty person takes. When the thirst is quenched, they experience a great gratification, and yet they would find it extremely difficult to describe the drink. Certainly, they would admit, to themselves at least, that the coolness and the wetness of the water were adjectives entirely inadequate to describe those qualities which had produced the gratification they felt. Also, whenever the state of mystical consciousness recurs, the recurrence results in a continuous progress. Each experience begins where the last left off. There are no unexplained interims, always a progressive development. It is as if one were looking upon a motion picture screen at a story being unfolded, and suddenly at a certain point the projector was switched off, the light would be extinguished, and the shadow pictures would disappear. Perhaps minutes, hours, or days later, if the projector were again started, the visual impressions on the screen would begin exactly where the tale last ended. Nothing would be left unexplained or incomplete. One never goes backward, and there is no retrogression in the state of mystical consciousness.

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

Rosicrucian mysticism, as expounded in the official modern monographs and teachings of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is a synthesis of those important time-tested, profound Cosmic laws and

principles which lead to Cosmic Consciousness. The Rosicrucian teachings include many Eastern mystical principles with modifications that make them applicable to the Western mind.

Let us consider Sufism as one example of Eastern mystical principles. Sufism is a form of Islamic mysticism. It developed in the second century after Mohammed (who some claim was originally named Qutham) had his great theophanic experience in a cave on the slopes of Mount Hira in Arabia. Some consider there to be two origins or etymologies of the word *sufi*. One side proclaims that it came from the word *safa*, denoting purity—a spiritual and moral purity, as distinguished from the contamination of worldly and mortal things. Others say that it is derived from the word *şūf*, meaning wool, inasmuch as the early ascetics of Arabia, many of whom were Muslims as well, wore wool as a sign of their spiritual office or calling. Be that as it may, certain Muslim votaries, more profound perhaps than their fellows, more spiritually inclined, began to abhor the religious ostentation of the average believer, the pomp and ceremony of some of the rituals, and the raucous recitation of the Qur’an. Such demonstrations suggested hypocrisy to them. Also, to these more devout Muslims, religion meant an inner experience rather than an outward display. They finally became convinced that the Qur’an, the Muslim Bible, contained a certain secret text not meant for the casual believer. Very studiously, they examined it and selected certain phrases upon which they meditated at great length, seeking that inner experience and enlightenment.

Jalal al-Din Rumi is a central figure in the history of Sufism because it took a more organized form and developed into a definite system of mysticism through his poetry and missionary work. Rumi was born in the year 1207 in Afghanistan. His father was a wealthy man and a devout and noted ascetic. The young Rumi also displayed the qualities of devoutness and spiritual discernment very early in life. Some time prior to departing on a great mission, it is related that Rumi had erected a marble pillar in the courtyard adjoining his home, somewhat taller than him, and around which he would entwine his arms as in an embrace and clasp his hands. Then, leaning backward so that his weight was upon his hands, Rumi would slowly walk about the pillar, revolving, as it were, until eventually his consciousness, as

he declared, would be lost in an “ocean of love.” This we may define as meaning that Rumi had been absorbed for the period into the Cosmic, into the Absolute, and had experienced mystical consciousness. After returning from this submerging in the ocean of love, Rumi would be greatly illumined and would disclose revelations to those who listened intently. Those revelations eventually became some of the doctrines of Sufism. Such physical practices have been dispensed with by modern mystics.

It is well that we consider, to some extent at least, a few of the principal doctrines of Sufi mysticism. All being, all reality, no matter what its nature or kind or its form or experience comprises one unity. The Divine is unknowable in its pure, absolute essence. No human consciousness can embrace the Divine. The manifestations, however, can be known and, thus, to a degree people can also comprehend the Divine.

The Sufis recognize substance or matter as an actuality. It is the outer or physical, material world. It is an attribute of the great unity. It is not, as some schools of mysticism and of philosophy affirm, an illusion—a product merely of the receptor senses of people. It is and includes actual substances. Things are as they seem to be. All matter is a negative aspect of this one great unity. The positive aspect or attribute is invisible. It is a higher world, a world which people experience within themselves, the world of soul or spiritual inclination. We, humanity, so the Sufis claim, are an objectification of the Divine, the material form of the Divine, the consciousness of the Divine clothed in substance. The Divine is necessary to us. No one will dispute that, but the Sufist goes beyond that. They declare that we are necessary to the Divine because the Divine is manifested or Its consciousness is in our physical forms and, without us, the Divine would have no expression in substance.

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

- A. The realization of self, that a person must truly be aware of the individuality of consciousness and that they are and also that all other things are. Also, that they do not have an independent existence but, rather, an independent expression, and that is self.

B. The realization of the Divine, not an absolute knowledge of the Divine, not that a person's conscience can so embrace it as to comprehend the Divine and, thus, know all things and, thus, to be the Divine. Rather, it is that a person must have a personal inner conviction when alone by themselves and without lip tribute to religion, dogma, or creed that a Deity does exist;

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

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

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

To the true mystic, physical existence and mortal existence are not something to be cast aside in favor of a permanent absorption into the Cosmic. In fact, the true mystic realizes that the soul can never be

so free that it can be absorbed permanently into the Cosmic before transition. Until transition, then, the mystic may only hope and be happy in the opportunity for mere glimpses of the Cosmic.

Meister Eckhart, the great medieval mystic, stated that an object and an image are bound in one. We cannot think of fire without likewise thinking of heat. And Eckhart went on to relate that, therefore, we cannot separate an image from its object. Now, the Cosmic is the object. It is real. Conversely, the physical or material world is the image. It is a reflection of the object or the Cosmic. We know that a poor mirror distorts an image and so, too, our objective consciousness often reflects an image or picture of the whole Cosmos that is not a true one. It may be very incomplete, very imperfect.

The mystic consciousness, to which we should resort periodically, reveals a true image of existence. The true mystic, then, uses their illumination, the result of their mystical experiences, to fashion life, mortal existence, after the Cosmic. The true mystic is not unlike an artist painting the landscape from within a cell in which they are confined. Over the window of the cell there hangs a shade, and occasional breezes fluttering it permit glimpses of the great sunlit beauty of a landscape without. After each glimpse, the artist imparts their experience of what they have seen to the canvas before them in the cell. After many glimpses and much labor, the canvas gradually partakes of the realism and splendor of nature. Finally, when looking upon the canvas, the artist experiences that same rapture which they did when peering out of the window as the shade permitted.

The Rosicrucian mystic, the modern mystic, makes their world include all of the Cosmic virtues and values which they have been able to glean in an understanding of their mystical experience. The Cosmic is the object, the world is the image, and the mystic makes that image conform as closely as possible to the object. They interpret their experiences of Cosmic Consciousness in terms of constructive, creative, humanitarian enterprises here on earth.

The mystical consciousness in function should result in an integrating of the so-called spiritual and material worlds. It should make it possible for a person to create more fully in their limited, objective world.

People expand spiritually, not just through experiencing the greater majesty of the Cosmic, but by emulating it, by converting an illumined consciousness into creative, unselfish, mundane achievements. The mystic, therefore, as part of their technique, needs to not lose their touch with other mortals in the material world. They must train themselves objectively. They must become proficient in some trade, art, or science. These are the tools by which they shape their mastery of life when they have the Cosmic illumination by which to set for themselves a particular objective.

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

If you would know a mystic, do not confine your search for them to monasteries and temples, but look for them also on the highways and byways, in towns and hamlets, and in the hustle and bustle of the great cosmopolitan centers of the world. When you find a person who is industrious, studious, compassionate, loved by their friends and neighbors, tolerant in their religious views, and who can point out to you the magnificence and efficacy of the Divine in the simplest of things, you have found a mystic. With these qualities, whether they be attired in a sacerdotal robe or in the overalls of a mechanic, that person is nonetheless a mystic.

We have not meant to imply in all the foregoing that there is but one specific, fixed technique which everyone must use to attain a mystic consciousness. There are those who will read these chapters who have found more responsive methods. Eventually, each individual acquires intimate personal ways and means which afford them a greater facility for reaching the sublime state of attunement. However, as in

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crafts and trades, certain fundamentals must be learned first, and the foregoing have been offered as rudimentary principles which, if followed faithfully, intelligently, and with true purpose in mind, will lead to a technique of mysticism and the full life it affords.

THE END

THE ROSICRUCIAN ORDER, AMORC

Purpose and Work of the Order

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

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

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

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